

## Imaam leading the night prayer whilst reading from a Mus\_haf

Article taken and slightly adapted from: [shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com](http://shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com)

(Al-Hudaa wan-Noor, 694.)

---

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

**Questioner:** During the night prayer is it allowed to read the Qur'aan from a copy of the Mus\_haf?

**Shaykh al-Albaanee** (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)<sup>1</sup>:

And all good is in following those who preceded us

All evil in the innovations of those who came after

Imagine yourselves right now praying the night prayer in the time of 'Umar, who would be leading you? Ubaiy ibn Ka'b.

**Questioner:** We don't have an Ubaiy with us.

**Shaykh al-Albaanee** (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ): That's why we must produce an Ubaiy.

**Questioner:** Until we do, what should we do?

**Shaykh al-Albaanee** (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ): Such a method [of holding and reading from the Mus\_haf] will not bring about an Ubaiy or even half an Ubaiy, for this reason, I remind you of the famous hadeeth, **"Keep refreshing your knowledge of the Qur'aan, for by the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, it is more inclined to escape than a camel from its rope,"** keep refreshing your knowledge of the Qur'aan.

Those people who lead the prayers in the mosque [while reading] from a Mus\_haf, and [I mean] no offense [here] and with respect for any Imaam who leads the people in prayer from a Mus\_haf—I don't say that these people are lazy [but] I say that at the very least they didn't carry out this Prophetic order, **"Keep refreshing your knowledge of the Qur'aan."** What does, **"keep refreshing,"** mean? It is explained in the remainder of the hadeeth.

If a haafidh does not repeat what he has memorised from the Qur'aan day and night, it will escape from him just as a runaway camel does from its rope. It is well known amongst camel herders that parallels are coined about a camel's disposition, such that you have sayings such as, '[So and so] is more spiteful than a camel,' for camels are extremely spiteful,

---

<sup>1</sup> (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

## Imaam leading the night prayer whilst reading from a Mus\_haf

[likewise they are] greatly prone to escaping, even cutting their ropes no matter how strong they may be. That is why addressing the Arabs, camel herders, he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)<sup>2</sup> said, **“It is more inclined to escape from the breasts of men than a camel from its rope.”**

So if Muslims don't give due care [to memorising the Qur'aan]—and this is a communal obligation, if some people carry it out others don't need to—[if they don't give due care] then they will be forced to read from the Mus\_haf.

Were the Salaf as-Saalih like that? Of course not.

So, we must produce students who memorise the Qur'aan and recite it well, and who subsequently lead the people in prayer even if they are young children and those who pray behind them are old men, because priority is given to the one who has memorised it and not the scholar.

For this reason, many times I—and you can see that I am in my eighties now—will pray behind the youth, because they have memorised more of the Qur'aan than me, doing so as an implementation of his saying (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), **“The people should be lead by the one who is most well-versed in recitation of the Book of Allaah. If they are equal in recitation, then they should be led by the one who is most knowledgeable of the Sunnah. If they are equal in their knowledge of the Sunnah, then they should be led by the eldest.”** Where was I [in this ranking]? In third place [i.e., the eldest]. “If they are equal in age, then they should be led by the one who emigrated first.”

So, the people should be lead by the one who is most well-versed in recitation of the Book of Allaah. So during taraaweeh the people must be lead by the one who is most well-versed in recitation of the Book of Allaah.

And when I say this I know that there could be young children who have memorised more than grown men, but these young children might not pray properly, [but] following this path and implementing this hadeeth is a legislated way to teach some of these children who have memorised the Qur'aan the [correct] method of praying, such that they pray it in congregation and lead the people in it, doing so proficiently as ordered by the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

In conclusion I remind you of the hadeeth of a young boy from the Companions whose name was 'Amr ibn Abee Salamah, his father Aboo Salamah was one of the earliest people of the Ansaar to believe in Allaah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) before he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) migrated to Madeenah. These Ansaar used to go to Makkah on 'Umrah in order to meet the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and to learn what new legislated rulings had been revealed to him. So one time his father travelled and then he and some of the elders from the Ansaar came back with a new ruling which the Prophet had taught them, which was to pray in

---

<sup>2</sup> (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

## Imaam leading the night prayer whilst reading from a Mus\_haf

congregation. Prior to that they would pray individually, so they came back with this new ruling, to pray in congregation, the Prophet having taught them this hadeeth, **“The people should be lead by the one who is most well-versed in recitation of the Book of Allaah ...”**

[This young boy] 'Amr said, “So they looked around Madeenah and didn't find anyone more well-versed in the recitation of the Qur'aan than me, nor anyone who had memorised more than me,” and 'Amr's age was between seven and nine, that's what is mentioned in the narrations, i.e., at the most he was nine years old, so he said they put him forward to lead them in prayer—elderly, grown men with beards praying behind a young boy of nine years at the most.

And as is mentioned in the hadeeth he was wearing a mantle, i.e., a loincloth made out of a heavy, velvety material. When he would prostrate it would raise up above him, and the women were praying behind the men as is the Sunnah, and some of his 'awrah would show. And so this boy had barely given salaam from the prayer when a woman called out from behind the men, “Won't you cover the buttocks of your reciter from us?” The boy went on to say, “So they bought a thawb for me, and I had never been so happy with anything before as I was with that thawb.”

Thus, we must give due care to memorising the Qur'aan and copying our Salaf as-Saalih.