

## Chapter Eighteen

### Twenty Units Tarawih

The hadith I have used is by no means to go against the great Imams i.e. Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. There method of Salaah is also correct as it is according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

The hadith quoted are to show that the Fatwas of Imam Abu Hanifa are according to the Sunnah as the Ghair Muqalids object to this.

*Note: The hadith numbers before the hadith indicate the different chains of narrations, hence, each chain will count as a separate hadith.*

#### **Hadith 1-5**

Ibn 'Abbas narrates, "Without doubt the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in the month of Ramadhan would offer 20 units besides the Witr."<sup>1</sup>

#### **Hadith 6**

Yazid ibn Ruman narrates, "In the time of 'Umar in Ramadhan people would offer 23 units."<sup>2</sup>

From this we find that tarawih is 20 units and Witr is 3 units. In total it makes 23 units.

#### **Hadith 7**

Saaib ibn Yazid narrates, "We companions in the time of 'Umar would offer 20 units of prayer and Witr."<sup>3</sup>

#### **Hadith 8**

Ubay ibn Ka'ab narrates, "'Umar gave the order to lead people in tarawih because people fast during the day and cannot recite the Quran

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1 Imam Baghwi. Ibn Abi Shayba, Tabarani in his Kabir, Abd ibn Hameed and Baihaqi.

2 Imam Malik

3 Bayhaqi in Ma'rifa with a Sahih chain.

properly. It is better if you read Quran in the night. Ubay asked, “O leader of the faithful! This is such an act that has never existed. He replied, ‘I know; however, this is a good act.’ So Ubay lead people for 20 units.<sup>4</sup>

From this we find that people offered the tarawih and individually. Secondly that all the companions agreed to this as Ubay ibn Ka’ab lead the companions in the Salaah. The companions prayed them, and none apposed.

Ibn Taymiyah states in his fatawa, “It has been proven that Ubay ibn Ka’ab would lead the people in 20 units of Tarawih throughout the month of Ramadhan following which he would perform three units Witr. Thus, most scholars have taken 20 units to be Sunnah because Ubay ibn Ka’ab performed this amount amidst the Muhajireen and Ansaar and nobody refuted him.”

Even the leader of the Wahabis/Salafi agrees on this issue, yet they are not even taking into consideration the fatawa of their own leader, tut tut, shame on them! They are not Ahle Hadith but Ahle Nafs (people who follow their desires)!

### **Hadith 9**

Abu ‘Abdur Rahman Salma narrates, “ ‘Ali (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) called the reciters in the month of Ramadhan, then ordered a person lead the people in 20 units and ‘Ali (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would lead them in Witr.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Hadith 10**

Abu Al-Husna narrates, “‘Ali (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) ordered a person to lead people in five tarawih, meaning 20 units.”<sup>6</sup>

Tarwih means to rest and we should rest after every four units.

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4 Ibn Mune'e.

5 Bayhaqi in his Sunnan.

6 Baihaqi.

Imam Aazam Abu Hanifa took all ahadith into consideration and also the practices of the companions to decide that 20 units of Tarwih is a Sunnah.

### **Statement of the ulama of the Ummah**

In Tirmidhi, part of Qayam Shehr Ramadhan it states “And some Scholars practise that which have been narrated by ‘Umar and ‘Ali, meaning 20 units of Tarawih and this is what Sufyan Thawri, Ibn Mubarak and Imam Shafi’i say. Imam Shafi’i said, “We found the people of Makkah offering 20 units of Tarawih.”

In ‘Umdatul Qari the explanation of Bukhari it states, “Ibn ‘Abdul Bari states ‘The majority of Scholars state Tarawih is 20 units and this is what the people of Kufa and Imam Shaf’i state and this is correct.” Ubay ibn Ka’ab said, “There are no differences of opinion in the companions on this issue.”

Mulla ‘Ali Qari in the explanation of Naqaya states regarding 20 units of Tarawih, “There is a consensus (agreement) of the Muslims on 20 units of Tarawih because Baihaqi with a Sahih isnad has narrated that the companions and all the Muslims in the time of ‘Umar and ‘Ali would recite 20 units of Tarawih.”

Allama ibn Jahaz Baynami states, “All the companions or on the agreement of 20 units of Tarawih.”

From these statements of great Scholars, we find that it is the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). There is a consensus of the companions. The Muslims since the time of the companions have been praying 20 units of Tarawih.

## Common Sense

Common sense tells us that if you total all the Fardh and Wajib Salaah of the day it equals to 20. Hence to offer only 8 units goes against even common sense.

