

20 Raka'at Taraweeh

In the light of Hadith ***

Under the guidance of:

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The excellence of Ramadhan and the command of Taraweeh

**By Mufti Ziauddin Naqshbandi Qadri,
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Allah SWT has selected Ramadhan for the revelation of His Word, the Holy Quran. He (SWT) has also shown His preference for this month over other months by mentioning its name in the Holy Quran.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى
وَالْفُرْقَانِ -

The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). Surah Al Baqarah (2:185)

With the coming of the month of Ramadhan, Allah SWT floods the world with His Mercy. The doors of the sky are opened. The doors of Jannah are opened. Everywhere, there is an expression of His Mercy. One of the blessed attributes of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) is His generosity and benevolence. In the month of Ramadhan, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) became even more generous. There is a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْوَدَ النَّاسِ
وَكَانَ أَحْوَدُ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ -

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas (May Allah be well pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was the most generous of all and His generosity would be at its highest point in the month of Ramadhan, when Jibrail (peace be upon him) would come to His presence. (Sahih Bukhari, Vol 1, Pg No: 3)

Imam Baihaqi has recorded a Hadith in his Shu'ab Ul Iman:

عن ابن عباس ، قال كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا دخل

شهر رمضان أطلق كل أسير ، وأعطى كل سائل -

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas (May Allah be well pleased with him), he said: When the month of Ramadhan came, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) released every prisoner and would give to everyone who asked. (Baihaqi, Shu'ab Ul Iman, Hadith No: 3475))

Allah SWT has given absolute authority to the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) to decide the rules and the reward for following them. Since He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) is all the more generous in Ramadhan, as per His habit, He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) decreed special rules for Ramadhan and gave glad tidings of special reward in this month.

The reward of an optional (Nafil) is equal to that of an obligation (Fardh), the reward of a Fardh is increased seventy-fold; the reward for providing means to a fasting person to break the fast is a drink from the Houz e Kouthar; the promise to increase a Momin's sustenance (Rizq); the one in itikaaf is rewarded for every virtuous act etc.

The special reward for these virtuous acts of Ramadhan has been mentioned in the Hadith only. No verse of the Holy Quran mentions this. This is only the generosity of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and the result of His benevolence. A special virtuous act in Ramadhan is Taraweeh.

The excellence of Taraweeh

There is a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Jame Tirmidhi:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ
إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ -

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (May Allah be well pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: Whoever stands in prayer (Salaat) in the nights of Ramadhan in state of Iman and sincerity (Ikhlaas), all his past sins are forgiven.

(Sahih Bukhari, Vol 1, Hadith No: 1902; Sahih Muslim, Kitab Us Salaatil Musafireen; Jame' Tirmidhi, Hadith No: 619; Sunan Abu Dawood, Hadith No: 1165; Sunan Nasai, Hadith No: 2174, Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith No: 1316, Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 362)

The command for Salaat Ul Taraweeh

The Salaat Ul Taraweeh is a "Sunnat e Moukkada" i.e. a compulsory Sunnah for all men and women. To offer this Salaat in a Masjid with a congregation (Jama'at) is a Fardh-e-Kifayah for men. If all the people of a locality leave the congregation, all of

them will be held accountable for leaving a Sunnah. For women, it is preferable to offer this Salaat in their own houses without a congregation. As given in Durre Mukhtar, Vol 1, Pg No: 520:

(التراويح سنة) مؤكدة.....(للرجال والنساء).....(والجماعة فيها)
سنة على الكفاية)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

There is a Hadith in Sunan Baihaqui, Imam Tabarani's Mo'jam Kabeer, Mo'jam Ausat, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Musnad Abd bin Humaid, Majma Uz Zawaaid and Zujajatul Masabeeh:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ : كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي فِي شَهْرِ
رَمَضَانَ بَعِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً وَالْوَيْثَرَ.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and Witr.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4799; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 286, Hadith No: 13; Al Matalib Ul A'aliya Li Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Hadith No: 642; Mo'jam Ausat Tabarani, Hadith No: 5598/810; Mo'jam Kabeer Tabarani, Hadith No: 11934; Majma Uz Zawaaid, Vol 2, Pg No: 172; Musnad Abd bin Humaid, Hadith No: 655; Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 366, Khulasatul Ahkaam Lin Nawawi, Vol 1, Pg No: 579, Hadith No: 1971; Al Talkhees Li Ibn Hajar Makki, Vol 2, Pg No: 52, Hadith No: 540; Fath Ul Bari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Al Fiqha Tul Islami wa Adilla, Subul Ul Huda War Rashad, Vol 8, Pg No: 267)

Evidence of 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the era of Hadhrat Umar Al Farooq

عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ رُوْمَانَ قَالَ : كَانَ النَّاسُ يَقُومُونَ فِي زَمَانِ عُمَرَ بْنِ
الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي رَمَضَانَ بِثَلَاثٍ وَعِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً.

It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Yazid bin Rooman R.A. that he said in the era of Hadhrat Umar Bin Khattab (May Allah be well pleased with him) people used to offer 23 raka'at (20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 Witr).

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqi, Hadith No: 4802, Shu'abul Iman, Hadith No: 3123; Ma'arifatus Sunan wal Aathaar Lil Baihaqi, Hadith No: 1443; Muwatta Imam Malik, Pg No: 40, Hadith No: 233; Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 366, Khulasatul Ahkaam Lin Nawawi, Vol 1, Pg No: 576/577, Hadith No: 1962, Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Bab Us Salaat Ut Taraweeh; Mirqatul Mafateeh Sharh Mishkatul Masabeeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Fath UL Qadeer, Kitab Us Salaat; Al Bah Raiq, Sharh Kanz Ud Daqaaiq, Bab Salaat Ut Taraweeh; Al Kafi li Ibn Qudamah, Kitab Us Salaat, Al Mausuatul Fiqhiya Al Kuwaitaiya, Vol 27, Pg No: 141/142 (Published in 1427 Hijri), Bidayatul Mujtahid, Vol 1, Pg No: 210)

Allama Badruddin Aini (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in the interpretation of this Hadith:

قال ابن عبد البر هذا محمول على أن الثلاث للوتر –

Translation: Allama Ibn e Abdul Barr (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) said: "23 raka'at mean 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 of Witr."

(Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ut Taraweeh, Vol 8, Pg No: 245)

Hadhrat Umar's (May Allah be well pleased with him) command for offering 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

There is a Hadith in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba:

عن يحيى بن سعيد أن عمر بن الخطاب أمر رجلا يصلي بهم عشرين
ركعة.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Yahya bin Sae'ed that Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) commanded a person to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Chapter No: 227, Hadith No: 3; Tuhfatul Ahwazi, Bab Ma Ja'a FI Shahri Ramadhan)

The teacher of Imam Bukhari's teacher Imam Abdur Razzaq writes in his Musannaf:

عن السائب بن يزيد قال : كنا ننصرف من القيام على عهد عمر وقد
دنا فروع الفجر ، وكان القيام على عهد عمر ثلاثة وعشرين ركعة.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Saib bin yazid (May Allah be well pleased with him) says: In the era of Umar, we used to return from the night's prayers when the time for Fajr would be near and in the era of Hadhrat Umar

(May Allah be well pleased with him), the Salaat of the night would be 23 raka'at (i.e. 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 of Witr)

Apart from 20 raka'at of Taraweeh, this Hadith establishes that long raka'at and intense recitation of the Holy Quran was the habit of the Sahabah.

There is a Hadith in Kanzul Ummal in The Book of Salaat:

عن أبي بن كعب أن عمر بن الخطاب أمره أن يصلي بالليل في رمضان
فقال: إن الناس يصومون النهار ولا يحسنون أن يقرأوا فلو قرأت
عليهم بالليل، فقال: يا أمير المؤمنين هذا شيء لم يكن، فقال: قد
علمت ولكنه حسن فصلى بهم عشرين ركعة. (ابن منيع).

