

Contemporary

IRSYAD
SERIES



OFFICE OF THE MUFTI



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2
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INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى خَيْرِ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ، سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَمَنْ أَقْتَدَى بِهِدِيهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ، وَبَعْدَ

Part of the objective of Muslim law (*maqasid al-Shari'a*) is the protection of public from all forms of harm. Anything that leads to harm ought to be prevented. Herein lies our role to be socially responsible as we face the COVID-19 outbreak.

For instance, if we feel unwell, we should quickly get treatment. As we seek to fulfil our religious obligations, we should not inadvertently cause harm to others. In this case, one who is unwell should not go to the mosque. Performing *ibadah* at home does not make us less of a Muslim; especially when we do so with the intention to not harm others. The Muslim community has a religious and social responsibility to ensure that we help in curbing the spread of COVID-19.

This handbook aims to provide guidance on religious queries related to the COVID-19 outbreak, some of which were raised by the Muslim public.

May Allah s.w.t continue to protect us and all of humanity from all forms of harm and disasters, as well as provide us with a way out of this crisis. *Amin Ya Rabbal 'alamin.*

**The Office of the Mufti
Islamic Religious Council of Singapore**



5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAXIMISE YOUR RAMADAN IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES

- 1** **Deepen our faith and heighten our spirituality by focusing on the meaning of Ramadan**
Whether in congregation or on our own, God looks at our hearts - our intention, focus and aim.
- 2** **Spread mercy, hope and kindness**
Help and support those in need. We are in this together - even if we are a little far apart.
- 3** **Maintain social distance, but strengthen emotional connectedness**
Kinship and friendship remain important, and let us make our relationships positive and beneficial despite the distance.
- 4** **Count our blessings, and not rue our misfortunes**
Focus on the many blessings that God continues to give us, and not those that He has taken away.
- 5** **Learn new things**
Improve your recitation and memorisation of the Qur'an.

**THEOLOGICAL
QUESTIONS**

**Wisdom Behind
Challenges**


PART ONE

Is the virus outbreak a trial or retribution from Allah s.w.t.?

1. Allah s.w.t. tests human beings with various forms of trials and challenges, including illnesses. Prophets and messengers were tested with various trials and they faced them with patience and in full faith that there is a wisdom behind the trial that had befallen them. For example, Allah s.w.t. describes the resilience of Prophet Ayyub a.s. :

﴿٨٣﴾ وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ
فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ فَاكْشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ
مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَذِكْرًا لِلْعَابِدِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾


Meaning: "And (remember the story of) Ayyub, when he called upon his Lord: "(O my Lord) indeed I have been afflicted with illness and You are the Most Merciful of those who are merciful. So, We answered his supplication and We removed from him the illness (that afflicted him), and We gave him (in reunion) his family, as a mercy from Us and as a reminder to all who worship (Allah)." (Surah Al-Anbiya', verses 83-84)



2. Thus, an illness is also a part of Allah's test for humankind. Although Allah s.w.t. tests us out of love and mercy, some tests may also be caused by our mistakes and sins.

As an example, Allah s.w.t. says regarding past communities in the Qur'an: "And we have destroyed them because of their transgressions" (Surah Al-An'am, verse 6). So, how do we understand the meanings of trials and misfortunes?

Only God knows the wisdom behind every trials. Human beings are commanded to be patient and to deepen spirituality when facing trials.



3. From the sacred sources and texts, we understand that the wisdom behind a particular trial is known only to God. No human being can know for certain the reasons and causes for a particular misfortune that afflicts an individual or a community.

How should we understand trials and challenges in life?

4. A believer perceives trials and challenges in life as a decree of God. Its wisdom will only become apparent much later. Thus, the Prophet s.a.w. taught his ummah to always say good things when tested, either by praising God and saying *Bismillah* بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ (Hadith Qudsi, narrated by Ahmad), or by saying: *Inna lillahi wa 'inna 'ilayhi raji'un* إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُونَ (Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 156). In addition, the Prophet s.a.w. provided us with guidance when visiting someone ill that we should offer a support and say positive things: *La ba's thohur inshaAllah* لَا بَأْسَ ظُهُورٌ، اِنْ شَاءَ اللّٰهُ، which means: *There is no harm in illness, it is a form of purification, if Allah wills.* (Hadith narrated by Imam Al-Bukhari)¹

5. A believer also accepts every test as a mercy from Allah s.w.t.. We ought to strengthen our faith which will help us face the test with perseverance and patience. Let us increase our good deeds, supplicate to God for His assistance, and stay united and cooperative in facing this trial as one community.

[1] Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadith no. 3616.

Religious Principles in Managing Pandemics

PART TWO

6. Islam has laid down several guiding principles in dealing with a pandemic.

*A specific harm is to be borne by the individual
in order to deter public harm*

Prevention of Diseases

7. In Islam, measures to prevent diseases have always been given priority, and this is reflected in the following maxim:

الْوَقَايَةِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْعِلَاجِ

Meaning: "Prevention (of diseases) is better than cure"²

8. The Prophet s.a.w. has always emphasised on the gravity of preventing the possible transmission of contagious illnesses. Preventive measures taken in curbing its spread are given precedence over curative measures. One of such measures is to observe good personal and environmental hygiene. Islam places a high importance on cleanliness. The Prophet s.a.w. had said:

[2] Al-Sadlān, Ṣāliḥ Ghānīm, al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubrā wa mā Tafarra' 'anhā, p. 508.

