



RAMADAN KAREEM

May Allah swt bless you all with peace, plenty and prosperity, good health, happiness and contentment.

May His Noor illuminate the world, dispel the darkness of disease, deceit, discrimination, despair and spread peace and harmony.

May Allah swt shower His blessings on you and your dear ones. Strengthen your hearts with Imaan. Bless and protect what He has granted you and may He bless you with fulfilment of your wishes. Aameen.

*With Duas From The Board And Members
Of*

*The Islamic Center Of Northland, Kansas
City, Missouri.*

AI-MIZAN

YOUTH CORNER

WHO IS MUHAMMAD (PBUH)?

A MERCY TO MANKIND.

([Reproduced with kind permission from Allah's Word Website](#))

One in every five persons on this earth firmly believes that the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) is the last Messenger of God. He was a Muslim and there are more than 1.3 billion such Muslims today.

Not only individuals but entire countries take pride in declaring their allegiance to him. There are 54 such Muslim states today, ranging from those as large as Indonesia and Bangladesh, with populations of 200 and 125 million respectively, to those as tiny as the Maldives or Brunei with populations of 230,000 and 260,000. Even in non-Muslim countries, large Muslim populations constitute significant minorities; as much as 120 million in India and 20 million in China.

Indeed, within the last half century, Islam, the religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), has become the second largest religion in most European countries, as also in America and Canada.

Black and white, red and yellow, followers of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) come from all human races. Whether in Asia or Europe, Africa or America, in every nook and cranny of this globe, you are sure to find Muslims. They live in the most advanced, sprawling megacities as well as in the most primitive nomadic tent, village, hamlet, and even in the bush.

As now so always, down the centuries, across the planet, from end to end, billions and billions of men and women have lived all their lives, loving the Prophet (Pbuh) and trying to follow in his footsteps, as no one else has been so loved and followed. They have lived and died, believed and acted, married and raised families, worshipped and ruled, made war and peace, even eaten and dressed, walked and slept, just as he did or taught them to do.

Indeed, never in history has a man influenced mankind, even beyond his death, so deeply and so pervasively as he has. He brings light and peace to countless hearts and lives. Muslims love him more dearly than their own selves. In him they find their greatest source of inspiration and guidance. He is the ultimate norm and the perfect example for them. Faith in Allah and His Messenger is their mainstay and Allah is their chief source of support and comfort in all personal vicissitudes and tribulations. To him

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support and comfort in all personal vicissitudes and tribulations. To him they also look to lead them through social and political turmoil. He has always inspired them to greater and greater heights of spiritual and moral upliftment and civilizational achievements. And still does.

In short, Muslims believe that through him, a human like themselves, God has spoken to them, and guided him to live amongst them, setting an example and a model for all times to come. Even today he motivates and induces whole populations to yearn and strive to shape their private lives, politics and policies according to Allah's teachings.

With duas from the Editorial Board of Almizaan.

May Allah SWT bless you all and your families with good health, happiness, contentment and success in all walks of life. May He guide you all at every step and protect you from the evil whisperings of Shaitan.

With thanks for being a part of our readership.

M.Cole Photography

The Medical Benefits of Taraweeh Prayers

(Ibrahim B. Syed, Ph. D. President, Islamic Research Foundation International, Inc.)

Website: <http://www.irfi.org>

Muslims derive therapeutic and spiritual benefits starting from the Wudu to the physical movements in the *Salat - Takbir, Qiyam, Ruku, Sajda, Jalsa, and Tasleems*. Muslims perform five daily contact prayers (*Salat*) and voluntary prayers (*Sunnah, Nafl*) throughout the year and Taraweeh prayers during the month of Ramadan. This results in moderate physical exercise particularly to every muscle in the body. Some muscles contract isometrically (same length) and some contract in approximation or isotonicity (same tension). The energy needed for the muscle during exercise is met by a process known as glycogenolysis. The rate of muscle metabolism increases during the performance of *Salat*, resulting in a relative deficiency of oxygen and muscle nutrients. In turn this deficiency causes vasodilation - an increase in the calibre of blood vessels - thereby allowing blood to flow easily back to the heart. The temporarily increased load on the heart acts to strengthen the heart muscle and to improve the circulation within the heart muscle.

