

Performing Twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth is Sunnah Mu'akkadah

A Detailed Response to Saamrodi's Objection

Q: Salaah-325: The reason for posing this question is that a Ghayr Muqallid by the name of Molvi Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi is creating havoc by publishing an article in a Gujarati newspaper that there is no proof for the Taraaweeth salaah being more than eight Rakaahs. He challenges people to prove even from a weak Hadith that Rasulullaah SAW. performed twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth.

He even quotes from Hanafi books such as Tahtaawi, Maraaqil Falaah, Fat'hul Qadeer, Ayni and others stating that twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth has not been proven from the action of Rasulullaah SAW. He writes, "Dear friends! There is no doubt about the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. never performed twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth. It was the people (Sahabah RADI.) after him who increased the number of Rakaahs. Now one needs to think whether it is Rasulullaah SAW. we have to follow or the people (the Sahabah RADI.? Has Allaah given the rights to the Deen and the Shari'ah to any of the followers of Rasulullaah SAW.? Do not fall into the deception of the extra (twenty Rakaahs) of Taraaweeth that the people have started. Would you please furnish the details of the twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth salaah because the people are greatly confused.

Answer: What a disservice to the Deen it is to start the debate of twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth salaah at a time when most Muslims are not even performing their salaah and the Masaajid are left deserted! At a time when Muslims are concerned about those afflicted with disasters all over the world, someone like Saamrodi offers a challenge of thousands of Rupees to anyone contesting the issue of twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth! Even death is better than a perverted understanding of matters.

It is irresponsible acts like this that have given Saamrodi and his group a bad name. In fact, people with a clear understanding of matters steer clear from them and refer to him as Saamiri (the deceitful hypocrite during the time of Hadrath Moosa ALY. The editor of the Delhi Tarjumaan newspaper has written the following in the 1 October 1957 edition in an article titled Saamiri's evil': "The hallmark of this strange man is to create havoc and all his life has instigated waves of conflict in peaceful environments. He has therefore been likened to the instigator Saamiri. His leader from the Ahle Hadith Moulana Thanah'ullaah held the beliefs of the Mu'tazilahs, Jahmiyyahs and naturalists.

People with incomplete and slight knowledge of the Deen have always sowed seeds of trouble because they regard their meagre knowledge of Deen to be all of Deen. Moulana Rumi RAH. describes a person with such incomplete knowledge as a person being led about by Shaytaan.

The Khawaarij also had an incomplete picture of the Deen before them and accused Hadhrat Ali RADI. of ignoring the commands of the Qur'aan by quoting the verse "All decisions rest with Allaah". They then rebelled against him and became Kuffaar together with their companions. Although they recited the Qur'aan, they failed to understand it and Rasulullaah SAW. actually predicted their advent when he described them as "people who will recite the Qur'aan, but it will not even pass their collarbones.

When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. went to reason with them, he asked them what their grievance against Hadhrat Ali RADI. was. They said that Hadhrat Ali RADI. appoints people as arbiters and heeds to their decisions, whereas this opposes the Qur'aan which states: '*All decisions rest with Allaah, '. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. then explained to them that the Qur'aan actually instructs people to appoint arbiters. In the case of a person in Ihraam hunting an animal, the Qur'aan declares that two just people should be appointed to decide the precise animal to be given in compensation. Furthermore, in the case of a dispute between a couple, the Qur'aan enjoins that an arbiter from the husband's side and another from the wife's side should negotiate a settlement.

Just like them, Saamrodi also fails to understand the Qur'aan. He shouts slogans of "Obey Allaah and the Rasool SAW. and advocates following the Ahadeeth, but then closes his eyes to other verses of the Qur'aan, to other Ahadeeth and the practices of the Sahabah RADI. Whereas the Khawaarij labelled only Hadhrat Ali RADI. and his companions as Misguided people, Saamrodi labels every follower of the Deen for the past thirteen hundred years as misguided people and opponents of the Sunnah and the Ahadeeth. The group he labels include the Sahabah RADI. the Taabi'een, the Awliyaa, the Mashaa'ikh and even Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH., Imaam Maalik RAH. and Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal RAH. He regards the twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeh that they all performed a deception (Allaah forbid!). Saamrodi's challenge is just like a person who claims that the Qur'aan says, "Do not perform salaah" but omits the next part of the verse that reads, when you are in the state of intoxication" or one who advocates a free reign in eating and drinking by claiming that the Qur'aan states "Eat and i drink" but omits to mention the next part of the verse that reads "but do not be extravagant".