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ

Meaning: "Purity is part of faith." (Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim).³

Staying Away from Public Areas

9. Other than preserving one's health and hygiene, anyone who is unwell should stay away from public spaces as this may result in a widespread transmission of the disease. The Prophet s.a.w. said:

لَا يُورَدَنَّ مُمْرِضٌ عَلَى مُصِحٍّ

Meaning: "Do not place the sick with the healthy" (Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).⁴

10. In this current situation, those who choose to disregard the importance of observing preventive measures are in fact going against the teachings of the Prophet s.a.w.

[3] An-Naysabūrī, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no. 223.

[4] Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadīth no. 5771; See also, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no. 2221

11. In another Hadith, (reported by Imam Muslim), the Prophet s.a.w. was said to have prohibited a person with bad breath (due to having eaten food like garlic) from praying in congregation at the mosque, as this was seen to be a source of annoyance and discomfort for the other congregants. If bad breath is deemed as sufficient a reason to be prevented from going to the mosque, what more of an infectious virus which does not only cause annoyance, but in fact poses great harm to others.


Not Leaving or Entering an Area with Outbreak

12. Persons who are inside an area affected by the outbreak should not leave the area. Conversely, persons from outside the area should not enter the area. This is line with the teachings of the Prophet s.a.w.:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَقْدَمُوا عَلَيْهِ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا مِنْهُ

Meaning: *"If you hear of a plague in a land, do not enter it; and if the plague breaks out in the place where you stay, do not leave it."* (Hadith reported by Muslim).⁵

[5] An-Naysabūrī, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no. 2219.



13. This directive is aimed to curb the transmission of infectious diseases from spreading to other areas and inflicting other communities. In addition to this, every individual must strictly follow the advice given by medical experts and health officers. This includes complying with 'Stay Home Notice' or 'Leave of Absence' to ensure the safety of one's self, family, and the larger society. This is also in line with the Islamic jurisprudential maxim: *"A specific harm is to be borne by the individual in order to deter public harm."*

What are the religious guidelines for those who have contracted the virus?

14. The Prophet s.a.w. advised those who have contracted infectious diseases to remain at home, and to have patience. The Prophet s.a.w. said: *"Anyone who remains in a town which is plagued with epidemic, remaining patient and seeking the reward for that from Allah while believing that nothing will befall him other than what Allah has preordained for him, then such a person will receive the reward of a martyr"* (Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari).

The Need for Mosque Closure Due to an Outbreak

15. Mosques can be closed temporarily for a thorough cleaning and disinfecting process to ensure that a further spread of the virus does not take place. During this period, all activities taking place at the mosques will be suspended


temporarily, including congregational and Friday prayers. This was also the decision made by the Muis Fatwa Committee on **18 February 2020**.

Fatwa Decision

The Fatwa Committee has decided that if there is a wider spread of COVID-19 and the situation becomes more critical that necessitates the closure of mosques, the temporary suspension of congregational and Friday prayers during this period is permitted.

Minimizing Time Spent in Public Places for the Vulnerable Groups

16. According to research, there are segments of the population who are at higher risk of developing more serious complications from the virus, such as the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions. For these groups, the guidelines are as follows:



a. For the elderly: Minimize time spent in public places, including mosques, during this period. If mosques are permitted to conduct Friday prayers, this group should perform Friday prayers only once in every three weeks.

b. Those with underlying chronic illnesses: There is concession for them to not perform Friday prayers, and thus it is not obligatory upon them to perform it.

The Need for Temporary Suspension of All Religious Activities

17. In order to prevent further widespread from happening, all activities involving large social gatherings like festive events and schools are to be suspended. This includes events and activities held at places of worship. The temporary suspension of congregational prayers, Friday prayers, and religious talks and classes at the mosques are all part of the effort to prevent widespread transmission of the virus. This is not the first time that a mosque is closed to prevent further harm. In 1979, Majidil Haram was temporarily closed due to a terrorist attack that took place in the compound.

18. Despite the temporary mosque closure, religious worship and activities must continue in our respective homes. For example, we should continue to (1) increase our recitations of the Qur'an, (2) perform congregational prayers with our families, (3) allocate time to deepen our religious knowledge, and (4) get in touch with a religious teacher if we have any religious queries during this period.

Stricter Safe Distancing Measures

19. On 20 March 2020, the Ministry of Health announced stricter safe distancing measures to prevent further spread of the cases. Some of these measures include safe distancing of at least one metre apart between individuals.⁶ In addition to these measures, the government had also introduced new temporary laws on 7 April 2020, in a bid to contain the COVID-19 transmission. Under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020, individuals must stay at home as much as possible, and may leave the house only for essential purposes.

20. These additional measures are necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the public, and to prevent the further spread of the virus. All Muslims should also comply with these measures when performing certain Islamic rituals, such as in arranging for the final rites for those who pass on during this period.

[6]<https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/stricter-safe-distancing-measures-to-prevent-further-spread-of-covid-19-cases>

21. Attending to the funeral rites for a deceased Muslim is a collective religious obligation (*fardhu kifayah*), and hence funeral prayers must still be performed for the deceased. However, this should be done with the necessary adjustments in light of the need to contain the spread of the virus. In principle, the number of people attending to funeral rites must always be kept to the minimum and must only involve officials from the funeral company and immediate family members.

22. The final rites (including washing, enshrouding, prayer and burial), should only be carried out by:

- Officials from a recognised funeral company; and
- Immediate family members, not exceeding 10 individuals.