Translation: Hadhrat Ubai bin Ka'ab (May Allah be well pleased with him) narrates that Hadhrat Umar commanded him to lead the Salaat Ul Taraweeh in Ramadhan saying, people fast in the day, because of which they cannot recite the Holy Quran properly, you please recite the Holy Quran in Taraweeh.

He requested: "O Commander of the faithful, this is such an action which has not been performed in congregation till now. He (i.e. Hadhrat Umar) said: Yes, I know that, but this is better." Thus, Hadhrat Ubai bin Ka'ab (May Allah be well pleased with him) led the Salaat. (Kanzul Ummal, Hadith No: 23471)

There is a Hadith in Imam Baihaqui's Sunan e Sughra and Ma'arifus Sunan:

عن السائب بن يزيد ، قال : كنا نقوم في زمان عُمر بن الخطاب رضي
الله عنه بعشرين ركعة والوتر -

Translation: "Hadhrat Saib bin Yazid (May Allah be well pleased with him) says: In the era of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him), we used to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 raka'at of Witr.

(Sunan Sughra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 833; Ma'arifatus Sunan Wal Aathaar Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 14431 Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 366; Miaqatul Mafateeh Sharh Mishkaat Ul Masabeeh, Kitab Us Salaat; Tuhfatul Ahwazi, Bab Mo'jam Ausat Ja'a Fi Qiyami Shahr Ramadhan, Fath Ul Qadeer, Kitab Us Salaat, Fasl Fi Qiyam Shahr Ramadhan)

عَنِ السَّائِبِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ قَالَ : كَانُوا يَقُومُونَ عَلَى عَهْدِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ بَعِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً قَالَ وَكَانُوا يَقْرَأُونَ
بِالْمِئِينَ ، وَكَانُوا يَتَوَكَّؤْنَ عَلَى عُصِيَّتِهِمْ فِي عَهْدِ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ رَضِيَ
اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْقِيَامِ.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Saib bin Yazid (May Allah be well pleased with him) that in the era of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) people used to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh. People used to recite 100 verses and in the era of Hadhrat Usman (May Allah be well pleased with him), they would support themselves with a staff because of the long raka'at.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4801; Umdatul Qari, Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ul Adhaan, Mirqatul Mafateeh Sharh Mishkatul Masabeeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Qiyami Sharhi Ramadhan)

Imam Nawawi (May Allah be well pleased with him) has mentioned this Hadith as rigorously-authenticated (Sahih) in his book "Khulasatul Ahkam"

رَوَاهُ الْبَيْهَقِيُّ بِإِسْنَادٍ صَحِيحٍ .

Translation: Imam Baihaqui has narrated this Hadith using a well-authenticated (Sahih) chain of narration.

(Khulasatul Ahkaam, Kitab Us Salaat, Hadith No: 1961)

Mulla Ali Qari (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has also mentioned this judgment of Imam Nawawi in "Mirqatul Mifateeh", Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Qiyami shahri Ramadhan."

(Mirqatul Mafateeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Qiyami shahri Ramadhan)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh, the command of Hadhrat Ali

There is a Hadith in Imam Baihaqui's Sunan Kubra and in Umdatul Qari, Sharh Sahih Bukhari (A commentary on Sahih Bukhari):

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ السَّلْمِيِّ عَنْ عَلِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ : دَعَا
الْقُرَّاءَ فِي رَمَضَانَ ، فَأَمَرَ مِنْهُمْ رَجُلًا يُصَلِّي بِالنَّاسِ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً

Hadhrot Abu Abdur Rahman As Sulami narrates on the authority of Hadhrot Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him), that in the month of Ramadhan, he (i.e. Hadhrot Ali)

summoned the Huffaz (those who memorized the Holy Quran) and commanded one Hafidh of them to lead others for 20 raka'at of Taraweeh.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4804, Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 366, Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ul Tahajjud, Tuhfatul Ahwazi, Bab Maa Jaa fi qiyami shahri Ramadhan)

Command to offer Taraweeh with 5 breaks

There is Hadith in Imam Baihaqui's Sunan Kubra, in Musannaf Abdur Razzaq, in Kanzul Ummal etc.

عَنْ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ : أَنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَمَرَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ بِالنَّاسِ خَمْسَ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abul Husna (May Allah be well pleased with him) that Hadhrat Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him) commanded a Hafidh to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh with 5 breaks.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4805; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, bab 227, Hadith No: 2; Kanzul Ummal, Kitab Us Salaat, Hadith No: 23474, Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ut Taraweeh, Tuhfatul Ahwazi, bab Ma jaa fi Qiyami shahri Ramadhan)

In Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba there is a similar Hadith on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Husna 's (May Allah be well pleased with him) son.

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Ibn E Abul Husna that Hadhrat Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him) commanded a person to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 163, Hadith No: 7681)

It has been established by these highly authoritative and reliable books of Hadith that the First Four Caliphs not only offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh themselves but also commanded others to do so. In Islamic law, the status of the caliphs is such that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has commanded the Ummah to adopt their Sunnah.

عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا
بِالنَّوَاجِدِ-

Translation: Bind yourself to My Sunnah and to the Sunnah of My Caliphs and hold fast to it.

(Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol 1, Pg No: 5, Hadith No: 42)

Also, other Sahabah and the Tabie'en (the successors and the students) also offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh. The Hadith about this follow:

Other Sahabah also offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

20 raka'at Taraweeh in Medina Al Munawwarah:

There is a Hadith in Musannaf Ibn e Abi Shaiba

عن عبد العزيز بن رفيع قال كان أبي بن كعب يصلي بالناس في
رمضان بالمدينة عشرين ركعة ويوتر بثلاث.

Translation: Hadhrat Abdul Aziz bin Raf'ee says: Hadhrat Ubai bin Ka'ab (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the month of Ramadhan and used to lead the people in 3 raka'at of Witr.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, bab 227, Hadith No: 5, Tuhfatul Ahwazi, bab Ma jaa fi Qiyami shahri Ramadhan)

The practice of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (May Allah be well pleased with him)

In Umdatul Qari, Allama Badruddin Aini has narrated a Hadith on the authority of Imam A'amash, in which it is clearly reported that Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud used to lead people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh.

عن الأعمش عن زيد بن وهب قال كان عبد الله بن مسعود يصلي لنا
في شهر رمضان فينصرف وعليه ليل قال الأعمش كان يصلي عشرين
ركعة ويوتر بثلاث—

Translation: Hadhrat A'amash narrates on the authority of Hadhrat Zaid bin Wahb (May Allah be well pleased with him) that he said, In the month of Ramadhan, Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead us and Imam A'amash narrates that he used to lead people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 raka'at of Witr.

(Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ut Taraweeh, Vol 8, Pg No: 246)

The Sahabah's consensus on 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

Imam Kasani Hanafi (May Allah be well pleased with him) writes about 20 raka'at of Taraweeh:

وَالصَّحِيحُ قَوْلُ الْعَامَّةِ لِمَا رُوِيَ أَنَّ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ جَمَعَ أَصْحَابَ
رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ عَلَى أَبِي بَنِي كَعْبٍ
فَصَلَّى بِهِمْ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً ، وَلَمْ يُنْكَرْ أَحَدٌ عَلَيْهِ فَيَكُونُ
إِجْمَاعًا مِنْهُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ .

Translation: The authentic opinion is of the majority of scholars, because Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) gathered the Sahabah under the leadership (Imamat) of Hadhrat Ubai bin Kaab (May Allah be well pleased with him), and he lead them in 20 raka'at every night. None of the Sahabah denied this (or objected to this) and this way, the consensus of the Sahabah on this issue was achieved.

(Badai Us Sanai, Vol 1, Kitab Us Salaat, Pg No: 644)

Allama Badruddin Aini (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) who authored Umdatul Qari, a commentary and explanation on Sahih Bukhari writes:

واحتج أصحابنا والشافعية والحنابلة بما رواه البيهقي بإسناد صحيح عن
السائب بن يزيد الصحابي قال كانوا يقومون على عهد عمر رضي الله
تعالى عنه بعشرين ركعة وعلى عهد عثمان وعلي رضي الله تعالى عنهما
مثله—

Translation: The Hanafi, Shafi'e and the Hambali Imams have accepted (for 20 raka'at of Taraweeh) that Hadith as evidence which was recorded and narrated by Imam Baihaqui with his own rigorously authenticated (Sahih) chain of narration, which he narrates on the authority of Hadhrat Saib bin Yazid (May Allah be well pleased with him).

