

A series of questions answered by Shaykh Waṣī Allāh ‘Abbās [الله ﺩ ﻓﻄﻬﻪ].

4. Is 20 Rak‘āt tarāwīḥ prayed in Makkah? Please answer In light of ‘Aḥādīth.

Answer: The Ḥadīth of Makkah is that in Makkah 20 Rak‘āt Ṣalāh is only in the Ḥaram. Only!! In all the other Masājid of Makkah, we have our own masjid. Our children Al-ḥamd li Allāh are all Ḥuffāz and they lead tarāwīḥ. In other Masājid there are only 8+3=11 Rak‘āt. That's it. In all of the other Masājid. All the Masājid in Riyāḍ. If someone leads 20 Rak‘āt then that's upon them but I haven't heard of any.

So why is 20 Rak‘āt prayed only in Makkah? You will know of a man who was called King ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. He decided to impose the sunnah so he sought advice from the Scholars. Look, these scholars were Ḥanbalī. We have discovered that amongst the Mālikī's, Shafi'ī's, Ḥanafī's and Ḥanbalī's the Ḥanbalī's have the least partisanship. When we were reading their books it is mentioned that facing the sun or the moon whilst urinating is not permissible. Our teacher was a very famous Ḥanbalī. He said this point is against the Ḥadīth. This is nowhere in the ‘Aḥādīth. Just facing the Qiblah whilst urinating is not permissible. He rejected it. Even though this was a book of his own Madhhab. So the point is that King ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said 8 Rak‘āt should be prayed. But those scholars gave a fatwā with wisdom and said, " No, this is an international area and people from all over the world come. So some wish to pray 20, some wish to pray 10. What you should do is have two Imāms. One Imām should pray 10 Rak‘āt and then other should pray 10 Rak‘āt. Whoever wishes to pray ten can pray and then pray witr and then go. And whoever wishes to pray 20 or 50 then they can." This is an issue of wisdom in relation with the Ḥaramayn Sharīfayn and there is nothing wrong with this. So the Imām himself, if you were to see on the television then you would find that one Imām never leads 20 Rak‘āt. He leads and then goes away. This is what happens generally. But the Sunnah way of which we are certain upon is that tarāwīḥ is 8+3=11. And our beloved Messenger ﷺ never read more. And the order of ‘Umar (عنه ﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﺭﻛﻮﻩ) to pray 20 is not authentic. When he told ‘Ubayy ibn Ka‘b in Masjid Nabawī to pray so he ordered him to pray 8 Rak‘āt in the Prophet's ﷺ masjid. Sometimes ‘Ubayy ibn Ka‘b would pray 36 Rak‘āt. This is proven. So from this we understand that this can be done if your health is good, but if you just pray 11 and go then In Shā’ Allāh you will have attained the virtue of fulfilling the sunnah and the virtue. But if someone wishes to pray more then do not believe that only 20 is the sunnah. I can't remember, but I myself have sometimes prayed more and prayed less. But I have never prayed 20. I am saying this with certainty that I purposely have never prayed 20. I have either done more or less. So we are certain upon this that it is permissible that you read 8 and then go home read more. There is nothing wrong with this. But to believe that less than 20 is not permissible then this belief is against the sunnah of our beloved Messenger ﷺ

Taken from Sawaal o Jawaab on the 10th of July 2011. (<https://youtu.be/vMJxPc-kqyo>)

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