The companions would recite one Ruku of the Quran in each unit, to the extent the reason why a Ruku in the Qur'aan is known as a Ruku is because 'Umar and 'Uthman and other companions would perform Ruku (bow) at these points and they would complete the Qur'aan on the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Ramadhan. If they were only 8 units in Tarawih then the amount of Rukus in the Quran should be 216, however, there are 557 and with 20 units of Tarawih it works out at 540. The other 17 Rukus can be made up throughout the other days. If one prayed 8 and one Ruku in each Rakat then how you can make up 349 Rukus, I don't know!

The word Tarawih in the plural of Tarawiha which means 'to rest' hence if there were 8 units then there would be one Tarawih, in this situation it would not be called Tarawih as this plural term is said on a minimum of three in the Arabic language.

It has been a consensus of the Ummah since the time of the Prophet to offer 20 units of Tarawih prayers. Even today in the Haramain (i.e. Makkah and Madinah) the Wahabis rule even they still recite 20 units I don't understand why the rest of the Wahabis/Salafis/Ghair Muqalids object to this as all over the world people offer 20 units of Tarawih. The only thing that these people follow is their desire and are always looking for shortcuts and what suits them. Hence, they are not Ahle Hadith but Ahle Nafs (people who follow their nafs)!

## Hadith used by those who assert tarawih to be eight units

Abu Salaama reports that he asked ‘Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) regarding the state of the Messenger of Allah’s (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) Salaah during Ramadhan. She explained, “Narrated Abu Salma bin 'Abdur Rahman:

“How is the prayer of the Messenger of Allah during the month of Ramadan?” She said, “The Prophet of Allah never exceeded eleven units in Ramadhan or in other months; he used to offer four units-- do not ask me about their beauty and length, then four units, do not ask me about their beauty and length, and then three units.” ‘Aisha further said, “I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah! Do you sleep before offering the Witr prayer?’ He replied, ‘O ‘Aisha! My eyes sleep but my heart remains awake!’”<sup>7</sup>

Firstly, this hadith goes against those who say Tarawih is eight units as if you read the hadith carefully you will find the words “...*eleven units in Ramadhan or in other months...*” the question is that is there Tarawih prayers in other months of the year besides Ramadhan? This hadith then is not talking of the tarawih prayers as tarawih prayers are only in the month of Ramadhan.

Secondly this hadith states the Prophet offered three units of Witr, and you say Witr is only one unit!

Thirdly this hadith is explaining the night prayer i.e. Tahadjud prayer. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not offer more than 11 units, of which 8 units are the Tahadjud prayer and the three Witr as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offered his Witr late in the night.

Fourthly the hadith mentions that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) prayed four and then another four. Tarawih prayer is

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<sup>7</sup> Bukhari

offered in two's and not fours. Even those who offer eight units of tarawih offer in two's and not fours.

Fifthly, Imam Bukhari has mentioned this hadith in few places and not mentioned that this is for Tarawih but mentioned in the chapter of Tahajjud or Witr, etc.

Sixthly, the hadith has been narrated by 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), if she mentioned the tarawih prayer to be eight units, why did she not stop 'Umar and 'Ali and the rest of the companions from performing 20 units?

### **Questions To Be Answered!**

The following questions should be answered by the Ghayr Muqallids:

- 1) 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him all) would order people to offer 20 units of Tarawih, did they not know the Sunnah, yet 1400 years later you claim to know the Sunnah better than the companions!
- 2) If the Khulafa-e-Rashideen gave the order of 20 units of Tarawih which according to you is Bid' at (Allah forbid) why did the rest of the companions accept it, was there no-one amongst them who was correct or spoke the truth or who followed the Sunnah and yet 1400 years later you have become people of the truth and followers of the Sunnah!
- 3) If all the companions stayed silent on this issue for some reason why did 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) not say anything when she saw a Bid' at according to you? Was the preaching of the truth not obligatory on her? Does that mean that you have become better or more knowledgeable than 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her)?
- 4) All the Khulafa-e-Rashideen, all the companions and 'Aisha Siddiqa (may Allah be pleased her) herself would offer 20 units of Tarawih. Themselves prayed, or at least saw it taking place in their time

and stayed quiet being on the straight path or where they misguided (Allah forbid). You call the Hanafis misguided and Bid'aties when we offer 20 units Tarawih then what Fatwa will you give to the Khulafa-e-Rashideen, the rest of the companions and 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), answer my question?

5) Those who have offered 20 units of Tarawih from the time of the prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) till today, if they are Bid'aties and you are those who follow the Sunnah then what ruling (Fatwa) will you give to those who offer 20 units of Tarawih in the Haramain? Are they misguided and Bid'aties too like the rest or does a different ruling apply to them?