The Sahabi narrates that the Sahabah and the Tabie'en offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the time of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him), Hadhrat Uthman (May Allah be well pleased with him), Hadhrat Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him).

(Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Vol , Kitab Ul Adhaan, Pg No: 459)

وفي المغني عن علي أنه أمر رجلا أن يصلي بهم في رمضان بعشرين
ركعة قال وهذا كالإجماع-

Translation: And in Mughni there is a Hadith of Hadhrat Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him) that he (Hadhrat Ali) commanded a person to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in Ramadhan. In the explanation of this Hadith, Imam Aini (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes: This practice of the Sahabah is like their agreement.

(Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Ul Tahajjud)

Hadhrat Mulla Ali Qari (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in his commentary on Mishkaat Sharh Mirqaat:

لكن أجمع الصحابة على أن التراويح عشرون ركعة -

Translation: Nevertheless, the Sahabah have agreed that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at.

(Mirqat Ul Mafateeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Qiyami Shahri Ramadhan)

It has been mentioned in Al Fiqh Al Islami Wal Adilla:

التراويح سنة.....وعدد ركعاتها عشرون ركعة، تؤدي ركعتين
ركعتين، يجلس بينهما، مقدار الترويحة، بعشر تسليمات ثم يوتر بعدها،
ولا يصلى الوتر بجماعة في غير شهر رمضان. ودليلهم على العدد فعل
عمر رضي الله عنه كما أخرج مسلم في صحيحه، حيث إنه جمع الناس
أخيراً على هذا العدد في المسجد، ووافقه الصحابة على ذلك، ولم
يخالفهم بعد الراشدين مخالف

Translation: Taraweeh is a Sunnah and there are 20 raka'at of it, which are offered in units of 2 raka'at. Witr will be offered after that. Apart from Ramadhan, Witr cannot be offered as a congregational prayer.

The practice of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) is the evidence of 20 raka'at of Taraweeh as Imam Muslim has clarified this in his Sahih that Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) gathered the Sahabah in the Masjid e Nabvi (The Prophet's Masjid) to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and the Sahabah also agreed with him on this and even after the Caliphs, nobody objected to this.

(Al Fiqh Al Islami Wal Adilla, Al Juz Ath Thaani, Al Fasli Thamin, An Nawafil Indal Hanafiyya)

Hadhrt Imam Sarkhisi Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Mabsut:

وَفِي اتِّفَاقِ الصَّحَابَةِ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ عَلَى تَقْدِيرِ التَّرَاوِيحِ بَعِشْرِينَ
رَكْعَةً دَلِيلٌ عَلَى أَنَّ الْوَاجِبَاتِ فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً وَذَلِكَ لَا
يَكُونُ إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ الْوِثْرُ وَاجِبًا -

Translation: The consensus of the Sahabah on 20 raka'at of Taraweeh is the evidence that all the Fardh and Wajib Salaat in the day and night add up to 20 and this number will be completed when Witr is considered as Wajib.

(Mabsut Sarkhisi, Kitab Us Salaat, Al Faslil Awwal Fi Adadir raka'at)

Allama Ibn e Taimiya writes in his Majmu Al Fatawa:

قَدْ ثَبَتَ أَنَّ أَبِي بِنَ كَعْبٍ كَانَ يَقُومُ بِالنَّاسِ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً فِي قِيَامِ
رَمَضَانَ وَيُوتِرُ بِثَلَاثٍ . فَرَأَى كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْعُلَمَاءِ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ هُوَ السُّنَّةُ ؛ لِأَنَّهُ
أَقَامَهُ بَيْنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَلَمْ يُنْكِرْهُ مُنْكَرٌ .

Translation: This has been well established that Hadhrt Ubai bin Kaa'ab (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the month of Ramadhan and used to lead them separately in 3 raka'at of Witr. Thus, many of the Ulema say that this is a Sunnah because Hadhrt Ubai bin Kaab did this in the presence of many of the Muhajirin (those who migrated from Macca to Madina) and Ansar (The natives of Madina) Sahabah and none of them opposed or denied this.

(Majmu Al Fatawa, Vol 23, Pg No: 112)

Allama Dusuqi writes:

وَقَالَ الدُّسُوقِيُّ وَغَيْرُهُ : كَانَ عَلَيْهِ عَمَلُ الصَّحَابَةِ وَالتَّابِعِينَ -

Translation: The Sahabah and the Tabie'n have offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh."

(Al Mausuatul Fiqhiya Al Kuwaitiya, Published by the Government of Kuwait, Vol 27, Pg No: 141/142)

The Tabi'en too offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

عن عبد الله بن قيس عن شتير بن شكل أنه كان يصلي في رمضان
عشرين ركعة والوتر.

Translation: Hadhrat Abdullah bin Qais narrates on the authority of Hadhrat Shaitar Bin Shakal that he used to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the month of Ramadhan.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4803, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 1; Mirqatul Mafateeh Sharh Mishkatul Masabeeh, Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Qiyami Shahri Ramadhan)

Allama Ibn e Hajr bin Asqalani rh writes in Tahzeeb Ut Tahzeeb, about Hadhrat Shaitar bin Shakal (May Allah be well pleased with him):

وكان ثقة-

Translation: He is reliable and Imam Nasai (Author of Sunan Nasai, which is included in Sihah Sittah-The six most authentic books of Hadith) has also declared him as reliable.

(At Tahzeeb Ut Tahzeeb, Vol 4, Pg No: 273/274)

Hadhrat Suwaid BinGhafflah (May Allah be well pleased with him) offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh)

Imam Baihaqui writes in Sunan E Kubra that Hadhrat Suwaid bin Ghafflah (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh:

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو الْخَصِيبِ قَالَ : كَانَ يُؤْمِنَا سُوَيْدُ بْنُ غَفَلَةَ فِي رَمَضَانَ
فِيصَلِي خَمْسَ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً.

Translation: Hadhrat Abul Khusaib (May Allah be well pleased with him) says: Hadhrat Suwaid (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead us in prayer and used to lead us in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh with 5 breaks.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Kitab Us Salaat, Hadith No: 4803)

Harith (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

عن الحارث أنه كان يؤم الناس في رمضان بالليل بعشرين ركعة ويوتر بثلاث ويقنت قبل الركوع.

Translation: Hadhrat Harith (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 raka'at of Witr and used to recite Dua e Qunoot before going into the ruku.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 6)

Hadhrat Abul Bukhturi (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the people in 20 rakkats of Taraweeh.

عن أبي البختري أنه كان يصلي خمس ترويحات في رمضان ويوتر بثلاث.

Translation: Hadhrat Abul Bukhturi (May Allah be well pleased with him) says that in Ramadhan, he used to lead the people in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh with 5 breaks and 3 raka'at of Witr.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 7)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh – Evidence by Hadhrat Ata (May Allah be well pleased with him)

عن عطاء قال أدركت الناس وهم يصلون ثلاثا وعشرين ركعة بالوتر.

It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Ata (May Allah be well pleased with him) says that, I saw the people offering 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and 3 raka'at of Witr.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 9, Fathul Bari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Bab Salat Ut Taraweeh)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh – Statement by Ibn e Abi Mulaika (May Allah shower His Mercy on him)

عن نافع عن عمر قال كان ابن أبي مليكة يصلي بنا في رمضان عشرين

رکعة ویقرأ بسورة الملائكة في رکعة.

Translation: Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar's (May Allah be well pleased with him) servant Hadhrat Nafe (May Allah be well pleased with him) narrates that Ibn e Mulaika used to lead us in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and used to recite Surah Fatir in 1 raka'at.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 4)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh - Practice of Hadhrat Ali bin Rabee'ah (May Allah shower His Mercy on him)

It is given in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba:

عن سعيد بن عبيد أن علي بن ربيعة كان يصلي بهم في رمضان خمس
ترويحات ويوتر بثلاث.