May Allaah save us from Saamrodi's audacity . He quotes extracts from Tahtaawi, Ashbaa, Maraaqil Falaah, Moulana Nanotwi RAH.'s Maktoobat, Moulana Anwar Shah RAH.'s Urfush Shazi, Allaama Ibn Humaam RAH.'s Fat'hul Qadeer, Allaama Ayni RAH.'s commentary of Bukhaari, Allaama Halabi RAH.'s kabeeri, Mulaa Ali Qaari RAH.'s Mirqaat and from Allaama Tahaawi RAH. However, these extracts have been quoted out of context, incomplete and twisted to suit himself.

We shall now present the words of these scholars to you.

1. TAHTAAWI: After a lengthy discussion, Allaama Tahtaawi RAH. states: "This narration from Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. makes it evident that twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah has been proven as an act of Rasulullaah SAW. He further states that the practice of twenty Rakaahs with ten Salaams has been passed down from generation to generation.
2. MARAAQIL FALAAH: "The Taraaweesh salaah is Sunnah Mu'akkadah and it comprises of twenty Rakaahs with ten Salaams by the consensus of the Sahabah RADI. and has been passed down from generation to generation.
3. AL ASHBAA WAN NADHAA'IR: "The Taraaweesh salaah comprises of twenty Rakaahs with ten Salaams"
4. LATAA'IF QAASIMI: Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi RAH. writes: "An act that the Sahabah RADI. carried out regularly is Sunnah Mu'akkadah because Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Hold fast to my practices and the practices of the rightly guided Khalifahs. He writes further, "Twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh has been proven from the end of Hadhrat Umar RADI.'s Khilaafah by consensus of the Sahabah RADI. It is therefore a Sunnah and whoever denies it being such is misguided and wrong. In his Tasfiyatul Aqaa'id, his Fatwa states the same and will be quoted at the end with the question.
5. Allaama Anwar Shah Kashmeeri RAH. In his commentary of Tirmidhi called Urfush Shazil, Hadhrat Allaama writes: "None of the four Imaams advocate anything less than twenty Rakaahs and this was the practice of the consensus of the Sahabah RADI. In fact, Imaam Maalik RAH. is of the opinion that the Taraaweesh salaah comprises of 36 Rakaahs. He explains further that while the people of Makkah performed Tawaaf during the rest period between every four Rakaahs of Taraaweesh, the people of Madinah were unable to do so. To compensate for this, they performed four Rakaahs salaah individually during this period, because of which they eventually performed 16 extra Rakaahs, making it a total of 36.
6. ALI AAMA IBN HUMAAM (RAH.) "Authentic narrations prove that the Sahabah RADI. and Taabi'een performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. as reported by Yazeed bin Roomaan RAH. in the Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik and by Hadhrat Saa'ib bin Yazeed RADI. in a narration of Bayhaqi. The narration is authentic as researched by Imaam Nawawi RADI.

7. ALL MMA AYNi RAH.'S COMMENTARY OF BUKHAARI: "The number of Rakaahs in the Taraaweesh salaah is twenty and this is also the practice of Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. and Imaam Ahmad RAH. Their proof is the a narration of Bayhaqi from Hadhrat Saa'ib bin Yazeed RADI. During the times of Hadhrat Um ar '){b(,aG/, Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI. the Sahabah RADI. performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah as did those after them. The best practice to follow is that of the Sahabah RADI.

8. ALLMMA HALABI (RAH.) IN KABEERI: "It is clear from this discussion that the Taraaweesh salaah comprises of twenty Rakaahs with ten Salaams according to us. This is the practice of the majority, while Imaam Maalik RAH. is of the opinion that it comprises of 36 Rakaahs, as was the practice of the people of Madinah. The proof is from an authentic narration of Bayhaqi in which Hadhrat Saa'ib bin Yazeed RADI. states that they performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the periods of Hadhrat Umar RADI., Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI. The other narration of Yazeed bin Roomaan RAH. in the Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik states that during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI., people performed 23 Rakaahs of Taraaweesh together with the Witr salaah. The book Al Mughni contains a narration from Hadhrat Ali RADI. in which he instructed someone to lead the people in twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweesh salaah. This is as good as Ijmaa. Although the narration of Yazeed bin Roomaan RAH. in the Mu'atta is Munqati, it is reliable according to Imaam Maafik RAH. and therefore fit to make deductions from.