6) Amongst the followers and the Mujtahid Imams themselves there have been many friends of Allah (Awliya), Mufasirs, Muhadiths and other scholars who offered 20 units of Tarawih, are they all misguided too?

7) If they are misguided and Bid'aties then is it permissible to read their books and take hadiths from their books and are their hadiths Sahih or not as when a person whose actions are incorrect are not Sahih then how can a person's narration be Sahih if his beliefs are incorrect?

8) If according to you all those who offer 20 units Tarawih are misguided, then what is the meaning of this hadith: 'Follow the majority group of Muslims'?

Lastly to conclude I would like to mention what 'Abdul 'Azeez bin Baaz one the Wahabi leaders in his book 'Concerning Tarweeh', he writes, *"And if one were to pray twenty three rak'ah, including the Witr, as did 'Umar and other Sahaabah in various nights of Ramadaan, then there is no harm in this, for there is much flexibility in this matter. It has been reported in the hadeeth of 'Aai'shah that 'Umar and other Sahaabah prayed eleven rak'ah including the witr and other reports that he prayed twenty-three. It has been reported that he ordered the Sahabi whom he appointed to lead the night prayer to pray eleven*

*rak'ah, as he has been reported that he ordered him to pray twenty-three. This confirms the fact that there is much flexibility in this matter, as does his saying, "The night prayer is in pairs of two." 8*

In the same book on page 15 he writes, "As for the authenticity of praying twenty-three rak'ah, it was done by 'Umar and other Sahaabah, so there is no fault in it. In fact, it is from the Sunnah, the Sunnah of the rightly guided successors."

He also mentions on page 14 of the same book that there is flexibility that one can pray 23 units. So, when one of their respected leaders has no problem with it and gives permission then what fatwa would you give him? Misguided or not, and if not then why not?

Hope you can answer every question with justice from all your scholars, I await your reply. Show me one Sahih Hadith from Bukhari, Muslim or even the Sahih Sitta (Six famous books of Hadith) which is Maroof<sup>9</sup> or which the Prophet prayed or gave the command of 8 units of tarawih, and the word tarawih should be mentioned.

### ***Salaat al-Tarawih during the Period of the Rightly-Guided Khulafa*** **(TWENTY RAKAATS)**

Yazeed Ibn Ruman (*radhiallahu anhu*) narrates that during the *khilaafah* of Hazrat Umar (*radhiallahu anhu*) the Sahaabah used to perform twenty *rakaats tarawih* and three *rakaats witr salaah* (with jamaat). [*Muwwatta Imaam Maalik*, chapter concerning standing in *salaah* during *Ramadhaan*]

During the *khilafah* of Abu Bakr (*radhiallahu anhu*) tarawih with *jamaat* was not in vogue. The practice of performing twenty rakaats with jamaat in every night of *Ramadhaan* and the completion of the entire Quraan began only during the *khilaafat* of 'Umar (may Allah be

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8 Concerning Tarweeh. p 11.



pleased with him). All the Sahaabah present had agreed upon this practice. From then onwards including the Khilafah of both Hazrat Uthmaan and Hazrat Ali (*radhiallahu anhu*) up to this day the Muslim *Ummah* (at large) has followed this practice.

### Question & Answers

**Question:** Is it not a fact that those who offer eight units for the Tarawi Prayer have authentic evidence backing them that this is the correct number of units for the tarawi salah, because it is narrated by Imam Malik narrates from Sa'ib ibn Yazeed that 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered Ubai ibn Ka'ab and Tamim Dari to lead then in eleven rakats for the Tarahwi prayer (may Allah be pleased with them all). From this is it not evident that 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered 8 units (rakahts) and three units for Witr totaling eleven so does this not mean that those who pray twenty units are incorrect because if this was the case why did 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) order not twenty-three instead of eleven?

**Answer:** There are numerous answers to this question firstly this contradicts the claim of those who claim that number of units of the Tarawi prayer is eight because in reality these claimants have provided a narration from which it is evident that there are also three extra units adding to the eight units hence totaling eleven so if this is the case why do they contradict the Hadith used as their own evidence because it is a known fact that they only pray one unit extra for 3 Witr Salah bringing the total of prayer to nine so in reality they are accepting part of the hadith and refuting the remaining part.

