

108242 - Is it permissible to read from the computer during Taraweeh prayers?

the question

Is it permissible to read the Holy Qur'aan from the computer whilst performing Taraweeh prayers?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Reading from the computer whilst praying comes under the same rulings as reading from the Mus-haf whilst praying. This is a well known issue concerning which there is a difference of opinion among the scholars. The Shaafa'is and Hanbalis regard it as permissible, but Abu Haneefah was of the view that their prayer is invalidated if one reads from the Mus-haf.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (33/57, 58):

The Shaafa'is and Hanbalis are of the view that it is permissible to read from the Mus-haf whilst praying. Imam Ahmad said: There is nothing wrong with a person leading the people in praying qiyaam (taraweeh) whilst looking at the Mus-haf. It was said to him: What about the obligatory prayers? He said: I have not heard anything concerning that.

Al-Zuhri was asked about a man who read from the Mus-haf during Ramadaan. He said: The best of us used to read from the Mus-haf.

In the commentary on Rawd al-Taalib by Shaykh Zakariya al-Ansaari it says: If he reads from the Mus-haf and turns the pages occasionally it does not invalidate the prayer, because this is a slight movement or is not ongoing, and does not distract one. A little of a movement of which a lot would invalidate the prayer, if done deliberately with no need, is makrooh.

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Abu Haneefah was of the view that the prayer is invalidated if one reads from the Mus-haf in all cases, whether it is a little or a lot, whether one is leading the prayer or praying alone, whether one is unversed and can only recite from it or not, and they mentioned that Abu Haneefah had two reasons for regarding it as invalid:

1. That holding the Mus-haf, looking at it and turning the pages is a lot of movement
2. That he is being prompted by the Mus-haf, so it is as if he is being prompted by someone else, and it makes no difference in this case whether the Mus-haf is placed on a stand or held in the hand. But with regard to the first reason, it makes a difference.

He excluded from that the case where a person had memorized what he is reciting and he recites without holding the Mus-haf. In that case it does not invalidate his prayer because this reading is counted as helping him to remember what he has memorized and is not regarded as being prompted by the Mus-haf; merely looking without holding it does not invalidate the prayer.

Two of our companions – Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad – were of the view that it is makrooh to read from the Mus-haf if the intention is to imitate the people of the Book. End quote.

The view that it is permissible is the view which is stated in fatwas of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas, Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen and Shaykh 'Abd-Allaah al-Jibreen.

See the answer to question no. [1255](#) and [69670](#).

Undoubtedly it is better that the people should only be led in prayer by one who has memorized the book of Allaah, and can recite from memory.

Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan (may Allaah preserve him) was asked:

Is reading from the Mus-haf better than reciting from memory? We hope you can advise us.

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He replied:

With regard to reading Qur'aan outside of prayer, reading from the Mus-haf is better, because it is a more accurate recitation. But if reciting from memory will help him to focus more, then he should recite from memory.

With regard to prayer, it is better to recite from memory, because if he recites from the Mus-haf he will do repeated movements by holding the Mus-haf, putting it down, turning the pages and looking at the letters; thus he will miss out on placing the right hand over the left on the chest whilst standing, and he may miss out on spreading the arms when bowing and prostrating if he puts the Mus-haf under his arm. Hence we prefer that the worshipper should recite Qur'aan from memory whilst praying rather than reading from the Mus-haf. End quote.

Al-Muntaqa min Fataawa al-Fawzaan (2/35, question no. 16).

See also the words of Shaykh al-Uthaymeen in the answer to question no. 3465.

One of the negative aspects of reading from the Mus-haf – or from the computer or cell phone – whilst praying is that it deadens the imam's interest in memorizing Qur'aan, and ends his desire to memorize it. If he knows that he can open the Mus-haf whilst praying, or look at the computer or cell phone, he will not devote time to memorizing the Book of Allaah, and he will not be eager to memorize it well. You should strive to memorize the Book of Allaah and recite it by heart whilst praying.

And Allaah knows best.