Translation: Hadhrat Sa'eed bin Ubaid (May Allah be well pleased with him) narrates that, in the month of Ramadhan, Hadhrat Ali Bin Rabee'ah (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead the Muslims in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh with 5 breaks.

(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 285, Bab 227, Hadith No: 11)

The teacher of Imam Bukhari's (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) teachers, the Hadith-Expert Hadhrat Abdul Razzaq (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in his Musannaf with his own chain of authority:

عبد الرزاق عن الثوري عن إسماعيل بن عبد الملك قال : كان سعيد
بن جبير يؤمنا في شهر رمضان ، فكان يقرأ بالقراءتين جميعا ، يقرأ ليلة
بقراءة ابن مسعود، فكان يصلي خمس ترويحات -

Translation: Imam Abdul Razaq (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Sufyan Sauri (May Allah be well pleased with him) and he has narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Ismail bin Abdul Malik that Hadhrat Saeed bin Jubair (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to lead us in Salaat in the month of Ramadhan and used to recite the Quran in 2 different ways, one night according to the method of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (May Allah be well pleased with him) and would lead us in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh with 5 breaks.

(Musannaf Abdur Razzaq, Hadith No: 7749)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh - From the time of Hadhrat Muhammad Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) to the time of the Muhaddith-e-Deccan Hadhrat Syed Abdullah:

The above mentioned Hadith, sayings of the Sahabah, sayings of the Imams and the clarifications of the Jurisprudents (Fuqaha-Islamic Law experts) and the Hadith-Experts (Muhaddithin) and other elders of the Ummah make it crystal clear that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at only. The names of the above mentioned Fuqaha and the Muhaddithin mentioned in the book are being mentioned here in chronological order, so, that it becomes all them more clear that in every age and era Taraweeh has been offered as 20 raka'at only and it was never discontinued.

Hadhrat Imam e Azam (May Allah be well pleased with him) 150 Hijri

Imam Abdur Razzaq San'ani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 211 Hijri

Imam Ibn e Abi Shayba (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 235 Hijri

Imam Ahmed Bin Hambal (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 241 Hijri

Imam Nasai (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 303 Hijri

Imam Tabarani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 360 Hijri

Imam Baihaqui Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 458 Hijri

The interpreter of Abul Waleed Maliki (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 472 Hijri

Imam Sarkhisi Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 483 Hijri

Imam Qazi Ayaz Maliki (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 544 Hijri

Hadhrat Ghouse Azam (May Allah be well pleased with him) 561 Hijri

Imam Kasani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 587 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Rushd Maliki (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 595 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Qudama Hambali (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 620 Hijri

Imam Sharfuddin Nawawi Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 676 Hijri

Abul Baraka'at Abdullah bin Ahmed Nasafi Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 710 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Taimiya 728 Hijri

Author of Tabyeen Ul Haqaaiq, Imam Zaila'i (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 743 Hijri

Author of Majma Uz Zawaaid, Imam Haithami (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 807 Hijri

Author of Fathul Bari, Imam Ibn e Hajr Asqalani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 852 Hijri

Author of Umdatul Qari Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Allama Badruddin Aini Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 855 Hijri

Author of Fath Ul Qadeer, Allama Ibn e Hamam Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 861 Hijri

Author of Subul ul Huda War Rashad, Allama Muhammad bin Yousuf Salhi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him), 942 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Nujaim Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 970 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Hajr Makki Haithami Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 973 Hijri

Author of Kanz Ul Ummal, Allama Ali Muttaqi Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 974 Hijri

Author of Mirqatul Mafateeh Sharh Mishkatul Masabeeh, Hadhrat Mulla Ali Qari (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 1014 Hijri

Allama Abdur Rahman Muhammad (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 1078 Hijri

Hadhrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddis Dehlvi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 1176 Hijri

Allama Ibn e Abidin Shaami Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) 1252 Hijri

The Pride of the Muhaddithin, the essence of the A'arifeen, Hadhrat Abul Hasanaat Syed Abdullah Shah Naqshbandi Mujaddidi Qadri (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) (Deceased-1384 Hijri) has recorded Hadith and Traditions on the authority of Baihaqui, Ibn Abi Shaiba, Baghawi and Abd Bin Humaid in his great book of Hadith, Zujajatul Masabeeh.

The practice of the Tabie'en, the majority of the Ulema and the Fuqaha of the Hanafi School:

The Sahabah have a consensus on the issue of 20 raka'at of Taraweeh. The majority of the Tabie'en, the scholars, the Shawafa'ee and the people of Kufa also act on this as clarified in Umdatul Qari Vol 8, Pg No: 246:

وأما القائلون به من التابعين فشتير بن شكل وابن أبي مليكة والحارث
الهمداني وعطاء بن أبي رباح وأبو البحتري وسعيد بن أبي الحسن
البصري أخو الحسن وعبد الرحمن ابن أبي بكر وعمران العبدي وقال
ابن عبد البر وهو قول جمهور العلماء وبه قال الكوفيون والشافعي
وأكثر الفقهاء وهو الصحيح-

Translation: As far as the practice of the Tabie'en goes, the names of those among them who considered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh as correct are being mentioned here:

Hadhrat Shateer bin Shakal
Hadhrat Ibn Abi Mulaika
Hadhrat Harith Hamdani
Hadhrat Ata Bin Abi Ribah
Hadhrat Abul Bakhtari, the brother of Hadhrat Hasan Basri
Hadhrat Sae'eed bin Abul Hasan
Hadhrat Abdul Rahman bin Abu Bakr
Hadhrat Umran Abdi

May Allah shower His Mercy on all of them.

All the people of Kufa follow this path only and Hadhrat Imam Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) and majority of Fuqaha did this only and this is more correct.

Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafie, Imam Ahmed bin Hambal and according to 1 report Imam Malik (May Allah be well pleased with al of them) agree that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at only.

Imam Kasani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Badai us Sanai:

وَأَمَّا قَدْرُهَا فَعِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً فِي عَشْرِ تَسْلِيمَاتٍ ، فِي خَمْسِ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ
كُلُّ تَسْلِيمَتَيْنِ تَرَوِيحَةٌ وَهَذَا قَوْلُ عَامَّةِ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَالصَّحِيحُ قَوْلُ
الْعَامَّةِ لِمَا رُوِيَ أَنَّ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ جَمَعَ أَصْحَابَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ عَلَى أَبِي بِنِ كَعْبٍ فَصَلَّى بِهِمْ فِي كُلِّ
لَيْلَةٍ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً ، وَلَمْ يُنْكَرْ أَحَدٌ عَلَيْهِ فَيَكُونُ إِجْمَاعًا مِنْهُمْ عَلَى

ذَلِكَ .

Translation: Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at only. This is the ruling of the majority of the Ulema and this is correct because when Hadhrat Umar bin Khattab (May Allah be well pleased with him) gathered the Sahabah under Hadhrat Ubai bin Kaab (May Allah be well pleased with him), he lead them in 20 raka'at of Taraweeh every night and none of the Sahabah objected to it. This way the Sahabah achieved a consensus on this.

Allama Ibn e Nujaim (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Bahr Ur Raiq and Allama Ibn e Abidin Shami writes in Raddul Muhtaar:

Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at. The majority of the scholars agree on this and in east and west (i.e. everywhere), the Muslims practice this. (Al Bahr Ur Raiq, Vol 2, Pg No: 117)

وَعَلَيْهِ عَمِلَ النَّاسُ شَرْقًا وَغَرْبًا—

(Radd Ul Muhtaar, Vol 1, Pg No: 521, Bidayatul Mujtahid, Vol 1, Pg No: 210, Al Fiqh Al Madhahib Al Arba, Vol 2, Pg No: 342)

The opinion of Hadhrat Ghouse Azam (May Allah be well pleased with him)

The pole of the world, the leader of men, Hadhrat Syed Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani Hasani Husaini, Ghouse Azam Dastagir (May Allah be well pleased with him) writes in Al Ghunya Li Talibi tariqil haqqi:

وهي عشرون ركعة—

Translation: Salaat Ut Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at

(Al Ghunya Li Talibi tariqil haqqi, Vol 2, Pg No: 16)

20 Raka'at of Taraweeh, the ruling of the Imams of the Ummah

Allama Shibli writes in the Hashiya, explanatory notes of Tabyeen Ul Haqaiq Vol 1 pg no. 443:

(وَهِيَ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً) أَي عِنْدَنَا وَبِهِ قَالَ الشَّافِعِيُّ وَأَحْمَدُ وَنَقَلَهُ الْقَاضِي عِيَّاضٌ عَنْ جُمْهُورِ الْفُقَهَاءِ .