23. In addition to the above, funeral prayers can only be conducted at home, with the following conditions: i) the number of people attending the prayers does not exceed 10 (excluding the funeral companies' officials); ii) there is a physical distance of at least one meter between them.

24. If the deceased has no immediate family members, or was a resident of a nursing home, the funeral company should contact the Pusara Aman Mosque for the funeral prayer to be performed there.

25. Other family members and relatives who are not able to attend the funeral and join in the funeral prayer, they may choose to perform the funeral prayer in absentia (*Solat Al-Ghayb*).

How to perform Solat Al-Ghayb?

Solat al-Ghayb is similar to the usual funeral prayer, and the only difference lies in the niat (intention) made, which is due to the absence of the deceased. For this prayer, please observe the following: 1) face the direction of the Kaabah; 2) make the intention to perform funeral prayer in absentia and 3) follow all other actions in a normal jenazah prayer.

26. Only a maximum of ten family members may participate in the burial at the cemetery.

27. If the family wishes to read the *tahlil* after the funeral, ensure that only those from the same household as the deceased may attend the session. Families may consider inviting an imam/ustaz to recite the *tahlil* through video conferencing.

28. Apart from burials, under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures), subsequent visits to the cemetery **are not allowed at all times**. Instead, family members are advised to increase their supplications for the deceased from home.

Are congregational and funeral prayers valid if there are gaps between the congregants?

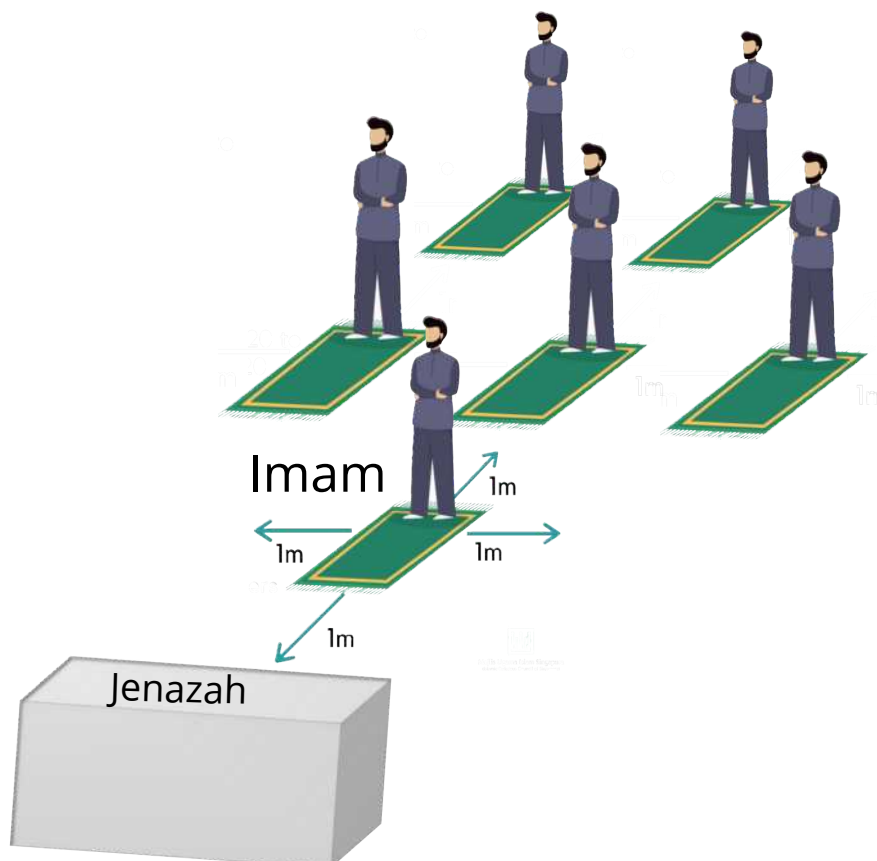
29. This issue has been discussed by the *fuqaha'* (jurists) of the Shafi'i school of thought. Although some of them are of the opinion that the gaps could affect the validity of the prayer, Al-Khatib al-Shirbini opines that the perfecting of prayer rows by closing the gaps between congregants is a recommended act and not a condition that validates the prayer.⁷ Imam Al-Ramli too is of the view that this does not affect the validity of the congregational prayer.⁸ Imam An-Nawawi also opines that no matter where the individual stands when performing the congregational prayer in the mosque, his prayer is considered valid.⁹

[7] Al-Khatīb al-Shirbīnī, *Mughnī al-Muḥāj*, vol 1, pp 493.

[8] Umar Al-Quradaghi, *Al-Manhal Al-Naddah fi Ikhtilaf al-Ashyaikh*, p. 110.

[9] Al-Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, vol 4, p. 308.

30. The main objective of closing the gaps between congregants is to instil the spirit of unity, as mentioned in the hadith narrated by Anas ibn Malik.¹⁰ However, in this situation of an outbreak, observing safe distance between individuals in congregational prayers fulfils the objectives of the Shari'a, which is to prevent harm, and this does not run contradictory to the objective of closing the gaps in between congregants.



[10]The prophetic saying is: "O Servants of Allah, perfect the prayer rows between you or Allah will create dissension among you" (Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari and Muslim).