During the month of Ramadan, additional prayers are performed after *salatul Isha*, called Taraweeh prayers which vary from 8 *rakat* (unit of prayer) to 20 *rakat* with a few minutes break after every 4 *rakat* for chanting and extolling the Majesty of Allah. After *Iftar* (breaking of fast) the [blood glucose](#) level continues to rise from the food ingested. Just before the *Iftar* meals, the blood glucose and insulin levels are at their lowest level. After an hour or so after the *Iftar* meal, the blood glucose begins to rise and also plasma insulin. Liver and the muscles take up the circulating glucose. The [blood sugar](#) reaches high levels in an hour or two and the benefits of Taraweeh prayers come into effect. The circulating glucose is metabolised into carbon dioxide and water during the Taraweeh prayers.

Hence the Taraweeh prayers help in expending the extra calories and improve flexibility, coordination, reduce stress-related autonomic responses in healthy persons, and relieve anxiety and depression.

Physical and Emotional Well-Being

The gentle exercises performed in Taraweeh prayers improve physical fitness, emotional well-being and increase the longevity of the *Namaz* (one who performs the *Salat* or *Namaz*). When a little extra effort is made, as in performing the Taraweeh prayers, there will be a betterment in the endurance, stamina, in flexibility and strength.

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It was noted that the five daily prayers (*Salat*) produce the same physiological changes without any undesirable side effects as those produced by jogging or walking at about three miles per hour. Recent research studies performed on 17,000 Harvard alumni who entered college between 1916-1950 give strong evidence that only moderate aerobic exercise, equivalent to jogging about 3 miles a day, promotes good health and may actually add years to life. Men who expended about 2000 kcal of energy on a weekly basis (equal to a daily 30-minute walk, run, cycle, swim, etc.) had one-quarter to one-third lower death rates than classmates who did little or no exercise. In addition to the health-boosting qualities of the *Salat*, the *Namazi* will be trained to be ever ready for any unexpected physical exertion such as sudden lifting of children, chairs, or catching a public transportation vehicle. The elderly will accomplish this more securely and efficiently. Hence this is an advantage for the elderly to maintain their physical fitness for a longer period of time. It has been observed that those who fast and perform the Taraweeh prayers report feeling much convalescing and robust.

The Elderly

As human beings grow older, their physiological activity diminishes, as a result their bones become thinner and if not taken care of will suffer from osteoporosis (which causes the fractures of the bones when they fall in the elderly due to a loss of bone mineral content and consequent sponginess of the bones. The bone then becomes structurally unstable, brittle and susceptible to fractures). Primary osteoporosis is most common among postmenopausal (due to reduction in oestrogen) women or those who have undergone a bilateral oophorectomy (both the ovaries removed). Women are six times more likely than men to develop Type I osteoporosis. The three major prevention strategies of osteoporosis are a high dietary intake of calcium and vitamin D, regular exercise and oestrogen replacement in postmenopausal women. The skin also becomes fragile and crinkled. The repair processes of the body become slower and immune responses are decreased. In the elderly their physical activity is reduced as a result they have lower levels of [Insulin](#) Growth Factor 1. Reserve functions of all vital organs

decrease and the elderly are more susceptible to mishaps and ailments. Because of repeated and regular movements of the body during *Salat* the muscle strength, tendon power, joint flexibility and the [cardiovascular](#) reserve are improved. Hence *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers enable the elderly to enrich the quality of life and to meet with unforeseen difficulties such as falls which could injure their bodies. Therefore Taraweeh prayers will improve their endurance, self-respect and self-confidence in being self-reliant.