9. ALLAMA MULLA ALI QAARI (RAH.): "The matter is established by Ijma because of the authentic narration of Bayhaqi in which Hadhrat Saa'ib bin Yazeed RADI. states that they performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the periods of Hadhrat Umar RADI., Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI.

10. TAHAAWI: Although in his discussion of the three Rakaahs of Witr, Imaam Tahaawi RAH. quotes a narration that makes it appear as if the Taraaweesh salaah comprises of eight Rakaahs, the Imaam would certainly have quoted it again in his discussion of the Taraaweesh salaah being twenty Rakaahs. He however does not do this because he also believes that according to Ijma the Taraaweesh salaah comprises of twenty Rakaahs.

We will now cite the relevant Ahadeeth and statements of the Mujtahideen RAH.

Ahadeeth and statements of the Mujtahideen and Muhadditheen RAH.

In his Sunan Bayhaqi quotes that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. said, "During Ramadhaan, Rasulullaah SAW. performed twenty Rakaahs salaah as well as the Witr salaah without the congregation." This narration of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. has also been reported by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf, by Tabraani in his Kabeer, by Ibn Adi in his Musnad and by Baghawi in his Majma Sahabah RADI, during Ramadhaan, Rasulullaah SAW. performed twenty Rakaahs salaah as well as the Witr salaah.

Haafidh Ibn Hajar Asqalaani RAH. reports from Imaam Raafi'ee RAH. that Rasulullaah SAW. led the Sahabah RADI. in twenty Rakaahs for two nights. However, when they had gathered on the third night, Rasulullaah SAW. remained in his room and told them the next day, "I feared that it may be made obligatory for you and you will then not be able to cope."

After quoting this narration, Ibn Hajar RAH. states that this narration is authentic according to all scholars.

Now Saamradi's people may argue that the narration of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. is weak but they fail to realise that there is need for a strong chain of narrators only when there exists a difference of opinion on an issue (such as in the case of saying Aameen loudly or softly). However, the Fuqahaa, Muhadditheen and the entire Ummah throughout the centuries have always accepted and practised the twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth and this unanimity is in itself a strong enough proof.

Here we will cite a few. excerpts making it clear that twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth salaah has been accepted by the Ummah throughout the ages.

1. Imaam Tirmidhi RAH. (passed away 279 A.H.) states that Hadhrat Umar RADI., Hadhrat Ali RADI., Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri RAH. (passed away 161 A.H.), Hadhrat Ibn Mubaarak RAH. (passed away 181 A.H.) and Hadhrat Imaam Shaafi'ee UVdiWa (passed away 240 A.H.) all accept the Taraaweeth salaah as being twenty Rakaahs. He quoted Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. as saying that he saw the people of Makkah performing twenty Rakaahs.

2. The famous compilation of Ahadeeth Kanzul Ummaql (Vol.2 Pg.284) reports that after Hadhrat Umar RADI. instructed Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI. to lead the people in twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth salaah, Hadhrat Ubay RADI. then led the Sahabah RADI. and Taabi'een in twenty Rakaahs

3. Bayhaqi reports a narration in which Hadhrat Saa'ib bin Yazeed RADI. states that they performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the periods of Hadhrat Umar RADI., Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI.

4. The other narration of Yazeed, bin Roomaan RAH. in the Mu'atta of Imaam Maalika states that during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI., people performed 23 Rakaahs of Taraaweesh together with the Witr salaah.

5. Ma'rifatus Sitta quotes an authentic narration from Imaam Bayhaqi RAH. stating that Hadhrat Ali RADI. summoned the Qurra in Ramadhaan and appointed someone to lead the people in the twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweesh salaah. Hadhrat Ali RADI. then himself led the Witr salaah.

6. The Muhaddith Ibn Qudaamah RAH. writes in his Al Mughni that the Sahabah RADI. were unanimous about performing twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh.