Secondly in the chain of narration to this Hadith there is a narrator called Muhammad Yusuf and his narration is contradicting as in Muatta Imam Malik it is narrated eleven units, in Imam Muhammad ibn Nasr Marwazi it is narrated 13 units, Mudhadith Adur-Razaq it is narrated 21 rakahs and if you look in Fatahul Bari (commentary to al-Bakahri vol 4

printed in Egypt) it is the same so in reality his narrations are not trust worthy (motabar) It is a fact that we must ponder over that why are such narration's used to justify our actions. .

Finally, I would like to point out that in the beginning, at the time of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) he ordered eight units after some time passed he raised the number of units to twelve and finally to twenty which have been practiced since. Hence, in the Muatta of Imam Malik there is a lengthy hadith narrated the hadith ends as follows; "The reciter would recite Surah al-Baqarah in eight units of the Tarawi prayer, then when the units increased to eleven the people found the increase easy to follow..." Mulla 'Ali Qari in the commentary to this hadith he has stated in Mirqat; (commentary to Mishkat) "Yes the order of twenty units is proven from the time of 'Umar, as in the Muatta it is narrated as eleven units and eight are also mentioned from 'Umar's (may Allah be pleased with him) time hence these two narrations have been combined bringing the total to twenty units and this is from the time of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) hence it has been and remains the tradition of the Muslims". So, in reality it is evident that the companions and Muslim Ummah overall has been practicing upon praying twenty units for the Tarawih prayers.

**Question:** You have quoted that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah blessing be upon him) would offer twenty units for the Tarawih prayer why did 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) order eight, does that mean he went against the Sunnah?

**Answer:** The Messenger of Allah (May Allah blessing be upon him) would offer twenty units but the companions were not commanded to offer eight or twenty units they were simply told to pray during the nights of Ramadan, also at the time of Messenger of Allah (may Allah blessing be upon him) the Tarawih Salaah was not offered as a congregational prayer because there was a chance that due to it being offered as a congregation prayer it might have been ordained obligatory as those actions which the Messenger of Allah (may Allah blessing be upon him) would practice without fail would become obligatory by the

will of Allah. So it was due to this the Messenger of Allah (may Allah blessing be upon him) offered his Tarawih prayer in private and this could be the reason why the blessed companions did not know the exact numbers offered for the Tarawih Salaah at that time whereas at the time of ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) due to his Ititihad (proof of reasoning) he first ordered eight then twelve but when he had gathered enough evidence regarding the number of units to be twenty then he ordered accordingly. Also, I would like to point out the availability of Hadith material was not abundant and widespread as we have in the present day & age each Hadith was collected with great effort & time and would only be applied after greater research not like the present day where we end up quoting hadith without the necessary research, May Allah guide us all.

**Question:** In al-Bukhari it is stated that; Abu Salma (may Allah be pleased with him) asked Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) “How many units did the Messenger of Allah (may Allah blessing be upon him) offered for the Tarawi prayer in Ramadan?” She replied; “The Messenger of Allah (May Allah blessing be upon him) offered no more than eleven units whether it was Ramadan or not”. Does this not prove that Messenger of Allah (May Messenger of Allah (May Allah blessing be upon him) would offer eleven units for His Tarawi prayer?

**Answer:** There are two parts to this question firstly Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) is referring to the Messenger Tahajjad (night prayer) and not to Tarawih prayer and the proof of this is within the Hadith text because it states “...during Ramadan or other than Ramadan” and tarawih prayer is pacifically during the month of Ramadan and for this reason Iman Tirmidhi has quoted this Hadith in the chapter of the Night prayer (Tahajjad Salah) and not in the chapter regarding Tarawih prayer. And the Hadith which have been quoted in your question ends by stating that Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) has said; “O Messenger of Allah Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) why is it that you sleep before offering the Witr prayer?” The blessed Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) replied; “O Aisha my eyes sleep not my

heart”. So, in reality this further proves that this was the night prayer not the Tarawih prayer because the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offered it after awakening from sleep. The second part to this question deserves contemplation because if this Hadith was regarding the Tarawih prayer numbering eight and three Witr prayer then why did such a prominent companion ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) order twenty and even further why did all the companions accept this decision, because surely if it was against the Sunnah and was an evil innovation (bidat) they would have opposed his decision arguing that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offered eight then why are you ordering twenty but this was not the case even Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) remained silent and agreed with this decision, finally while pondering over this fact I would like to point out that we must remember to understand the Hadith in its true concept and not be misguided by our own desires.

My question is split into two parts:

- i) “Did the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offer 8 units all the time?”
- ii) “Did the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) do this until he passed away?”

Hope you can prove these two questions and when doing so I do not want to hear the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) 8 units etc. but I want Sahih hadith that clearly (no meanings or interpretations) states the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offered 8 units all the time and that he did this action until he passed away. Good luck!