Translation: In our opinion, Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at and this is the ruling of Imam Shafa'ee and of Imam Ahmed bin Hambal (May Allah be well pleased with him).

Allama Qazi Ayaz has narrated on the authority of the majority of scholars that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at.

Allama Ibne Abidin Shaami Naqshbandi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has written in Raddul Muhtar:

(قَوْلُهُ وَهِيَ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً) هُوَ قَوْلُ الْجُمْهُورِ وَعَلَيْهِ عَمَلُ النَّاسِ
شَرْقًا وَغَرْبًا .

Translation: Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at. This is the ruling of the majority of scholars.

(Radd Ul Muhtaar, Vol 1, Pg No: 521)

It is written in Mausua'a Fiqhiya:

فَدَهَبَ جُمْهُورُ الْفُقَهَاءِ مِنَ الْحَنْفِيَّةِ ، وَالشَّافِعِيَّةِ ، وَالْحَنَابِلَةِ ، وَبَعْضِ
الْمَالِكِيَّةِ إِلَى أَنَّ التَّرَاوِيحَ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً –

Translation: The majority of the scholars of the Hanafi, Shafa'ee, Hambali and some Maliki scholars is that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at.

Allama Ali Sunahwari writes:

وَقَالَ عَلِيُّ السَّنْهُورِيُّ : هُوَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ عَمَلُ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَمَرَ إِلَى زَمَانِنَا
فِي سَائِرِ الْأَمْصَارِ –

Translation: The people practice this and all the cities have been following this only.

(Al Mause'atul Fiqhiya Al Kuwaitiya, Vol 27, Pg No: 141/142)

The opinion of the Fuqaha of the Hanafi School:

Hadhrat Imam Sarkhsi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Mabsut:

فَاتِّهَا عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً سِوَى الْوَيْتِ عِنْدَنَا –

Translation: In our opinion, Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at without Witr.

(Mabsut, Sarkhsi, Kitab Us Salaat, Al Faslil Awwali Fi Adadi raka'at)

Imam Kasani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes:

وَأَمَّا قَدْرُهَا فَعِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً فِي عَشْرِ تَسْلِيمَاتٍ ، فِي خَمْسِ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ
كُلُّ تَسْلِيمَتَيْنِ تَرَوِيحَةٌ وَهَذَا قَوْلُ عَامَّةِ الْعُلَمَاءِ .

Translation: Taraweeh is 20 raka'at, offered with 10 salaams and 5 breaks. After every 2 salaams, a break is to be taken. This is the ruling of the majority.

(Badai Us Sanai, Vol 1, Pg No: 644)

Imam Abdullah bin Ahmed Nasafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him), the author of Tafseer Midrak writes:

وسن في رمضان عشرون ركعة-

Translation: In the month of Ramadhan, 20 raka'at of Taraweeh is Sunnah.

(Kanz Ud Daqaiq, Kitab Us Salaat, Pg No: 34)

Imam Zaila'i Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes:

(قَوْلُهُ وَهِيَ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً) أَي عِنْدَنَا وَبِهِ قَالَ الشَّافِعِيُّ وَأَحْمَدُ وَنَقَلَهُ
الْقَاضِي عِيَّاضٌ عَنْ جُمْهُورِ الْعُلَمَاءِ .

Translation: In our opinion, Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at and Imam Shafa'ee and Imam Ahmed bin Hambal have also said this. Allama Qazi Ayaz (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has narrated the same on the authority of the majority of the scholars.

(Tabyeen Ul Haqaiq, Kitab Us Salaat, Bab Witir wan Nawafil)

Allama Ibn e Nujaim Misri (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Bahr Ur Raaiq:

وَقَوْلُهُ عِشْرُونَ رَكْعَةً بَيَانٌ لِكَمِّيَّتِهَا وَهُوَ قَوْلُ الْجُمْهُورِ لِمَا فِي الْمَوْطِئِ
عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ رُومَانَ قَالَ كَانَ النَّاسُ يَقُومُونَ فِي زَمَنِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ
بِثَلَاثٍ وَعِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً وَعَلَيْهِ عَمَلُ النَّاسِ شَرْقًا وَغَرْبًا -

Translation: The majority of the Fuqaha say that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at, as the Hadith of Hadhrat Yazid bin Ruman (May Allah be well pleased with him) is present in Mawatta Al Malik that in the era of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) people used to offer 23 raka'at (20 raka'at Taraweeh and 3 raka'at of Witr) The Muslims of the east and west have been doing the same.

(Al Bahr Ur Raiq, Vol 2, Pg No: 117)

It is given in Fatawa A'alamgiri:

وَهِيَ خَمْسُ تَرْوِيحَاتٍ كُلُّ تَرْوِيحَةٍ أَرْبَعُ رَكَعَاتٍ بِتَسْلِيمَتَيْنِ .
كَذَا فِي السَّرَاجِيَةِ وَلَوْ زَادَ عَلَى خَمْسِ تَرْوِيحَاتٍ بِالْجَمَاعَةِ يُكْرَهُ عِنْدَنَا .

هَكَذَا فِي الْخُلَاصَةِ .

Translation: Taraweeh is offered with 5 breaks. Each break is of 4 raka'at, which is offered with 2 salaams. If it is offered with more than 5 breaks, it is Makruh (Undesirable) in our opinion.

(Fatawa A'alamgiri, Kitab Us Salaat, Pg No: 115)

Allama Abdur Rahman Muhammad, popularly known as Shaykh Zada Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes:

(عشرون ركعة) سوي الوتر -

Translation: Apart from Witr, Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at.

(Majma Ul Anhur Fi Sharhil Multaqal Abhur, Kitab Us Salaat, Fasl Fit Taraweeh)

Clarification by Hadhrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddis Dehlvi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him):

Hadhrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddis Dehlvi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes about Taraweeh in his monumental work Hujjatullahil Baligha:

وعده عشرون ركعة-

Translation: Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at.

(Hujjatullahil Baligha, Vol 2, Pg No: 18)

Muhaddith-e-Deccan Hadhrat Abul Hasanaat Syed Abdullah Shah Sahab Naqshbandi Qadri Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes:

ان مجموع عشرين ركعة في التراويح سنة مؤكدة لانه مما واظب عليه
الخلفاء، وقد سبق ان سنة الخلفاء ايضاً لازم الاتباع وتاركها آثم-

Translation: A total of 20 raka'at of Taraweeh is a Sunnah Maukkada (Compulsory Sunnah) because this one of those acts which have been regularly performed by the Caliphs and it has been mentioned that the Sunnah of the Caliphs is also to be followed and the one who leaves them is a sinner.

(Zujajatul Masabeeh, Haashiya, Vol 1, Pg No: 366)

It is written in Al Fiqh Al Islami Wal Adilla:

وقد سئل أبو حنيفة عما فعله عمر رضي الله عنه فقال: التراويح سنة
مؤكدة، ولم يتخرجه عمر من تلقاء نفسه، ولم يكن فيه مبتدعاً، ولم يأمر
به إلا عن أصل لديه، وعهد من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم .

Translation: Imam Abu Hanifa (May Allah be well pleased with him) was asked about this ruling of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him). He said, Taraweeh is a Sunnah Maukkada and neither did Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) start this on his own nor did he invent any new method. The command which he gave is based on some evidence which he had and on the established Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam).