7. The research of the Muhaddith Ibn Hajar Haythami RAH. also reveals that the Sahabah RADI. were unanimous about performing twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh.

The famous Haafidh of Hadith Allaama Abdul Birr RAH. says that it is a fact that the Sahabah RADI. performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI.

Allaama Ibn Taymiyyah RAH. writes that Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI. led the Sahabah RADI. in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. He writes further that because Hadhrat Ubay RADI. led the Sahabah RADI. in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh and three Rakaahs Witr during Ramadhaan, most Ulema regard this to be a Sunnah because all of the Muhaajireen and Ansaar performed the salaah without an objection from any of them. This is the Fatwa of the man whom the Ghayr Muqallideen regard to be their Leader.

10. Imaam Sha;raani RAH. writes, "Hadhrat Umar RADI. then gave the instruction for 23 Rakaahs to be performed, three being the Witr salaah, This was then practised in all the cities.

11. The famous scholar of the Ahlul Hadith Nawaab Siddeeq Hasan believes that "Ulema regard as Ijmaa the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah that was performed during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI.

12. Allaama Bahrul Uloom RAH. writes that twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh became a matter of consensus.

13. Allaama Ibnul Humaam RAH. says that consensus was eventually reached that the Taraaweesh salaah comprises of twenty Rakaahs and this is what has been passed on from generation to generation.

14. Allaama Ayni RAH. says, "During the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. the Sahabah RADI. performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh and this continued during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI.

15. When Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. asked Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. whether Hadhrat Umar RADI. had any proof from Rasulullaah SAW. to perform twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. replied, "Hadhrat Umar RADI. was never one who perpetrated acts of Bid'ah.

16. The Mu'atta of Imaam Muhammad RAH. reads, "We go by this (twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh) because the Muslims (the Sahabah RADI.) were unanimous about it and saw it to be a good act. It has been reported that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Whatever the Muslims (the Sahabah RADI. regard as good act is indeed a good act in the sight of Allaah as well.

17. The following appears in the book Al Mutaqaa min Akhbaaril Mustat'aas , During the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. the Sahabah RADI. and others perform 23 Rakaahs, which included the Witr salaah."

18. Hadhrat Yahya bin Sa'eed Ansaari RAH. who was the Qaadhi of Madinah says that Hadhrat

Umar RADI. instructed someone to lead the people in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah. The narration is authentic, albeit Mursal.

19. Hadhrat Abdul Azeez bin Rafi RAH. says that Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI. led the people of Madinah in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh and three Rakaahs Witr. This narration is also authentic, albeit Mursal.

20. Hadhrat Abul Khaseeb RAH. says, "Hadhrat Suwayd bin Ghafala RADI. used to lead us in Ramadhaan with five resting periods and twenty Rakaahs." The narration is authentic.

21. Hadhrat Shutayr bin Shakal RAH. who was the student of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. used to lead the people in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah and three Rakaahs Witr. The narration is also authentic.

22. The eminent Taabi'ee and Mufti of Makkah Hadhrat Ataa bin Abi Rabaah RAH. says that he found the Sahabah RADI. and others performing 23 Rakaahs (Taraaweesh salaah) together with the Witr.

23. Hadhrat Naafi RAH. who was the student of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. says that Hadhrat Ibn Mulaykah RAH. used to lead them in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah during Ramadhaan. The narration is also authentic.

24. Hadhrat A'mash RAH. reports that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. used to perform twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah and three Rakaahs Witr.

25. Hadhrat Abul Bakhtari RAH. also took five resting periods and performed three Rakaahs Witr.

26. Hadhrat Abul Hasanaa RAH. says, "Hadhrat Ali RADI. instructed someone to lead us in twenty Rakaahs with five resting periods. The narration is authentic.

27. Hadhrat Muhammad bin Ka'b Qurazi RADI. also says that the Sahabah RADI. performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh during the time of Hadhrat Umar RADI.

28. Hadhrat Sa'eed bin Ubayd RAH. reports that Hadhrat Ali bin Rabee'ah RAH. took five resting periods and performed, three Rakaahs Witr during Ramadhaan. The narration is authentic.

29. Allaama Subki Shaafi'ee RAH. writes, "We believe that the Taraaweesh salaah is twenty Rakaahs, as proven by authentic narrations.

30. Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jaylaani RAH. says' "It comprises of twenty Rakaahs with every two Rakaahs ending with sitting and Salaam?. a person should make the intention of performing the Taraaweesh salaah before every two Rakaahs.

31. Imaam Ghazaali RAH. writes, "The Taraaweesh salaah comprises of? twenty Rakaahs and is Sunnah Mu'akkadah. The method of performing? it is well known. He also writes, "Twenty Rakaahs is the opinion of the? consensus of Ulema because of the narration of Yazeed bin Roomaan? RAH. in the Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik states that during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. people performed 23 Rakaahs of Taraaweesh together with the Witr salaah.

32. Sheikh Ahmad Roomi RAH. says, "There were a great number of Sahabah RADI. present at the time (when Hadhrat Umar RADI. instructed Hadhrat Ubay RADI. to lead them in twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh). Amongst them were Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI., Hadhrat Ali RADI., Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI., Hadhrat Abbaas RADI. and his son, Hadhrat Talha RADI. Hadhrat Zubayr RADI., Hadhrat Mu'aadh RADI. and many other Muhaajireen and Ansaar. None of them objected to Hadhrat Umar RADI. but rather supported him and practiced accordingly with steadfastness. In fact, Hadhrat Ali RADI. made du'aa for Hadhrat Umar RADI. saying, 'May Allaah illuminate his grave just as he illuminated our Masaajid.' Rasulullaah SAW. also said, 'Hold fast to my practices and the practices of the rightly guided Khalifahs after me.' The Taraaweesh salaah comprises twenty Rakaahs.

33. Hadhrat Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. also writes that the Taraaweesh salaah

during the times of the Sahaban RADI. and Taabi'een comprised of twenty Rakaahs.

34.Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. also mentions that consensus was reached amongst the Sahabah RADI. to perform twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh and three Rakaahs Witr.

35.Hadhrat Moulana Qutbud Deen Kahn Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. also mentions that consensus was reached amongst the Sahabah RADI. to perform twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh.

36.Allaama Shabeer Ahmad Uthmaani RAH. writes that since none of the Sahabah RADI. ever differed about the twenty Rakaahs, all scholars are unanimous about it.

Allaama Nawawi RAH. writes in his commentary of Muslim that the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh is a hallmark of Islaam just like the Eid salaahs. Therefore, the Ta'leeqaat af Hidayaha states that anyone performing only eight Rakaahs of Taraaweesh will be guilty of forsaking the Sunnah. Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. said. "There are six people whom I curse, Allaah curses and whom every Nabi whose du'aas are accepted also curses. (They are) the one who exceeds the limits set by Allaah's Book. the one who denies predestination, the one who regards as legal that which Allaah has made illegal, the one who regards as legal something pertaining to my family which Allaah has made illegal and the one who forsakes my Sunnah."

Such is the warning for anyone who leaves out the Sunnah. On the contrary, the person who performs the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah will receive the rewards of a Fardh salaah for every Rakaah, as promised by Rasulullaah SAW.

A Detailed Analysis

The foregoing pages highlighted the facts that Saamrodi's references were misquotes and that twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh has been a practice passed down from generation to generation. While this is sufficient to dispel the claims of Saamrodi, I wish to shed further light on the matter. It appears that Saamrodi is amongst those about whom the Qur'aan says: "They have eyes with which they cannot see and ears with which they cannot hear".

However, it is for those in search of the truth whom we wish to put at ease. It is about such people that Allaah says, "Give glad tidings to those of My servants who listen attentively and then practise the good accordingly." It is such people whom we now address.

When an accusation is levelled at any person or group, a fair and just person will first attempt to ascertain what the characteristics and thinking is of the accused party before passing any verdict. The nature of the accusation also has to be understood well and whether or not it fits into the image of the accused.

Just to please Saamrodi, if we assume that Rasulullaah SAW. never performed twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeh, we will have to examine Hadhrat Umar RADI. and the Sahabah RADI. because it was them who started it. Furthermore, this is an issue associated with factors as important as salaah in congregation and the Qur'aan itself. The question that therefore arises is: "Would someone like Hadhrat Umar RADI. really start a Bid'ah that pertains to matters as important as salaah in congregation and the Qur'aan?" Then too, was the folly of this not seen by any of the Sahabah RADI. and were they not able to raise an objection?