Fiqh Issues

PART THREE

Religious Concession in Attending Congregational and Friday Prayers

31. Muslim Scholars have discussed several situations that would allow for exemptions from praying in congregation, including Friday prayers. This is based upon the hadith reported by Abu Daud. In this hadith, the Prophet s.a.w. indicated that fear and illness are valid religious reasons to be exempted from performing congregational prayer, even if one can hear the call for prayer.

32. These religious concessions can also be applied in:
(i) supererogatory (*sunnah*) prayers such as Tarawih and Witr, (ii) collective obligatory (*Fardh Kifayah*) prayers such as the funeral prayer; and
(iii) individually obligatory (*Fardh 'Ayn*) prayers such as the Friday prayer.

Imam An-Nawawī explains :

(أما حكم المسألة) فقال أصحابنا : تسقط الجماعة بالأعذار سواء قلنا إنها سنة أم فرض كفاية أم فرض عين . . .

Meaning: *“(With regard to this issue), Our scholars (from the Shafi’i school of thought) have opined that congregational prayers can be exempted due to religiously-valid reasons, be it for prayers that are supererogatory, or prayers of collective and individual obligations”¹¹*

[11] An-Nawawī, Al-Majmū’, vol 4, p. 98; See also, Ibn Qudāmah, Al-Mughnī, vol 2, p. 376; Al-Zuhaylī, Wahbah, Al-Fiqh Al-Islāmī wa Adillatuh, vol 2, p. 169.

He then added that a Muslim is also permitted to miss Friday prayers for the same reasons:

من الأعذار المرخصة في ترك الجماعة، يرخص في ترك الجمعة

Meaning: *“All religiously-valid reasons that would allow for the forgoing of congregational prayers are also accepted as valid reasons for the forgoing of Friday prayers”.*¹²

A Muslim is hence permitted to miss their congregational and Friday prayers during an outbreak. This does not only apply for someone who is serving a quarantine order, but also applies for one who fears from being infected. For those who miss Friday prayers, they must perform Zohor prayers in its place.

33. The same goes for a community that is facing a calamity or a particularly challenging situation. During the time of Prophet’s companions, there was once when it was raining heavily and it posed difficulties and possible harm for people to make their way to the mosque. Given this situation, Ibn ‘Abbas instructed the muezzin to add the “صلوا في بيوتكم” (Pray in your homes). Ibn ‘Abbas r.a. then said:

أَتَعْجَبُونَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ! لَقَدْ فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنِّي، إِنَّ الْجُمُعَةَ عَزْمَةٌ، وَإِنِّي كَرِهْتُ أَنْ أُخْرِجَكُمْ فَتَمْشُوا فِي الطِّينِ وَالذَّخِصِ.

[12] An-Nawawī, Rauḍah Al-Ṭālibīn, vol 1, p. 146.

Meaning: *“Are you surprised by this? This has also been done by someone better than me (referring to the Prophet s.a.w.). The Friday prayer is an obligation, but I would not like to instruct you to go out and attend prayers while treading through wet earth and mud.”*¹³

34. Imam Ibn 'Abd al-Barr has also explained in his book Kitab al-Tamhid on the various forms of reasons which would permit a Muslim to not attend congregational and Friday prayers: *“Religiously valid reasons are wide-ranging. In essence, it refers to all situations that could prevent one from performing the Friday prayer, like in the situation where there is harm, fear of injustice, or a situation in which the person has an obligation that is not able to be performed by others, among these reasons are (fear of) an oppressive ruler who exercises injustice, continuous heavy rain, or in a situation where the person is afflicted by an illness and so on.”*¹⁴

35. If mosques are permitted to reopen and Friday prayers are to proceed, those serving the 'Stay Home Notice' or 'Leave of Absence' are allowed to miss congregational prayers or Friday prayers at the mosque. As long as they have made the intention to perform prayers but are unable to do so due to a valid reason, Allah s.w.t. has promised the full reward. The Prophet s.a.w. had said:

[13] Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadith no. 901; See also, An-Naysabūrī, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no. 699.

[14] Ibn 'Abd Al-Barr, Al-Tamhid, vol 16, p 243.

"Whoever desires goodness but does not do it, one reward is written for him. If he does it, ten rewards are written for him."
(Hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad).

What is the ruling on shaking hands during an outbreak?

36. According to scientists and medical experts, the virus can spread through respiratory droplets from infected individuals

released during coughing or sneezing. If the droplets come into contact with a surface, and the surface is touched by another person, that person can be infected

The Prophet s.a.w. undertook preventive measures by not meeting and not shaking the hands of those infected by a contagious illness during his time

if he touches his nose or eyes without washing his hands. Not shaking hands is a precautionary measure that would help prevent infections.

37. The Prophet s.a.w. was once visited by the people of Thaqif tribe who wanted to pledge allegiance to him, but one of its members was infected by a contagious illness. The Prophet s.a.w. sent a messenger to them with the message:

إِنَّا قَدْ بَايَعْنَاكَ فَارْجِعْ

Meaning: "Indeed we have accepted your pledge, so you may return." (Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim).¹⁵

38. This hadith shows that the Prophet s.a.w. also practised preventive measures by not meeting and shaking hands with those who have been infected with contagious illnesses. Handshaking is not obligatory, and it can be avoided during this period as we need to work towards curbing the virus transmission.

Can I use hand sanitizers that contain alcohol?

39. All of us must strive to take care of our personal hygiene, and one way to do this is to ensure that we keep our hands clean, either by washing them, or by using a hand sanitizer. The use of hand sanitizers containing alcohol is permitted. The Muis Fatwa Committee in 2008 has determined that the alcohol used for medical treatments and products (including hand sanitizers) is not the same type of alcohol which use is prohibited in Islam.