20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the Hambali school of Fiqh

Allama Ibn e Qudama Hambali (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in his book Al Kafi:

فالسنة أن يصلي بهم عشرين ركعة في الجماعة لذلك ، ويوتر الإمام بهم
بثلاث ركعات -

Translation: It is a Sunnah that Taraweeh should be offered as congregational prayer of 20 raka'at and the Imam should lead the people in Witr also.

(Al Kafi, Kitab Us Salaat)

20 raka'at of Taraweeh in the Shafa'ee school of Fiqh

Allama Ibn e Hajr Haithami Makki Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Al Minhaj Ul Qaweem:

لكن أجمع عليه الصحابة رضوان الله عليهم اجمعين -

Translation: Nevertheless, the Sahabah (May Allah be well pleased with him) have concurred and agreed on 20 raka'at of Taraweeh.

(AL Minhaj Ul Qaweem, Pg No: 138)

Allama Abul Walid Sulayman bin Khalaf Andusi Malki (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in his book Al Muntaqa Sharh Mawatta:

Translation: Based on the Hadith of Hadhrat Yazid bin Ruman (May Allah be well pleased with him): Imam Shafa'ee (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has ruled that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at apart from Witr.

Taraweeh in Maliki School of Fiqh:

Allama Ibn e Rushd Maliki (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in Bidayatul Mujtahid:

(فاختار مالك في احدي قوليهِ وابو حنيفة والشافعي واحمد وداؤد القيام
بعشرين ركعة سوي الوتر .

Translation: According to a report Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafa'ee and Imam Ahmed bin Hambal (May Allah be well pleased with him) have agreed that Taraweeh is of 20 raka'at apart from Witr.

(Bidayatul Mujtahid, Vol 1, Pg No: 210)

20 Raka'at in Taraweeh

There are 20 raka'at in Taraweeh. It is established by the Sunnah (Masnoon) to offer it as 10 cycles of 2 raka'at and to give a gap after every 4 raka'at. As given in Durre Mukhtar, Vol 1, Pg No: 521:

(وهي عشرون ركعة) (بعشر تسليمات)

Wisdom behind 20 raka'at of Taraweeh

Imam Zaila'i Hanafi (May Allah shower His Mercy on Him) writes:

غَايَةٌ مَا قِيلَ الْحِكْمَةُ فِي التَّقْدِيرِ بَعِشْرِينَ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ لِيُوَافِقَ الْفَرَائِضَ
الْإِعْتِقَادِيَّةَ وَالْعَمَلِيَّةَ كَالْوِثْرِ فَإِنَّهَا عِشْرُونَ .

Translation: Only Allah knows the wisdom as to why 20 raka'at have been ordered for Taraweeh. It might be that the raka'at should equal the number of Fardh Salaat, as all the Fardh Salaat including Witr add up to 20. (Tabyeen Ul Haqia, Kitab Us Salaat)

It is also given in Bahr Ur Raiq that the wisdom behind deciding the number of raka'at in Taraweeh as 20 is that the Sunnah complete the Fardh (Obligatory). That is why the number of raka'at in Taraweeh has been decided as 20 keeping in mind that the number of raka'at in the Fardh Salaat, as Allama Ibn e Nujaim Misri (May Allah shower His Mercy upon him) writes on the authority of Imam Jalaluddin Suyuti:

وَذَكَرَ الْعَلَمَةُ الْحَلَبِيُّ أَنَّ الْحِكْمَةَ فِي كَوْنِهَا عِشْرِينَ أَنَّ السُّنَنَ شُرِعَتْ
مُكَمَّلَاتٍ لِلْوَجِبَاتِ وَهِيَ عِشْرُونَ بِالْوِثْرِ فَكَانَتْ التَّرَاوِيحُ كَذَلِكَ لِتَقَعُ
الْمُسَاوَاةُ بَيْنَ الْمُكَمَّلِ وَالْمُكَمَّلِ انْتَهَى -

Translation: The wisdom behind ordaining the number of Taraweeh raka'at as 20 that the Sunnah complete the Fardh. All the Fardh Salaat including Witr add up to 20. For this reason, Taraweeh is also of the same number, so that the Salaat which are to be completed and the Salaat which complete become equal. (

Clarification by Allama Ibn e Abidin Shaami

Allama Ibn e Abidin Shaami Hanafi Naqshbandi writes:

وَلَا يَخْفَى أَنَّ الرُّوَاتِبَ وَإِنْ كَمَلَتْ أَيْضًا إِلَّا أَنَّ هَذَا الشَّهْرَ لِمَزِيدِ كَمَالِهِ
زَيْدٍ فِيهِ هَذَا الْمُكَمَّلُ فَتَكْمُلُ .

Translation: It is not a secret that the Sunnah along with the Fardh do complete them, but in this month they should be most complete.

Explaining of the Hadith of 36 raka'at:

وَقَالَ الشَّافِعِيُّ : وَلِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ فَعُلُّهَا سِتًّا وَثَلَاثِينَ ؛ لِأَنَّ الْعِشْرِينَ

خَمْسُ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ ، وَكَانَ أَهْلُ مَكَّةَ يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَ كُلِّ تَرَوِيحَتَيْنِ سَبْعَةَ
 أَشْوَاطٍ ، فَحَمَلَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ بَدَلَ كُلِّ أُسْبُوعٍ تَرَوِيحَةً لِيَسَاوَوْهُمْ ، قَالَ
 الشَّيْخَانِ : وَلَا يَجُوزُ ذَلِكَ لِغَيْرِهِمْ . . وَهُوَ الْأَصْحَحُّ كَمَا قَالَ الرَّمْلِيُّ
 لِأَنَّ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ شَرَفًا بِهِجْرَتِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَدْفِنِهِ -

Translation: The Shafa'ee Fuqaha say that the people of Medina offered 36 raka'at of Taraweeh. This is because 20 raka'at of Taraweeh has 5 breaks. The people of Mecca perform 1 tawaaf after each breaks. So, the people of Medina started offering another 4 raka'at in each break to become equal to the people of Mecca in virtuous acts. This is not allowed for anybody apart from the people of Medina. This is the most correct ruling as Allama Ramli says: Because the Holy Prophet's (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) migrated to Medina and His sanctuary also is in Medina, the people of Medina are distinguished from others.

(Al Mausuatul Fiqhiya Al Kuwaitiya, Vol 27, Pg No: 143)

It has been established by the rigorously-authenticated (Sahih) Hadith that Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him), Hadhrat Usman (May Allah be well pleased with him), Hadhrat Ali (May Allah be well pleased with him) used to offer 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and in the eras of their caliphate, it was also the custom of the Muslim Ummah. More than that, the Sahabah had arrived at a consensus about this as understood by the explanations given by the Imams, Fuqaha, etc. In general, in the Muslim world including in Mecca and Medina, this is what is followed.

If it is said that the Holy Prophet's (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offering of 20 raka'at is not established and offering 20 raka'at of Taraweeh is against Sunnah and we should offer 8 raka'at. Then to answer to this some points are being mentioned:

The Holy Prophet's (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offering of 20 raka'at has been recorded in Imam Baihaqui's Shu'ab Ul Iman, Imam Tabarani's Mo'jam Kabeer, Mo'jam Ausat, in Musannaf Ibn e Abi Shaiba, Musnad e 'Abd bin Humaid, Majma Uz Zawaaid and in Zujajatul Masabeeh on the authority of Hadhrat Abdulla bin Abbas.

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas says:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ : كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي فِي شَهْرِ
 رَمَضَانَ بَعْشَرِينَ رَكْعَةً وَالْوِثْرَ .

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offered 20 raka'at of Taraweeh and Witr in the month of Ramadhan.

