222751 - How Should Women Pray Tarawih at Home?

the question

What are the procedures for praying Tarawih at home? Is it required for a woman to have memorized the Book of Allah in order to pray Tarawih on her own? Or is it sufficient for her to recite that which she has memorized?

Summary of answer

A woman may pray Tarawih at home according to whatever she is able to do, paying attention to the Sunnah as much as possible. For more, please see the detailed answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Women’s prayer: At home or at the mosque?

It is better for a woman to pray in her house than in the mosque, whether that is an obligatory or supererogatory (nafilah) prayer, including Tarawih prayer .

The scholars of the Standing Committee said:

“A woman’s praying in her house is better for her than her praying in the mosque, whether it is an obligatory or supererogatory prayer, Tarawih or otherwise.” (Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Daimah – vol. 1, 7/201)

How can women pray tarawih at home?

A woman may pray Tarawih at home according to whatever she is able to do, paying attention to the Sunnah as much as possible. If she has memorized the entire Book of Allah and she is able to

make the prayer lengthy , then she may pray eleven rak‘ahs, or thirteen, praying two by two, then praying Witr at the end.

If she cannot make her prayer lengthy, then she should pray two by two, whatever Allah has decreed that she should pray, then when she thinks that she has done as much as she is able to, she should pray Witr at the end, with one rak‘ah.

The scholars of the Standing Committee said:

“Tarawih prayer is eleven or thirteen rak‘ahs, saying the taslim after each two rak‘ahs, and praying Witr at the end (with one rak‘ah) is preferable, following the example of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). But if anyone prays with twenty or more rak‘ahs, there is nothing wrong with that, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The night prayers are two (rak‘ahs) by two, then if one of you fears that dawn is about to break, he should pray one rak‘ah, so as to make what he has prayed odd-numbered.” Agreed upon. So he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not specify a particular number of rak‘ahs.” (Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Daimah, vol. 1, 7/198)

Do women have to memorize the Quran to pray tarawih at home?

A woman does not have to have memorized the Quran in order to pray Tarawih in her house; rather if she has memorized it, or a goodly amount of it, she may pray with whatever she has memorized of the Quran.

If she was not able to memorize enough to help her pray at home, there is no blame on her, or on any man, if they pray reading from the Mus-haf (printed copy of the Quran).

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

“If there is a need to read from the Mus-haf, for one who is an imam leading the prayers, or a woman who is praying Tahajjud at night, or a man who has not memorized the Quran, there is nothing wrong with that.” (Fatawa Nur ‘ala ad-Darb, 8/246)

Can a woman lead other women in tarawih prayer?

If there are a number of women in the house, there is nothing wrong with her leading them in praying in congregation. She should stand in the middle of the row, and recite whatever she is able to, and if she reads from the Mus-haf there is nothing wrong with that.

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

“It is better for a woman to pray in her house, even if there is a mosque in which Tarawih prayers are held, and if she prays in her house, there is nothing wrong with her leading other women in the house in prayer. In this case, if she has only memorized a little of the Quran, she may read from the Mus-haf .” (Fatawa Nur ‘ala ad-Darb by Ibn ‘Uthaymin)

Can women pray tarawih at the mosque?

There is nothing wrong with a woman praying Tarawih or other prayers in the mosque, with the congregation of men, especially if that will be more effective in encouraging her to offer a lengthy prayer, and will help her to do that regularly, even if offering prayers – both obligatory and supererogatory – at home is better for her – in principle – than her offering prayers in the mosque.

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

What is the Islamic ruling on a woman praying Tarawih in the mosque?

He replied:

“The basic principle with regard to a woman’s prayer is that her home is preferable and better for her, but if she thinks that there is an interest to be served by praying in the mosque, so long as she covers herself properly, because that is more motivating for her, or because she can benefit from listening to lessons, then there is nothing wrong with that, praise be to Allah. It is also good because of what it involves of great benefits and encouraging people to do righteous deeds.” (From the Shaykh’s website)

He was also asked:

Is it permissible for a woman to pray Tarawih in the mosque with the men?

He (may Allah have mercy on him) replied:

“Yes, it is mustahabb for her to do that if she fears that she will be lazy at home, otherwise her house is better. But if there is a need for that, there is nothing wrong with it. The women used to offer the five daily prayers with the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), although he said: “Their houses are better for them.”

But some women may feel lazy or unmotivated at home. So if she goes out to the mosque, fully covered and observing the hijab, and avoiding any wanton display, with the aim of praying and listening to people of knowledge, then she will be rewarded for that, because this is a righteous aim.” (Fatawa Nur ‘ala ad-Darb, 9/489)

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin said:

“It is better for her to pray Tarawih at home, but if praying in the mosque is more motivating for her and helps her to focus better, and if she prays at home she fears that she may neglect her prayer, then in this case the mosque may be better.” (Al-Liqa ash-Shahri)

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 3457 and 65562

And Allah knows best.