Let us now try to understand who Hadhrat Umar RADI. was. Hadhrat Umar RADI. holds the title of Faarooq, meaning that he was one by whom the truth and falsehood are set apart; one who defined milk as milk and later as water. It was about him that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The one who is most firm in enforcing Allaah's commands is Umar." This statement of Rasulullaah SAW. has reached the status of Tour Tawaatur and is mentioned in almost every Friday sermon.

It was the same Hadhrat Umar RADI. whose name made Shaytaan shiver and about whom an authentic Hadith states that when he passes by a road, Shaytaan ensures that he takes another road.

It was also Hadhrat Umar RADI. who stated, "The person I like best is he who points out my faults to me." In fact, the first thing he said after being appointed as Ameerul Mu'mineen was, "I should be followed only when I act according to the teachings of Allaah and His Rasool SAW. and according to the practises of Abu Bakr RADI. The creation cannot be obeyed when it entails disobeying the Creator.

These announcements were not mere lip service, but repeated very often. In fact, he once

asked from the pulpit, "What will you people do if I issue a decree that conflicts with the practices of Rasulullaah SAW. and Abu Bakr RADI. When the people remained silent, he repeated the question. This time a youngster stood up and drew his sword, indicating that he would use the sword to set matters right. To this, Hadhrat Umar RADI. remarked, "This Ummah will never stray as long as such courage remains.

Hadhrat Umar RADI. once stood on the pulpit to deliver a sermon and said, "Listen and obey." Someone immediately stood up and shouted, "We will not listen and not obey!" Rather than having the person punished, Hadhrat Umar RADI. asked the man to explain himself. The man said, "You have not been just in your distribution of the booty. We also received the cloth that you are wearing as a suit (an upper and lower garment), but we were unable to make a complete suit. You have therefore not been just by taking double the amount."

Hadhrat Umar RADI. did not reply to the man's objection, but told his son Hadhrat Abdullaah RADI. to reply. Hadhrat Abdullaah RADI. then testified that he had given his share to his father. The man did not need to excuse himself and simply said, "You may now speak because we will listen and obey." This makes it evident that the Muslims at the time felt free to question even minor matters that perturbed them. This freedom of speech was not restricted only to men, but accorded to women as well. Hadhrat Umar RADI. once announced from the pulpit, I do not know who increased dowries above four hundred Dirhams because the dowry that Rasulullaah SAW. and the Sahabah RADI. gave was always four hundred Dirhams or less. Had larger dowries been an act of Taqwa or honour, people would have never beat Rasulullaah SAW. and the Sahabah RADI. to it." After Hadhrat Umar RADI. had alighted from the pulpit, a woman from the Quraysh objected. "O Ameerul Mu'mineen!" she said, "Are you forbidding the people from paying dowries in excess of four hundred Dirhams?" When Hadhrat Umar RADI. confirmed it, she said, "Have you then not heard Allaah say in the Qur'aan:

when you have given one of them your wives) a fortune (as dowry)

Hadhrat Umar RADI. then said, "Allaah forgive me! Everyone has more understanding than Umar." He then returned to the pulpit and said, "O people! I had forbidden you from paying dowries in excess of four hundred Dirhams (the prohibition no longer stands). Therefore whoever wishes to give whatever he pleases from his wealth, he may do so.

The Aversion the Sahabah RADI. had for Acts of Bid'ah

Let us now focus on the Sahabah RADI. and examine their thinking, their inclinations and aversions. They were the illustrious group whom Allaah selected to be companions of His beloved Nabi SAW. They were the bearers of Rasulullaah SAW.'s message to all of mankind to come until Qiyaamah. Their fervour for the preservation of the Deen was therefore so intense that there is no group after them who ever detested acts of Bid'ah as much as they did.

The Sahabi Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mughaffal RADI. testifies: I have never seen any of the Sahabah RADI. detest anything as much as acts of Bid'ah.