Adrenaline is secreted even by minor activity. The secretion outlasts the incitement. Even after the Taraweeh prayers are over the effects of adrenaline and noradrenaline are manifest. (Adrenaline also called epinephrine is produced by the adrenal glands. The middle part of these glands, the adrenal medulla, secretes the hormone, which is chemically almost identical

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to the transmitter substance noradrenaline produced at the ends of sympathetic nerves. Adrenaline secretion into the bloodstream in stress causes acceleration of the heart, constriction of arterioles, and dilation of the pupils. In addition, adrenaline produces a marked increase in metabolic rate thus preparing the body for emergency.) Even the thought or the intention of performing the Taraweeh prayers is sufficient to [activate](#) the sympathetic nervous system. Sympathetic nervous system (thoraco-lumbar nervous system) is one of the two division of the autonomic nervous system, which supplies motor nerves to the smooth muscles of internal organs and to the heart muscle. Sympathetic nerve fibres arise via spinal nerves in the thoracic and lumbar regions. Their endings release mainly adrenaline, which increases heart rate and breathing rate, raises blood pressure, and slows digestive processes, thereby preparing the body for "fight or flight" and antagonising the effects of the sympathetic nervous system. The adrenaline would redistribute the blood in the body to the active muscles, would mobilise liver glycogen if necessary in order to provide glucose for the active tissues, would diminish fatigue in skeletal muscles and would facilitate alveolar ventilation relaxing bronchiolar muscle, and would initiate cardiovascular changes. Exercise induces a more effective functioning of beta-adrenoreceptors located on cell membranes.

Beneficial effects of Gentle Exercise

The Taraweeh prayer is considered to be gentle exercise. The beneficial effects of gentle exercise on the body are many which are elaborated here.

Effects on Skeletal Muscle

Once muscles atrophy inspite of the availability of ample proteins. During the *Salat* and Taraweeh, every muscle in the body contracts isotnically and others isometrically. This gentle exercise also enhances endurance and diminishes tiredness. It helps the incapacitated to make the most of their remnant capabilities. The blood flow in strung muscle is low. During the prayers the blood flow is greatly increased to the muscles. Blood flow sometimes increases even before the start of Taraweeh prayers, with just the thought of performing the Taraweeh prayers. In addition to needing fats, proteins, and carbohydrates, the human body requires minerals such as Potassium for nerve and muscle activity. It is found in fruits, meats, seafood and milk. Potassium deficiency leads to muscular and neurologic disorders. Potassium is also important in the

transmission of nerve impulses and is a major positive ion in intracellular fluids. Potassium is involved in cellular enzyme activities, and it helps regulate the chemical reactions by which carbohydrates is converted to energy and amino acids are converted to protein. Also Potassium ions cause vasodilation of arterioles. During the Taraweeh prayers, systolic Blood pressure may rise (the larger number in B.P.) a little and the diastolic Blood Pressure(the lower number in B.P.) may remain unchanged or even fall. However after the Taraweeh prayers are over, the

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B.P. may drop to just below normal levels which is a welcome sign. Taraweeh prayers improve respiratory efficiency; circulation in the capillaries surrounding the alveoli, or air sacs, is increased, and this brings about enhanced gas exchange and deeper breathing. The increase in the maximal consumption of oxygen is what makes the Namazi feel better. Those who perform the Taraweeh prayers, apart from the prescribed *Salat*, are more alert and active than those who do not perform the Taraweeh prayers, even after the age of retirement. Taraweeh prayers improve physical strength and joint stability and reduce the risk of injury to the tendons and connective tissues. After age 40, the bone mineral density falls with age. Taraweeh prayers increase bone mineral density in both menopausal and in elderly women and prevents osteoporosis and maintains normalcy in bone structures. Osteoporosis results in hip fractures in women after menopause and in elderly men. The risk of osteoporosis is substantially reduced by regular *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers. The prayers improve lubrication of joints, movement, and maintain flexibility. Deep vein thrombosis (the most common cause of ulceration of the legs in the elderly) is prevented by performing *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers.

Metabolic Effects

Salat improves body weight control and expend calories without proportionate increase in appetite. A combination of moderate dietary restriction, both at the *Iftar* and *Sahur* (early morning breakfast before the start of fast) meals, accompanied by the Taraweeh prayers, should achieve weight reduction. This will also reduce both fat and body weight, but fat-free weight will remain constant or may even increase slightly. Hence during Ramadan one should not overeat at the *Sahur* and *Iftar* meals and continue to perform *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers in order to lose some of the excess weight.