(Sunan Kubra Lil Baihaqui, Hadith No: 4799, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaiba, Vol 2, Pg No: 286, Bab 227, Hadith No: 13, Al Matalib Ul A'aliya Li Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Hadith No: 642; Mo'jam Ausat, Hadith No: 5598/810, Mo'jam Kabeer, Hadith No: 11934, Majma Uz Zawaaid, Vol 3, Pg No: 172; Musnad Abd bin Humaid, Hadith No: 655, Zujajatul Masabeeh, Vol 1, Pg No: 366, Khulasatul Ahkaam Lin Nawawi, Vol 1, Pg No: 579, Hadith No: 1971, Al Talkhees Li Ibn Hajar Makki, Tabe Ul Kitab Us Salaat, Vol 2, Pg No: 52, Hadith No: 540, Fath ul Bari, Sharh Sahih Bukhari, Bab Fadhli min Qama Ramadhan, Al Fiqh Al Islami Wal Adilla, Al Fasli Thamin, An Nawafil, Subul Ul Huda War Rashad, Vol 8, Pg No: 267)

A rule followed by the Experts of Hadith

Among the Imams of criticism of Hadith and of narration and comprehension of Hadith, none has declared this Hadith as false or lies. But they have clarified about the Dhaeef Hadith (Hadith which are not rigorously authenticated) that when there are other Hadith in support of that Hadith, then that Hadith does not remain Dhaeef. It becomes "Hasan Lighairihi" which is to be followed. Hadhrat Shah Abdul Haq Muhaddis Dehlvi (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has clarified in his foreword of Usul al Hadith:

والضعيف ان تعدد طرقه وانجبر ضعفه يسمي حسنا لغيره—

Translation: If a Dhaeef Hadith has many chains of narration which make it stronger, then it is called "Hasan Lighairihi"

Taking support from one rule of the Muhaddithin, namely That Dhaeef Hadith is not to be acted upon," and ignoring this Marfu' Hadith is to disobey those rules and guidelines. There is an element of weakness in the related Hadith of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas, but there are many authentic Hadith in support of it. The practice of the Sahabah is well established and the act of the Tabie'en is also well established. All these support and strengthen this Hadith.

Hadith of 8 raka'at

There is a narration from Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) which mentions 8 raka'at.

عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهُ سَأَلَ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا كَيْفَ كَانَتْ صَلَاةُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي رَمَضَانَ فَقَالَتْ مَا كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَزِيدُ فِي رَمَضَانَ وَلَا فِي غَيْرِهِ عَلَى إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً يُصَلِّي أَرْبَعًا فَلَا تَسَلُّ عَنْ حُسْنِهِنَّ

وَطَوَّلِهِنَّ ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي أَرْبَعًا فَلَا تَسْلُ عَنْ حُسْنِهِنَّ وَطَوَّلِهِنَّ ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي ثَلَاثًا
 قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَتَنَامُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُوتِرَ فَقَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ إِنَّ
 عَيْنِي تَنَامَانِ وَلَا يَنَامُ قَلْبِي

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abu Salma bin Abdur Rahman (May Allah be well pleased with him), he says that he asked Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) how was the Salaat of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) in Ramadhan? Ummul Momineen Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) said: The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would not offer more than 11 raka'at in Ramadhan and out of it. He would 4 raka'at with such fervor that you should not even talk about it. Then He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would 3 raka'at. I (i.e. Hadhrat Aisha) asked Him: O Prophet of Allah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)! Do You rest before offering Witr? The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: O Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her)! Verily My eyes sleep, my heart does not.

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Tahajjud, Pg No: 154, Hadith No: 1147; Bab Fadhl min qiyami Ramadhan, Pg No: 269, Hadith No: 2013; Pg No: 504, Hadith No: 3569; Sahih Muslim Kitab Us Salaatil Musafireen, Hadith No: 738)

The Hadith of 8 raka'at is about Tahajjud

Saying on the basis of this Hadith that Taraweeh is only of 8 raka'at is a grave mistake, which is very much against the science of Hadith, the narration of Hadith and the understanding of Hadith.

When looked closely, it becomes obvious that this Hadith is not at all about Taraweeh, but about Tahajjud as Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) is talking about 8 raka'at in Ramadhan and out of it. Every sane person realizes that Taraweeh is offered only in Ramadhan and not out of it; otherwise, we should also say that Taraweeh is offered for the whole year. Even those who insist that Taraweeh do not offer it throughout the year! We can act upon this Hadith only when the 8 raka'at mentioned here are accepted in Tahajjud. That these 8 raka'at mean Tahajjud is also supported by this Hadith of Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her), which comes in Sahih Bukhari:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي مِنَ
 اللَّيْلِ إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً فَإِذَا طَلَعَ الْفَجْرُ صَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ خَفِيفَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ
 اضْطَجَعَ عَلَى شِقِّهِ الْأَيْمَنِ حَتَّى يَجِيءَ الْمُؤَذِّنُ فَيُؤَذِّنُهُ—

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would offer 11 raka'at, then when the day dawned, He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would offer 2 light raka'at. Then, He would rest on His right side to the point that the Muezzin would come and request Him.

(Sahih Bukhari, Vol 2, Kitab Ud Da'awat, Hadith No: 6310)

Also, the (coming) Hadith of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (May Allah be well pleased with them) clearly shows that the Hadith of 8 raka'at is about Tahajjud. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would rest and offer 11 raka'at, then Hadhrat Bilal (May Allah be well pleased with him) would come and call out the Adhaan, as given in Sahih Bukhari:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ بَتُّ فِي بَيْتِ مَيْمُونَةَ لَيْلَةً وَالنَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عِنْدَهَا لِأَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ صَلَاةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِاللَّيْلِ فَتَحَدَّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَعَ أَهْلِهِ سَاعَةً ثُمَّ رَقَدَ فَلَمَّا كَانَ ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ أَوْ بَعْضُهُ قَعَدَ فَنَظَرَ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَقَرَأَ: إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ، ثُمَّ قَامَ فَتَوَضَّأَ وَاسْتَنَّ ثُمَّ صَلَّى إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ بِبِلَالٍ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَصَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَصَلَّى لِلنَّاسِ الصُّبْحَ -

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas (May Allah be well pleased with them), he says that I stayed at the house of my aunt Ummul Momineen Hadhrat Maimoona (May Allah be well pleased with her). The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) talked to His wife for some time, then rested and when the last third part of the night came, He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) sat up and looked towards the sky and recited this verse of the Holy Quran:

Then the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) awoke, would perform Wuzu and use Miswak and offered 11 raka'at. Then when Hadhrat Bilal (May Allah be well pleased with him) called out the Adhaan, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offered 2 raka'at and came out and offered the Salaat of Fajr.

(Sahih Bukhari, Vol 2, Kitab Ut Tafseer, Pg No: 657, Hadith No: 4569)

Calling 20 raka'at a Bida'ah is not at all justice

It is not correct to make a deduction from the 8 raka'at Hadith and call 20 raka'at a Bida'ah. Even if it is accepted that Taraweeh is of 8 raka'at, then the one offering 20

raka'at is offering 12 raka'at and Ramadhan is the month of good deeds and virtuous acts. It is established by the Hadith that in this month extra prayers should be offered. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has given glad tidings of the reward for offering Nafl prayers being equal to the reward of offering Fardh Salaat in other months. There is a lengthy Hadith in Imam Baihaqui's Shu'ab Ul Iman. Please see a small part out of it:

من تقرب فيه بخصلة من الخير كان كمن أدى فريضة فيما سواه—

Translation: The person who does a Nafl good act in this month is like a person doing a Fardh act in other months.

(Baihaqui Shu'ab Ul Iman, Hadith No: 3455, Zujajatul Masabeeh Vol 1, Pg No: 541/542, Kitab Us Saum)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would offer more worship in this month than other months. It is given in a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا
دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ وَأَحْيَا لَيْلَهُ وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Ummul Momineen Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) that when the last 10 days of Ramadhan came, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) would worship more than before, would spend the nights in worship and would wake up the members of the household.

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Fadhli Lailatul Qadr, Hadith No: 2044, Sahih Muslim Hadith No: 1174)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has declared Taraweeh as a special Sunnah, as given in Sunan Nasai, Sunan Ibn Majah and Kanzul Ummal:

حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ
وَتَعَالَى فَرَضَ صِيَامَ رَمَضَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَسَنَنْتُ لَكُمْ قِيَامَهُ—

Translation: Abul Salma bin Abdur Rahman (May Allah be well pleased with them) narrates from his father Hadhrat Abdur Rahman (May Allah be well pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: Verily! Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) has made the fasts of Ramadhan Fardh (obligatory) for you and I have declared the Salaat of Taraweeh in it to be a Sunnah.