[15] An-Naysaburī, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no. 2231; See also, An-Nawawī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Syarḥ Muslim, vol 14, p. 327.

What is the Islamic ruling on the suspension of Umrah/Hajj in the bid to prevent further spread of this pandemic?

40. First and foremost, it needs to be emphasised that the guidelines and instructions set by the government of Saudi Arabia must be complied with. As the party responsible for the safety of the pilgrims (Umrah and Hajj) as well as the locals, their decisions will be based on the public interest as the objective.

Islam has always emphasised that in the event there is conflict between *maslahah* (benefit) and *mafsadah* (harm), then the elimination of harm must be prioritised. The Prophet s.a.w. had said:

لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ

Meaning: "*Harm shall not be inflicted nor reciprocated.*" (Hadith reported by Ibnu Majah).¹⁶

41. In our efforts to prevent harm that can affect the safety of people's lives, the temporary suspension from performing Umrah/Hajj for a temporary period is permitted to help curb the pandemic, and to protect the safety and well-being of humankind.¹⁷

[16] Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, hadith no. 2341.

[17] Majlis Al-Imārāt li al-Iftā' al-Syar'ī, Fatwā fī Nāzilah (Fīrūs Kūfid-19 (kūrūnā) wa Mā Yata'alaq bih min al-Aḥkām, fatwa decision no. 22 year 2020.

Tarawih Prayer

PART FOUR

Is performing tarawih prayer in congregation at home permissible?

42. When it comes to supererogatory (sunnah) prayers, the Prophet s.a.w. had taught us that some of these prayers are to be performed at home. This was mentioned by the Prophet s.a.w. in his hadith:

صَلُّوا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ فَإِنَّ أَفْضَلَ الصَّلَاةِ صَلَاةُ الْمَرْءِ فِي بَيْتِهِ
إِلَّا الْمَكْتُوبَةَ

Meaning: "O people! Perform your prayers at your homes, for the best prayer of a person is what is performed at his home except the compulsory congregational prayer." (Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari).¹⁸

43. Based on the abovementioned hadith, tarawih prayers can therefore be done at home. In fact, when tarawih was first introduced, the Prophet s.a.w. used to perform it individually. This was until his companions started to follow him in his mosque, hence forming a congregation. This went on for a couple of nights before the Prophet s.a.w. decided to subsequently perform tarawih individually at home. This series of events was captured in a hadith. It was narrated that Prophet s.a.w. went praying at night in the mosque.

[18] Al-Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadis no.: 731.

Some men then started to join and pray behind him. He prayed again the following night and was followed by a larger congregation. On the third and fourth nights, people started to gather and waited for the Prophet's arrival, but he did not come out. When the morning (Subuh) prayer came, the Prophet s.a.w. finally came out and addressed the people: *"Your actions were not hidden from me, and nothing prohibited me from coming out to you except that I was afraid the night prayer would be enjoined on you"*. This happened in the month of Ramadan. (Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari).¹⁹

44. Performing tarawih at home hence clearly does not contradict the teachings and tradition of the Prophet s.a.w., especially considering our current situation.

When should I perform the tarawih prayer?

45. Tarawih prayer can be performed any time between the Isha' prayer and the Subuh prayer, as it is essentially a form of night prayer that is otherwise known as *Qiyam al-Layl* or Tahajjud. The term 'tarawih' means having a rest or taking a break. The meaning of this term was apparent in the practice of the Prophet's companions where they used to take breaks in between the tarawih prayer units (raka'at). It is hence permissible for you to take your time in performing your tarawih.

[19] Al-Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadis no.: 1129.

What is the number of raka'at required for tarawih prayer?

46. During the early period when tarawih prayer was first introduced, the Prophet s.a.w. had performed only eight raka'at. Sayyidatina 'Aisha r.a. said: *"The Prophet s.a.w. did not pray more than 11 raka'at in Ramadan or in any other month. He used to pray four raka'at, do not ask about its perfection and length, and then he would pray four, do not ask about its perfection and length, and then he would pray three raka'at (witr)."* She added, *"I asked, 'O Allah's Messenger! Do you sleep before praying the Witr?' He replied, 'O `Aisha! My eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep."* (Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari).²⁰

47. Subsequently, tarawih prayers were performed in accordance with the practice of the Prophet s.a.w. until the reign of Sayyidina Umar al-Khattab r.a. It has been narrated that Sayyidina Umar r.a. had gathered the Muslim community to perform 20 raka'at of tarawih prayer in congregation, led by one imam (Hadith reported by Imam Bukhari).²¹ Hence, individuals may choose one of the many possible ways to perform tarawih prayer, as practised throughout the Islamic tradition.

[20] Al-Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadith no.: 2013.

[21] Al-Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadith no.: 2010.

How do I perform tarawih prayer in congregation with my family members?

48. In view of the current pandemic, individuals should remain at home and perform tarawih with their household members only. It is thus up to the respective families to decide on the appropriate number of raka'at to be performed together.

49. In summary:

- Tarawih can be performed individually or in congregation, in sets of 2 raka'at. The *niat* for tarawih is:

أُصَلِّي سُنَّةَ التَّرَاوِيحِ رَكْعَتَيْنِ إِمَامًا/مَأْمُومًا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى

(Usolli sunnata-taraawiihi rak'ataini imaamam/ makmuumam lillah ta'ala)

I intend to offer two raka'at of the supererogatory (Sunnah) tarawih prayer as an Imam/Ma'mum for Allah s.w.t.