It is well known that exercise prevents coronary heart disease (CHD), increases high density lipoproteins (HDL or healthy Cholesterol), increases maximum oxygen uptake, slows the heart, lowers the B.P. slightly, decreases ventricular ectopic activity, enlarges the lumen of the coronary arteries and increases cardiac output. Exercise also improves carbohydrate tolerance and improves late-onset diabetes, and helps cases of chronic respiratory diseases. Beneficial changes have been recorded in the lipid profile, B.P., clotting factors, weight reduction and insulin sensitivity of muscles and other tissues in persons who exercise regularly. Growth Hormone secretion is elevated by fasting and it is further elevated by Taraweeh prayers. As Growth Hormone is necessary for collagen formation, this may be an important factor as to why the skin of those who fast regularly during Ramadan and perform the Taraweeh prayers do not get wrinkled, even when they grow old.

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Mental Health

It is a known fact that exercise improves mood, thought and behaviour. Exercise improves the quality of life, induces greater sense of well-being and energy, reduces anxiety and depression, influences mood favourably and contributes to self-esteem and an aura of confidence; improves memory in the elderly especially with constant repetition of the Ayaat (verses) from the Glorious Quran and other Ayaat which exalt His Glory. This constant repetition of the Quranic Ayaat would help to screen the mind from the incoming thoughts. It has been found by a Harvard University researcher, Dr. Herbert Benson that repetition of a prayer, Ayaat of the Quran or remembrance (*Dhikr*) of Allah or muscular activity coupled with passive disregard of intensive thoughts causes a "relaxation response" that leads to the lowering of Blood Pressure and decreases in oxygen consumption and a reduction in heart and respiratory rates. All these are combined in the Taraweeh prayer which is an ideal condition for "relaxation response." It combines repeated muscular activity with repetition of *Salat*, chanting of words of glorification of Allah and of supplications. The Taraweeh prayer puts the mind in a relaxed state. This calm state of the mind may be partly due to the release of encephalins, beta-endorphins (endogenous morphines) and others into the blood circulation. Endorphins are any one of the neuropeptides composed of many amino acids, elaborated by the pituitary gland and acting on the central and peripheral nervous systems to reduce pain. Endorphins are categorised as alpha-endorphin, beta-endorphin, and gamma-endorphin which produce pharmacologic effects similar to morphine. Beta-endorphin found in the brain and GI(gastro-intestinal) tract is the most potent of the endorphins and is a powerful analgesic(pain killer) in humans and animals. For example during childbirth many women release endorphins reducing a woman's sensation of pain. The release of endorphins is associated with an euphoria. During childbirth, women who give birth with little or no medication sometimes label this euphoria a "birth climax."

Conclusion

Islam is the only religion where physical movements of *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers are combined with spiritual exercise. When *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers are practised throughout a person's life, recurring every few hours or so, trains a person to undertake the difficult task of meditation during physical manoeuvres of *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers, so that the Namazi(one who performs the *Salat*) benefits both from spiritual as well as physical exercise. *Salat* and Taraweeh prayers are unique in that tension builds up in the muscles during physical manoeuvres on the one hand, while tension is relieved in the mind due to the spiritual ingredient, on the other hand. The following benefits have been noted among those who perform the Taraweeh prayers: burning off calories and losing weight, maintaining muscle tone and body composition, joint flexibility (stiff joints are often the result of disuse, not arthritis),

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increasing metabolic rate, improving circulation, improving heart and lung function and aerobic capacity, decreasing heart disease risk profile, increasing your sense of self-control, reducing your level of stress, increasing your ability to concentrate, improving your appearance, reducing depression and resistance to depression, helping you sleep better and suppressing your appetite. Evidence is also accumulating that those who perform regular *Salat* along with voluntary prayers can conserve and actually retard the loss of bone mass in the elderly, thus staving off the ravages of osteoporosis that afflicts both men and women. It is also possible to retard the aging process and confer some protection to health in later life. Those who have performed *Salat* (*Fard* and *Wajib*), *Sunnah* and *Nafl* and Taraweeh prayers throughout life get protection and a positive effect in terms of health and longevity. They reverse the life-shortening effects of cigarette smoking and excess body weight. Even people with high blood pressure (a primary heart disease risk) reduced their death rate by one-half and their risk of dying from any of the major diseases is reduced. They also counter genetic tendencies toward an early death. Hence *Salat* (*Fard*, *Wajib*), *Sunnah*, *Nafl* and Taraweeh prayers are necessary for Muslims to preserve life and their desirable qualities into old age.