(Sunan Nasai, Vol 1, Pg No: 308, Hadith No: 2180, Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith No: 1318, Kanzul Ummal, Hadith No: 24289/23722/23660/23659, Sunan Kubra Lin Nasai, Vol 2, Pg No: 89, Hadith No: 2520)

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has declared extra Salaat in Ramadhan as His Sunnah and encouraged the Ummah to perform more good deeds than other months.

If Taraweeh is accepted as 8 raka'at, then it should be said that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) encouraged the Ummah to offer more good deeds and perform more worship, but He Himself did not do so. May Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) protect us from this.

The mentioned Hadith establish that in Ramadhan more and more worship should be offered. Even then calling 20 raka'at as a Bida'ah is no justice.

It is a matter of shame that that act which is completely against the Sunnah is termed Sunnah and what the Hadith really demand is called Bida'ah.

Consequences of taking Taraweeh as 8 raka'at from Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) Hadith:

If Taraweeh is taken as 8 raka'at, then it should also be accepted that Taraweeh should be offered after getting up from sleep and in the last part of the night. Nobody offers Taraweeh after getting up from sleep.

If Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) was saying about 8 raka'at of Taraweeh, then she herself would be offering the same 8 raka'at. She would not have kept quiet on seeing something against the Sunnah. There is no narration from Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) that she offered 8 raka'at Taraweeh. She was present in the times of the Four Caliphs. The Sahabah would all offer 20 raka'at. If this was against the Sunnah, she would have objected to it. That Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) held her peace and did not object to this shows that this Hadith is not about Taraweeh.

If this Hadith of Ummul Momineen Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her) is about Taraweeh, then which Salaat does the following Hadith talk about? Both the Hadith cannot be about the same Salaat, as the previous Hadith of Hadhrat Aisha (May Allah be well pleased with her) is about Ramadhan and out of it and this Hadith talks about 2, 3 days:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي مِنْ
الَّيْلِ فِي حُجْرَتِهِ وَجِدَارُ الْحُجْرَةِ قَصِيرٌ فَرَأَى النَّاسُ شَخْصَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَامَ أَنَسٌ يُصَلُّونَ بِصَلَاتِهِ فَأَصْبَحُوا فَتَحَدَّثُوا بِذَلِكَ

فَقَامَ اللَّيْلَةَ الثَّانِيَةَ فَقَامَ مَعَهُ أَنَسٌ يُصَلُّونَ بِصَلَاتِهِ صَنَعُوا ذَلِكَ لَيْلَتَيْنِ أَوْ
ثَلَاثًا حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ جَلَسَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ فَلَمَّا أَصْبَحَ ذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ النَّاسُ فَقَالَ إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تُكْتَبَ
عَلَيْكُمْ صَلَاةُ اللَّيْلِ -

Translation: It has been narrated on the authority of Hadhrat Aisha Siddiqua (May Allah be well pleased with her), she says: The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was offering Salaat in His room at night and the wall of the room was of medium height. The Sahabah saw the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and offered Salaat behind Him (taking Him as their Imam). Morning came and the Sahabah mentioned this to the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam). The next night the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was offering Salaat. The Sahabah saw Him and started offering Salaat behind Him. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) did this for 2 or 3 nights to the point that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) remained in His room and did not come. In morning, when the Sahabah mentioned this, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: I fear that this Salaat will be declared Fardh for you. In another version of the same Hadith, the following words are given:

فتعجزوا عنها

Translation: Then you will not be able to offer it.

(Sahih Bukhari, Vol 1, Hadith No: 729; Hadith No: 924; Hadith No: 1129; Hadith No: 2012)

This Hadith is mentioned in Sahih Bukhari at more than 3 places. This Hadith has mention of offering of Salaat, but there is no mention of the number of raka'at. The interpreter of Sahih Bukhari, the author of Fath Ul Bari, Imam Ibn Hajr Asqalani (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has clarified in Al Talkhees that here, the number of raka'at was 20.

(Al Talkhees, Tabe ul Kitab Us Salaat, Hadith No: 540)

Imam Ibn Hajr Makki Haitami (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) has mentioned one Hadith about the number of the raka'at of Taraweeh.

"عشرون ركعة" في كل ليلة من رمضان بنية قيام رمضان او سنة
تراويح او صلوة التراويح.... لما صح انه صلي الله علي وسلم صلي

التراويح ليالي اربعا فصلوها معه ثم تأخر وصلاتها في بيته باقي الشهر
وقال خشيت ان تفرض عليكم فتعجزوا عنها-

Translation: (It has) “ 20 raka’at every night of Ramadhan, with the intention of Qiyaame Ramadhan or Taraweeh, because there is a rigorously-authenticated (Sahih) Hadith that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) offered Taraweeh for 4 nights and the Sahabah followed Him (in prayer). Then the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) did not come out His room and offered it in His room for the rest of the month and said: I fear that this Salaat will made Fardh (obligatory) for you, then you will not be able to offer it.

Muhammad bin Muhammad Akmaluddin Babarti (May Allah shower His Mercy on him) writes in detail about 20 raka’at Taraweeh in ‘Inaya Sharh Hidayah:

رُويَ أَنَّهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَرَجَ لَيْلَةً مِنْ لَيَالِي رَمَضَانَ وَصَلَّى
عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً ، فَلَمَّا كَانَتْ اللَّيْلَةُ الثَّانِيَةَ اجْتَمَعَ النَّاسُ فَخَرَجَ وَصَلَّى
بِهِمْ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً ، فَلَمَّا كَانَتْ اللَّيْلَةُ الثَّلَاثَةَ كَثَرَ النَّاسُ فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ
عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ وَقَالَ : عَرَفْتُ اجْتِمَاعَكُمْ لَكِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ
تُكْتَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكَانَ النَّاسُ يُصَلُّونَهَا فُرَادَى إِلَى زَمَنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُ ، فَقَالَ عُمَرُ : إِنِّي أَرَى أَنْ أَجْمَعَ النَّاسَ عَلَى إِمَامٍ وَاحِدٍ ، فَجَمَعَهُمْ
عَلَى أَبِي بِنِ كَعْبٍ فَصَلَّى بِهِمْ خَمْسَ تَرَوِيحَاتٍ عِشْرِينَ رَكْعَةً .

Translation: It is narrated that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) came one night and offered 20 raka’at. Then when the next night came, the Sahabah gathered. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) came and led the Sahabah in 20 raka’at. Then when the 3rd night came, the Sahabah gathered in large numbers, but the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) did not come. He (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: I know of your gathering (for Me), but I fear that this Salaat will be declared Fardh for you. Then the Sahabah, until the time of Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) offered this Salaat individually and separately. Then Hadhrat Umar (May Allah be well pleased with him) said: I think it is better that I gather the people behind a single Imam. Then, he gathered the people with Hadhrat Ubai bin ka’ab as the Imam, then he led the people in 20 raka’at with 5 breaks. (Al ‘Inaya, Sharh Hidayah, Kitab Us Salaat, Fasl Fi Qiyami Shahri Ramadhan)

The blessed habit of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was 20 raka’at. The sahabah agreed on the number of raka’at as 20. The Fuqaha who explained the

laws of Islam have clarified the same in the books of Fatawa. The Muhaddithin who held safely thousands of Hadith in their heart did the same. In every century, this was followed. After knowing all this in detail, no just person will deny 20 raka'at Taraweeh. The Hadith can be followed and acted upon correctly only when Taraweeh is offered as 20 raka'at.

May Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) for the sake of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) guide us and all Muslims on to the path of guidance and guide us to perform good deeds in this blessed month. Aameen

آمين بجاه طه ويس وصلي الله تعالى وبارك وسلم عليه واله وصحبه
اجمعين والحمد لله رب العلمين, سبحان الله وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم-