221803 - Can You Pray Taraweeh Twice in One Night?

the question

Is it permissible to offer Tarawih prayer twice in one night? Because there is a hadith which says: Hannad ibn Sariy told us, from Mulazim ibn ‘Amr who said: ‘Abdullah ibn Badr told me, from Qays ibn Talq, who said: Abu Talq ibn ‘Ali visited us one day in Ramadan, and he stayed with us until the evening, and led us in praying qiyam that night, and led us in praying Witr, then he went to a mosque and lead his companions in prayer until only Witr remained, then he asked the man to go forward and lead the prayer, and said to him: Lead them in praying Witr, for I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “There cannot be two Witrs in one night.” Narrated by an-Nasai in his Sunan (1679). What is the verdict on this hadith?

Summary of answer

If you pray Tarawih in one mosque, then you find another mosque where prayers are still going on, and you go and pray with the people, there is nothing wrong with you doing that, but you should not pray Witr twice.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Number of Rak`ahs in Tarawih

Tarawih prayer is qiyam al-layl (night prayers) in Ramadan, and there is no set number of rak‘ahs for qiyam al-layl in Ramadan or at any other time, that the Muslim should not exceed. So he may pray as much as he wants at night in Ramadan and otherwise.

If the people at the mosque divide the night prayers in Ramadan into two parts, one part after ‘Isha and another part at the end of the night, in order to attain the virtue of praying at the time

before dawn and to strive hard in worship, especially in the last ten nights, and they do Witr at the end of the prayer, there is nothing wrong with them doing that.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

There is nothing wrong with increasing the number of rak'ahs during the last ten nights and doing more than in the first twenty nights, and dividing them into two parts, one that is prayed at the beginning of the night and made brief like Tarawih in the first twenty nights, and another part that is prayed at the end of the night and made lengthy like tahajjud. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to strive hard in worship in the last ten nights in a manner unlike other times." (Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Daimah – vol. 2, 6/82)

Can you pray tarawih twice?

If a person prays Tarawih in one mosque, then he finds another mosque where prayers are still going on, and he goes and prays with the people, there is nothing wrong with him doing that either, but he should not pray Witr twice . So if he prayed Witr with the first congregation, he should not pray Witr with the second congregation, because there should not be two Witrs in one night.

For example, if he is an imam who leads the people in prayer in two mosques, or who leads two different groups in prayer, at the beginning of the night and at the end of the night, or he prays as a member of the congregation in one and as an imam leading the prayer in the other, all of that is permissible and there is nothing wrong with it, in sha Allah.

Abu Dawud (1439), at-Tirmidhi (470), an-Nasai (1679) and Ahmad (16296) narrated from Qays ibn Talq who said: Talq ibn 'Ali visited us one day in Ramadan, and he stayed with us until the evening and broke his fast, then he led us in praying the night prayers and led us in praying Witr. Then he went to his own mosque, and led his companions in prayer, then when only Witr was left, he asked a man to go forward and lead the prayer, and said: Lead your companions in praying Witr, for I heard the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: "There should not be two Witrs in one night."

This hadith was classed as hasan by Ibn al-Mulaqqin in al-Badr al-Munir (4/317) and by al-Hafiz in al-Fath (2/481). It was classed as hasan by the commentators on al-Musnad, and as sahih by al-Albani in Sahih Sunan Abi Dawud.

As-Sindi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“So he led his companions in prayer” – what appears to be the case is that he led them in both the obligatory and supererogatory prayer, so the people followed him in offering the obligatory prayer by way of one who is offering an obligatory prayer following one who is offering a supererogatory prayer.” (Hashiyat as-Sindi ‘ala Sunan an-Nasai, 3/230)

Imam Ahmad was asked about a man who leads people in ‘Isha and Tarawih prayers during the month of Ramadan – can he lead them in praying Witr when he intends to lead another group in prayer after that? He (may Allah have mercy on him) said: He should do something in between, such as eating, drinking, or sitting down. (Narrated by al-Marwazi)

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is because it is makruh to follow Witr immediately with another prayer. So he should do something else in between, so that there will be an interval between his Witr and subsequent prayers. This applies if he is going to lead them in prayer in the same place. But if it is going to be in another place, then his going there will form a separation. But he should not do a second Witr, because “There should not be two Witrs in one night .” (Badai‘ al-Fawaid, 4/111)

Most of the jurists are of the view that doing this is permissible in all cases, and is not makruh in any situation. (See: Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab, 6/258-259)

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

“If you have prayed Witr in your own mosque, then you go to another mosque and find the people praying there, then go in and pray with them, but when they pray Witr, stand up and add another rak‘ah so that the prayer will be even-numbered, because you have already prayed Witr.” (Jalasat Ramadaniyyah)

And Allah knows best.