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It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever prays at night in Ramadaan out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 37; Muslim, 759.

This hadeeth is indicative of the virtue of praying qiyaam in Ramadaan, and shows that this is one of the means of forgiveness of sin. Whoever prays Taraaweeh as it should be prayed has prayed at night (qiyaam al-layl) in Ramadaan.

Forgiveness is conditional upon “faith and hope of reward,” as stated here.

What is meant by “faith” is that when the person stands to pray qiyaam, he believes in Allaah, may He be exalted, and believes in His promise and in the virtue of praying qiyaam, and in the greatness of its reward with Allaah.

“Hope of reward” means that he is seeking the reward from Allaah and is not doing it for any other purpose such as showing off, etc.

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It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to encourage them to pray qiyaam during Ramadaan, without commanding them to do it. Then he said: “Whoever prays at night in Ramadaan out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven.”

So the Muslim should be keen to pray Taraaweeh, and should be patient in completing the prayer with his imam. He should not neglect any part of it, or leave before his imam, even if his imam does more than eleven or thirteen rak’ahs, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever prays qiyaam with the imam until he finishes, it will be recorded that he spent the night in qiyaam.”

It is only a few nights, which the wise man makes the most of before they are gone.

Abu Dawood said: It was said to Ahmad while I was listening: Can qiyaam – i.e., taraaweeh – be delayed until the end of the night?

He said: The way of the Muslims is dearer to me.

If a person is keen to pray whatever rak’ahs he wants to at the time of the pre-dawn (suhour time), then he should not pray witr again at the end of his prayer, rather it is sufficient for him to pray witr with his imam in taraaweeh, because of the hadeeth of Talq ibn ‘Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “There cannot be two witr in one

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night.”

With regard to the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) – according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Make the last of your prayers at night witr” – this is to be understood as referring to one who prays at the end of the night and did not pray witr at the beginning of the night.

The command here is to be understood as a recommendation, not an obligation. It is not essential to conclude the prayer at the end of the night with witr, based on the fact that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) prayed at the end of the night, after his witr.

Abu Dawood said: I said to Ahmad: Does praying after witr invalidate witr? He said: No.

Abu Dawood said: I heard Ahmad say concerning one who prayed witr at the beginning of the night then got up to pray qiyaam:

He said: He should pray two rak’ahs.

It was said: Does he not have to pray witr?

He said: No.

He said: I heard someone ask him about someone who wanted to pray after witr – should he pray two by two ?

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He said: Yes, but after witr he should lie down.

The imam should take care to pray properly in taraaweeh. He should pray with proper focus and humility, reciting in a proper manner and being at ease in rukoo' and sujood. He should beware of rushing lest he fail to attain the proper level of khushoo' (focus and humility) and lest he make the weak, elderly and sick among the people behind him get too tired.

Al-Saa'ib ibn Yazeed said: 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab commanded Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Tameem al-Daari to lead the people in praying eleven rak'ahs of qiyaam. He said: The reciter used to recite the soorahs that contain more than a hundred verses, until we would lean on sticks because of having to stand for so long, but we did not leave until dawn was approaching.

When the worshipper has said the tasleem at the end of witr, he should say: Subhaan al-Malik al-Quddoos (Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Holy) three times, elongating the vowels and raising his voice the third time, because it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did that.

There is nothing wrong with women attending Taraaweeh prayers so long as there is no risk of fitnah, and they go out looking decent, not making a wanton display of themselves in attractive clothes or wearing makeup, and they pray with proper focus and humility, keeping the houses of Allaah free from idle talk and evil speech such as backbiting, malicious gossip or talking about their household affairs, so that they will be free of sin and will earn the reward of Allaah.

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And Allaah knows best.

From: *Ahaadeeth al-Siyaam by al-Fawzaan*, p. 59.

O Allaah, accept this (worship) from us, for You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, and accept our repentance, for You are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Merciful

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