You will see from the narrations we shall be quoting that the vision of the Sahabah RADI. was extremely well-tuned and deep and they would reprimand people for matters that we would regard as trivial. One can not imagine that such people would ever sit back and allow any open act to take place that conflicts with the Sunnah, let alone participate in the same. Here are a few incidents to note:

1. When someone came to Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. to convey the salaams of another man, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. remarked that he had heard people say that the person was one who perpetrated acts of Bid'ah. He therefore said, "If he really does perpetrate acts of Bid'ah, then do not convey my Salaams to him."
2. When he heard the Mu'adhin in Makkah announced the Tathweeb (announcing the salaah after the Adhaan), Hadhrat Umar RADI. cautioned him saying, "Are the words of the Adhaan not sufficient?"
3. When Hadhrat Ali RADI. saw a Mu'adhin announcing the Tathweeb, he became angry and said, "Remove this perpetrator of Bid'ah from the Masjid."
4. Hadhrat Mujaahid RAH. reports that they were with Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. in a Masjid when after the Zuhur Adhaan, the Mu'adhin called out "As Salaah! As Salaah!" Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. exclaimed, "Take me away from this person who practises Bid'ah." He then left and performed his salaah elsewhere.

NOTE: If the Sahabah RADI. could not tolerate adding an announcement after the Adhaan, could they ever tolerate a salaah of twenty Rakaahs?

5.Hadhrat Hasan RAH. reports that when someone invited Hadhrat Uthmaan bin Abul Aas RADI. to a circumcision ceremony, he refused the offer saying, "Neither did we invite people for a circumcision ceremony during the time of Rasuluilaah SAW. nor did we attend any.

6.When Hadhrat Sa'd bin Maalik RADI. heard a person say, "Labbaik, Yaa Dhal Ma'aarij" to the Talbiya, he remarked, "We never said these words during the time of Rasulullaah SAW.

7.Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. was once performing Tawaaf with Hadhrat Mu'aawiya RADI. When Hadhrat Mu'aawiya RADI. kissed all four corners of the Kabah, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. told him that Rasulullaah SAW. kissed only the Rukn Yamaani and the Hajar Aswad. "But no part of this Kabah deserves to be left out," Hadhrat Mu'aawiya RADI. remarked. To this, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. recited the verse, "There is indeed a sterling example for you in Rasulullsah SAW." Hadhrat Mu'aawiya RADI. agreed that he was right.

NOTE: When a person cannot tolerate that the Kabah be kissed in conflict with the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. how can he tolerate that a Bid'ah be perpetrated in the Masjidul Haraam and Masjidun Nabawi?

8.When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. saw Hadhrat Tawoos Performing Nafl salaah after the Asr salaah, he stopped him, telling him that it was in conflict with the Sunnah.

9.A person once arrived at the place of performing the Eid salaah on the day of Eid and was about to start performing salaah when Hadhrat Ali RADI. stopped him. "O Ameerul Mu'mineen!" the man said. "I know well that Allaah will not punish me for performing salaah (why are you then stopping me?)." Hadhrat Aii RADI. replied, "I know well that Allaah will not reward you for something unless Rasulullaah SAW. did it or encouraged it. (Since Rasulullaah SAW. did not perform any salaah before the Eid salaah) I fear that you act will be futile and (when it comes to worship) futile acts are Haraam. I therefore fear that Allaah may even i punish you for it.

Now when Hadhrat Ali RADI. regarded performing Nafl salaah in conflict with the Sunnah to be a cause for punishment, why did he not stop the twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeh salaah and even appoint an Imaam to lead it?

10. When Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed Khudri RAH. saw the Khalifah Marwaan delivering the Khutbah before the Eid salaah, he stopped him, saying that it opposed the Sunnah.

11. Hadhrat Ka'b bin Ujrah RADI. once entered the Masjid when Abdur Rahmaan bin Ummul Hakam was sitting and delivering the Khutbah. "Look at that wretch!" Hadhrat Ka'b RADI. remarked, "He is sitting while delivering the Khutbah when Allaah says, "When they see trade or futility (the caravan and its welcoming procession), they hurry to it and leave you (O Rasulullaah SAW.) standing (where you are in the process of delivering the Friday Khutbah)."

12. Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari RADI. was the governor of Kufa and Hadhrat Salmaan bin Rabee'ah RADI. was the judge of Kufa at the time when they both issued a verdict that a daughter and a sister should each receive half the estate of a deceased while the grand daughter received nothing. They then sent the questioner to Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. for confirmation. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. however disagreed and immediately said, "I cannot say something that opposed what Rasuilaah SAW. did, otherwise I would go astray." According to what Rasulullaah SAW. said, he then gave half the estate to the daughter, a sixth to the grand daughter and the remainder to the sister.

