

232094 - Can You Recite Only Surat Al-Ikhlas in Tahajjud?

the question

Is there a specific way to pray Tahajjud? Someone told me that it should be eleven or twelve Rak`ahs, reciting Surat Al-Ikhlas twelve times in the first Rak`ah, then reducing the number of times it is recited in each Rak`ah, until you recite it just once in the final Rak`ah. Is there any evidence for this?

Summary of answer

Praying Tahajjud with 11 or 12 Rak`ahs, reciting Surat Al-Ikhlas 12 times in the first Rak`ah, then reducing the number of times it is recited in each Rak`ah until you recite it just once in the final Rak`ah is an innovation and is contrary to the Sunnah.

Detailed answer

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Understanding the Flexibility in Night Prayers

[There is no specific way to pray Tahajjud or offer \(optional\) prayers at night](#), in terms of what the worshipper should recite after Al-Fatihah in each Rak`ah. So the Muslim should pray two Rak`ahs by two, reciting whatever he is able to of the Holy Quran, then he should pray Witr after that. Various ways of praying at night have been narrated in the Sunnah, which we have discussed in the answer to question no. [46544](#).

Can You Recite Only Surat Al-Ikhlas in Tahajjud?

Praying Tahajjud with eleven or twelve Rak`ahs, [reciting Surat Al-Ikhlās](#) twelve times in the first Rak`ah, then reducing the number of times it is recited in each Rak`ah until you recite it just once in the final Rak`ah – as described in the question, or in a similar manner – is an innovation and is contrary to the Sunnah.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

[The night prayers are to be offered in sets of two Rak`ahs](#), then if you fear that dawn is approaching, pray Witr with one Rak`ah. What the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) usually did when [praying Qiyam Al-Layl](#) was eleven Rak`ahs, but if anyone does more or less than that, it does not matter. (End quote from Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da`imah, 7/181)

They also said:

There are no specific Surahs of the Quran to be recited in the night prayers; rather the individual may recite whatever he is able to of the Quran. (End quote from Fatawa Al-Lajnah, 6/103)

Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

[Qiyam Al-Layl \(offering voluntary prayers at night\) is a confirmed Sunnah](#), whether that is done at the beginning of the night, in the middle or at the end, although the end is preferable, and the last third of the night is best, unless that is too difficult. In that case one may pray Witr at the beginning of the night, with one, three, five, seven or more Rak`ahs, saying the Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, praying two Rak`ahs by two, trying his best to recite with deliberation, and praying Witr with one Rak`ah.

There are no specific Surahs to be recited; he may recite whatever he is able to, from the beginning of the Quran, from the middle of the Quran, or from the end; or he may recite in order to finish the Quran (Khatmah), starting from the beginning of the Quran until the end, then repeating that. It is all good, and there is nothing specific that is required in that regard. (End quote from Fatawa Nur `ala Ad-Darb, 10/25)

And Allah knows best.