- Tarawih may comprise of 8 raka'at (4 sets of 2 raka'at) or 20 raka'at (10 sets of 2 raka'at); each 2 raka'at is ended with the salaam.

What are the recommended recitations during *tarawih* prayer?

50. After reciting surah al-Fatihah in each *raka'at*, you can recite any short *Surah* or verses that you memorized.

51. If you are able to, it is recommended that you read certain *Surah* as follows:

| | 20 Raka'at | 8 Raka'at |
|--|---|---|
| From the 1st till the 15th night of Ramadan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recite a <i>Surah</i> from al-Takathur till <i>Surah</i> al-Lahab at every first <i>raka'at</i>. To recite <i>Surah</i> al-Ikhlās at every second <i>raka'at</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recite a <i>Surah</i> from <i>Surah</i> al-Takathur to <i>Surah</i> al-Kafirun for both <i>raka'at</i>.* |
| From the 16th till the last night of Ramadan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recite <i>Surah</i> al-Qadr at every first <i>raka'at</i>. To recite a <i>Surah</i> from surah al-takathur to <i>Surah</i> al-Lahab at every second <i>raka'at</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recite a <i>Surah</i> from <i>Surah</i> al-takathur to <i>Surah</i> al-Kafirun for both <i>raka'at</i>. |

*Please refer to annex B for the list of recommended recitations.

Is it obligatory for us to perform witr after completing tarawih?

52. Upon the completion of tarawih, it is recommended to perform witr. However, witr can also be performed after completing *Qiyam al-Layl* which refers to other supererogatory (sunnah) prayers that are done towards the end of the night, or after waking up from sleep. This was mentioned by the Prophet s.a.w.: "*Make the last of your prayers at night the witr prayer.*"²²

While witr should be performed in any odd numbers, it is usually made up of 3 raka'at with 1 or 2 salaam. Hence, the *niat* is:

أُصَلِّي سُنَّةَ الْوَيْتْرِ رَكْعَتَيْنِ / رَكْعَةً إِمَامًا / مَأْمُومًا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى

(*Usolli sunnatal witr rak'ataini/ rak'atan imaam/ makmumam
lillahi ta'ala*)

I intend to pray two raka'at (one raka'at) of the supererogatory (sunnah) witr prayer as an/a Imam/Makmum for Allah s.w.t.

[22] Al-Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadith no.: 998; See also, An-Naysabūrī, Muslim bin al-Ḥajjaj, Saḥīḥ Muslim, hadith no.: 751.

What are the recommended recitations during witr prayers?

53. After reciting surah al-Fatihah in each raka'at, one may recite any surahs (of any length) from the Qur'an.

54. It is recommended that you read certain surah as follows:

- Surah al-A'la in the first raka'at and surah al-Kafirun in the second raka'at;
- Surah al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nas in the third raka'at.

55. Additionally, starting from the 16th night of Ramadan onwards, it is recommended to recite the qunut supplication in the last raka'at of witr prayer.²³ The supplication is the same as the one that is recited for the Subuh prayers.

Are there any supplications that my family and I can recite together after every tarawih and witr prayers?

56. It is important to note that the following supplications are purely recommended and not compulsory. If you are unable to recite them or choose not to do so, the validity of your tarawih and witr prayers will not be affected. However, amidst the current pandemic, we would also encourage you to recite supplications for Allah to protect us and make the situation better for everyone after our tarawih prayers.

[23] Al-Sharbīnī, Mughnī al-Muhtāj, vol 1, p. 361.

A) Zikir and supplications after the tarawih prayers.

57. There are several *zikir* that we can benefit from after we complete the tarawih and witr prayers:

i. سُبْحَانَ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ (3x)

Subhanal malikil qudduus (3x)

ii. سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّنَا وَ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَ الرُّوحِ (3x)

Subbuuhun qudduusun rabbuna wa rabbul malaikati war-ruhi (3x)

iii. أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ، نَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَ نَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ (3x)

Ash-hadu an laa-ilaaha illallah, astaghfirullah, nas-alukal jannata wa na'udzubika minan-naar. (3x)

iv. اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنَّا (3x) يَا كَرِيمَ

Allahumma innaka 'afuwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'annaa (3x) Ya Kareem.

v. اللَّهُمَّ أَجِرْنَا مِنَ النَّارِ (3x)


Allahumma ajirnaa minan-naar (3x)

End with the following supplication:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ، حَمْدًا يُؤَافِي نِعْمَهُ وَ يُكَافِيءُ مَزِيدَهُ، يَا رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِجَلَالِ وَجْهِكَ وَ عَظِيمِ سُلْطَانِكَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَ سَلِّمْ عَلَي سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَي آلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا بِالْإِيمَانِ كَامِلِينَ، وَ لِلْفَرَائِضِ مُؤَدِّينَ، وَ لِلصَّلَاةِ حَافِظِينَ، وَ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلِينَ، وَ لِمَا عِنْدَكَ طَالِبِينَ، وَ لِعَفْوِكَ رَاجِينَ، وَ بِالهُدَى مُتَمَسِّكِينَ، وَ عَنِ اللُّغْوِ مُعْرِضِينَ، وَ فِي الدُّنْيَا زَاهِدِينَ، وَ فِي الآخِرَةِ رَاجِعِينَ، وَ بِالْقَضَاءِ رَاضِينَ، وَ بِالنِّعْمَاءِ شَاكِرِينَ، وَ عَلَي الْبَلَايَا صَابِرِينَ، وَ تَحْتَ لِوَاءِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ سَائِرِينَ، وَ إِلَى الْخَوْضِ وَارِدِينَ، وَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ دَاحِلِينَ، وَ مِنَ النَّارِ نَاجِينَ، وَ عَلَي سِرِيرِ الْكِرَامَةِ قَاعِدِينَ، وَ بِخَوْرِ عَيْنِ مُتَزَوِّجِينَ، وَ مِنْ سُنْدِسِ وَإِسْتَبْرَقِ وَ دِيْبَاجِ مُتَلَبِّسِينَ، وَ مِنْ طَعَامِ الْجَنَّةِ آكِلِينَ، وَ مِنْ لَبَنٍ وَ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى شَارِبِينَ، بِأَكْوَابٍ وَ أَبَارِيقٍ وَ كَأْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِينٍ، مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَ الصَّادِقِينَ وَ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَ الصَّالِحِينَ، وَ حَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا، ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ الشَّرِيفَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ السُّعْدَاءِ الْمَقْبُولِينَ، وَ لَا تَجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الْأَشْقِيَاءِ الْمَرْدُودِينَ. وَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَي سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.



Meaning: *“O Allah, include us among those whose faith is perfect, who fulfil all obligations, take care of their prayers, fulfil the zakat, those who seek all the good from You, who hope for Your forgiveness, those who steadfastly hold onto Your guidance, are protected from all deviations, those who renounce worldly pleasures and are blissful in the Hereafter, those who accept Your decree, are grateful for all Your blessings, and patient in the face of any trials.*

May we be among the ranks of those who are under the protection of the Prophet s.a.w. in the Hereafter, are able to pass the river of kauthar, those who enter Your paradise, are protected from the hellfire, who sit on the noble thrones, in the company dwellers of paradise adorned with colourful clothes of silk, feasting upon the exquisite food of paradise, drinking glasses of pure milk and honey, from pitchers filled with water continuously gushing out from the spring, with those whom You have bestowed Your blessings upon, the Prophets, those who are truthful, the martyrs, the pious, how fortunate it is that they are our companions. Thus, is the mercy and power of Allah, the All-Knowing.

O Allah, in this blessed and noble month, make us among those who will be given glad tidings, whose deeds are accepted, and do not make us among those who are wretched, whose deeds are rejected. May Allah pour His mercy on our Prophet s.a.w., his family, his Companions; with Your mercy, O the Most Merciful and all praises be to the Lord of all the worlds.”


B) Supplication to seek protection from disaster/outbreaks

اللَّهُمَّ اصْرِفْ عَنَّا هَذَا الْوَبَاءَ، وَقِنَا شَرَّ الدَّاءِ، بِلُطْفِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.
اللَّهُمَّ ادْفَعْ عَنَّا الْبَلَاءَ وَالْوَبَاءَ وَالزَّلَازِلَ وَالْمِحْنَ، مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ،
عَنْ بَلَدِنَا خَاصَّةً، وَسَائِرِ الْبُلْدَانِ عَامَّةً، يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ.
اللَّهُمَّ اقْضِ حَوَائِجَنَا، وَاسْتَجِبْ دُعَاءَنَا، وَاشْفِ مَرْضَانَا، وَارْحَمْ مَوْتَانَا،
وَآتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

Allahummasrif 'anna hazal wabaa', wa qinaa syarral daa', bi lutfika ya Arhamar rahimin.

Allahumma-dfa' 'annal balaa' wal wabaa' waz zalaazila wal mihan, ma zohara min-ha wa ma batan, 'an baladina khaasah, wa saa-iril-buldaani 'ammah, ya rabbal 'alamin.

Allahumma-qdhi hawaa-ijana, wastajib du'a-ana, washfi mardhona, war-ham mautanaa, wa-aatinaa fid-dunya hasanah wa fil-akhirati hasanah, wa qinaa 'azaban-naar.



Meaning: *“O Allah, turn us away from this outbreak, protect us from any adversities that may harm us, with Your benevolence, O the Most Merciful.*

O Allah, protect us from all misfortunes, outbreaks, earthquakes and tribulations, whatever that is made apparent from them and what is concealed, especially for our country and all countries in general, O Lord of the Worlds.

O Allah, fulfil our needs, accept our supplications, cure our sickness, show mercy to our dead and give us in this world and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”

Annex of Fatwa Decisions and Religious Positions (2020)

ASEAN

Singapore

Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (Muis)

18 Feb:

- Mosque officers have the responsibility to prohibit any unwell congregants from entering the mosque area.
- If the outbreak becomes more critical, the suspension of congregational and Friday prayers is religiously required.

Malaysia

Perlis Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council (MAIPS)

13 Mar:

There will be no Friday prayers in the city of Perlis and individuals should perform the *Zohor* prayers in their respective homes. Mosque officers should avoid organizing large-scale religious activities.

Jakim

16 Mar:

- All mosque activities including congregational and Friday prayers will be suspended from 17 March till 26 March 2020.
- Should a COVID-19 death occur, the body can be cleaned by doing *tayammum*, i.e. wiping clean soil on the body bag or the plastic cover of the deceased.



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| Brunei Darussalam | Ministry of Religious Affairs, Brunei Darussalam 16 Mar: Mosques will be closed and as well as congregational prayers will be suspended till 23 March, 2020. The call for prayers will continue as per normal. |
| MIDDLE EAST | |
| | International Union of Muslim Scholars 13 Mar: Called for all countries affected by the COVID-19 outbreak to suspend Friday prayers until the situation has stabilized. |
| Egypt | Fatwa Council of Egypt (<i>Dar al-Ifta'</i>) 27 Feb: Viewed that the suspension of umrah visas temporarily by the authorities in Saudi Arabia is in line with the objectives of Islamic law. <hr/> Al Azhar Council of Senior Scholars 15 Mar: Approved the fatwa decision to suspend congregational and Friday prayers in mosques. The call for prayers will be adapted, with the line " <i>sollu fi buyutikum</i> " replacing " <i>hayya 'ala al-salah</i> ". |



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| UAE | <p>The UAE Council for Religious Edicts (<i>Majlis al-'Imarat li al-'ifta' al-Shar'i</i>) 29 Feb:</p> <p>It is impermissible for anybody who is a confirmed or suspected case to go to a public place or mosque to perform congregational or Friday prayers.</p> |
| Saudi Arabia | <p>International Islamic Fiqh Academy (<i>Majma' al-Fiqh al-Islami al-Duwali</i>) 29 Feb:</p> <p>Permits the suspension of umrah in Mecca and visits to the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. This is based upon the Islamic jurisprudential maxim <i>"If an obligation cannot be performed except through that means, that means becomes obligatory."</i></p> <hr/> <p>Council of Senior Scholars 12 Mar:</p> <p>Does not permit congregational and Friday prayers for infected individuals. For those who fear or worry that they may get infected, it is permitted for them to not attend Friday and congregational prayers at the mosque.</p> |
| Iraq | <p>Ministry of Religious Endowments (Sunni) 12 Mar:</p> <p>Friday and congregational prayers shall be temporarily suspended for the public. However, congregational prayers can still be performed in one's home by following the Imam's voice at a nearby mosque. Attendance of congregational prayers at the mosque will be limited to the Imam, the individual who calls for prayer and several mosque officers.</p> |



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| Iraq | Sheikh Ali al-Sistani (Shi'a) 10 Mar: Following the guidelines by the Ministry of Health, mosques have been closed since 6 March till further notice. |
| Lebanon | Fatwa Council (<i>Dar al-Fatwa</i>/Sunni) 14 Mar: Mosques will be closed and Friday as well as congregational prayers will be suspended till further notice. The call for prayers will continue as per normal. <hr/> Supreme Islamic Shi'a Council 13 Mar: All mosques will be closed. There will be a temporary suspension of Friday and congregational prayers. |
| Palestine | The Ministry of Religious Endowments and Religious Affairs Palestine 13 Mar: To avoid the COVID-19 outbreak, religious activities at mosques and churches in the West Bank, will be temporarily suspended. |
| Kuwait | The Ministry of Religious Endowments and Religious Affairs 13 Mar: Congregational and Friday prayers will be temporarily suspended till further notice. |



| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Jordan | Fatwa Council of Jordan (<i>Dar al- Ifta'</i>) 14 Mar: Congregational and Friday prayers will be temporarily suspended at all mosques country-wide. However, in order to still keep the symbols (<i>syi'ar</i>) of Islam alive, Friday prayers will only be held at the King Hussein bin Talal mosque. Congregants will be limited to 40 individuals comprising of the King's health staff. |
| Syria | Ministry of Religious Endowments 14 Mar: Friday and congregational prayers will be temporarily suspended from 13 March till 4 April. |
| OTHER COUNTRIES | |
| Australia | Australian National Imams Council 16 Mar : Friday prayers shall be temporarily suspended. |
| | The European Council for Fatwa and Research 2 Mar: The council urges the imams and mosque leaders to take all preventive measures and if necessary, to not perform congregational prayers and Friday prayers as well as postponing studies, schools, lectures and other matters as part of the preventive measures. |

Annex B: List of Recommended Recitations

Recommended recitations in the terawih prayer

| | 1 - 15 Night | 16-30 Night |
|-------------------|--|---|
| 8 Raka'at | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah At-Takathur • Surah Al-'Asr • Surah Al-Humazah • Surah Al-Fil • Surah Quraysh • Surah Al-Ma'un • Surah Al-Kauthar • Surah Al-Kafirun • Surah Al-Nasr • Surah Al-Lahab | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah At-Takathur • Surah Al-'Asr • Surah Al-Humazah • Surah Al-Fil • Surah Quraysh • Surah Al-Ma'un • Surah Al-Kauthar • Surah Al-Kafirun • Surah Al-Nasr • Surah Al-Lahab |
| 20 Raka'at | <p>Every First Raka'at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah At-Takathur • Surah Al-'Asr • Surah Al-Humazah • Surah Al-Fil • Surah Qurasy • Surah Al-Ma'un • Surah Al-Kauthar • Surah Al-Kafirun • Surah Al-Nasr • Surah Al-Lahab <p>Every Second Raka'at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah Al-Ikhlās | <p>Every First Raka'at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah Al-Qadr <p>Every Second Raka'at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surah At-Takathur • Surah Al-'Asr • Surah Al-Humazah • Surah Al-Fil • Surah Quraysh • Surah Al-Ma'un • Surah Al-Kauthar • Surah Al-Kafirun • Surah Al-Nasr • Surah Al-Lahab |

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