Narrated Aisha (the mother of the faithful believers) Al-Harith bin Hisham asked Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) "O Allah's Messenger ! (ﷺ) How is the Divine Inspiration revealed to you?" Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) replied, "Sometimes it is (revealed) like the ringing of a bell, this form of Inspiration is the hardest of all and then this state passes off after I have grasped what is inspired. Sometimes the Angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp whatever he says." 'Aisha added: Verily I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) being inspired divinely on a very cold day and noticed the sweat dropping from his forehead (as the Inspiration was over).

CHEATING AND DECEPTION

By Imam Mufti (Reproduced with kind permission of IslamReligion.Com)

PEARLS FROM THE SAYINGS OF THE PROPHET (PBUH)

Cheating and deception are despicable characteristics that are beneath a decent person. Intentionally distorting the truth in order to mislead others contradicts the values of honesty, which requires an attitude of sincerity, straightforwardness, and fairness that leaves no room for cheating, lying, trickery, or deceit. There are many texts from the Quran and the Sunnah conveying the meaning that cheating, whether the target be Muslims or non-Muslims, is forbidden.

Accepting the guidance of Islam leads a person to truthfulness, which means a person completely avoids cheating, cheating, and back-stabbing. The Prophet of Islam said:

"Whoever bears arms against us is not one of us, and whoever cheats us is not one of us." (Saheeh Muslim)

According to another report, the Prophet passed by a pile of food in the market. He put his hand inside it and felt dampness, although the surface was dry. He said:

"O owner of the food, what is this?"

The man said, 'It was damaged by rain, O Messenger of God.'

He said, 'Why did you not put the rain-damaged food on top so that people could see it! Whoever cheats us is not one of us.' (Saheeh Muslim)

Muslim society is based on purity of feeling, love, sincerity towards every Muslim, and [fulfillment](#) of promises to every member of society. Its members are endowed with piety, truthfulness, and faithfulness. Cheating and deception are alien characters in contrast to the noble character of a true Muslim. There is no room in it for swindlers, double crossers, tricksters, or traitors.

Islam views cheating and deception as heinous sins, a source of shame to the one guilty of committing them, both in this world and the next. The Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, did not merely denounce them by excluding them from the Muslim community in this world, he also announced that on the Day of Judgment every traitor would be raised carrying the flag of his betrayal. A caller will cry out from the vast arena of judgment, pointing to him, drawing attention to him:

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"Every traitor will have a banner on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said: This is the betrayer of so-and-so." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

The shame of traitors – men and women - will be immense. Those who thought that their betrayal had been forgotten will find it right there, exposed for the whole world to see on banners raised high held by their own hands!

Their shame will increase even more when they meet with the Prophet of Mercy, the advocate of the sinners on that terrifying and horrible Day. Their crime is of such enormity that it will deprive them of divine mercy and the Prophet's intercession. The Prophet of Islam said:

"God said: There are three whom I will oppose on the Day of Resurrection: a man who gave his word and then betrayed it; a man who sold a free man into slavery and kept the [money](#); and a man who hired someone, benefited from his labor, then did not pay his wages." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

One should steer clear of all the various forms of deceit and deception present in today's society. Cheating is common in examinations, business transactions, and even between spouses and loved ones. Placing a label on domestically-made products to make it seem that it is imported is a kind of fraud. Some people give wrong advice when their council is sought and thus deceive the person who believes he is getting good advice. An employee should do the job for what he is paid for without any deception or cheating. Rulers rig the ballot to [win](#) elections and cheat the whole nation. Cheating between spouses and having extra-marital affairs is widespread in modern society. A Muslim should value himself too highly to be among those who cheat or deceive perchance one might fall in the category of hypocrites about whom the Prophet said:

"There are four characteristics, whoever has all of them is a true hypocrite, and whoever has one of them has one of the qualities of a hypocrite until he gives it up: when he is trusted, he betrays; when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he disputes, he resorts to slander." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim)

Therefore, a Muslim who has true Islamic sensitivities avoids deceit, cheating, treachery, and lying no matter what benefits or profits such activities might bring him, because Islam considers those guilty of such deeds to be hypocrites.



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