13. When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. saw people raising their hands above their chests while making du'aa, he said, "Your raising your hands like that is a Bid'ah because Rasulullaah SAW. never raised his hands above his chest.

14. When Hadhrat Umaarah bin Ruwaybah RADI. saw Bishr bin Marwaan raise his hands in du'aa as he delivered a sermon, he made du'aa that Allaah destroy Bishr's hands because he never saw Rasulullaah SAW. raise his hands in that manner during the sermon.

15. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Zubayr RADI. once saw a person raise his hands in du'aa (during Qa'dah) before completing the salaah. He therefore told the man that Rasulullaah SAW. never raised his hands, in? du'aa until he had completed the salaah.

16. Hadhrat Umar RADI. had sent Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. to Kufa to teach the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth to the people and as a Mufti. It was during this period that when the people waited for the Fajr salaah, they started the practice of sitting in groups with many stones before them. Someone would then tell them to recite Allaahu Akbar a hundred times and they

would all do so. He would then tell them to recite Laa Ilaaha Illallaah a hundred times and they would do it. In this manner they would recite various Adhkaar. When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. heard about this, he approached them and asked what they were doing. "We are only counting the Tasbeehaat with these stones," they replied. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. said to them, "You had rather count your sins on them. There is no need to count the Tasbeehaat because I can assure you that Allaah does not waste a single good deed."

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. then said in remorse, ?O Ummah of Muhammad SAW. It is so sad to see how fast you are heading for destruction The companions of Rasulullaah SAW. are still amongst you, Rasulullaah SAW.'s clothing is still with you and has not yet become old and even his utensils are present without being broken (yet you have already started going astray). I swear by the Being Who controls my life that you people are either following a way that is more rightly guided than the way of Rasulullaah SAW. (which is impossible) or you have opened the doors to deviation."

"But we have only intended to do good," the people pleaded. "There are many people who say that they only intend good," Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. said, "however, they are never blessed with any good at all. Rasulullaah SAW. told us that there will be people who will recite the Qur'aan without the Qur'aan going higher than their collarbones (will not be accepted) because their recitation will be done as they want to do it and not as Allaah and His Rasool SAW. want it." Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. then went away in anger. The narrator of the incident says, "We observed that these people later affiliated with the Khawaarij because they were fighting against us when we waged war against the Khawaarij."

17. Another narration states that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. once heard about some people who sat in groups after the Maghrib salaah. One of them would then tell the others to recite Subhaanallaah a certain number of times, Alhamdulillah a certain number of times and Allaahu Akbar a certain number of times. The people would then do as bidden. When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. heard about this and saw what they were doing, he remarked, "I swear by Allaah that you people are either involved in a very dark Bid'ah or you have more knowledge than the Sahabah RADI. of Rasulullaah SAW." He then had them removed from the Masjid.

18. Although the Ahadeeth prove that Chaast salaah (Salaatut Duha) should be performed, there is no need to gather in the Masjid to do so or to make announcements to the effect. In fact, doing so is an act of Bid'ah, as stated by Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI.

19. When the son of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mughaffal RADI. recited Bismillaah loudly in salaah before Surah Faatiha, his father said, "Dear son! That is an act of Bid'ah. Abstain from acts of Bid'ah. I have not seen anything more detestable to the Sahabah RADI. of Rasulullaah SAW. than acts of Bid'ah. I have performed salaah behind Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI., Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and have never heard any of the them recite it (loudly), so do not do so.

NOTE: Why did no one speak out when twelve Rakaahs were added to eight?

20. Hadhrat Abu Maalik Ashja'ee RADI. reports that he once asked his father Hadhrat Taariq RADI. "You have performed salaah behind Rasulullaah SAW. Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI., Hadhrat Umar RADI., Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and now for five years here in Kufa behind Hadhrat Ali RADI. Did they always recite the Qunoot?" "Dear son!" he replied, "That is a Bid'ah.

21. Hadhrat Naafi RAH. reports that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. once heard a person sneeze and say, "Alhamdulillah was Salaamu alaa Rasulullaah?. To this, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. remarked, "Although I also say "Alhamdulillah was Salaamu alaa Rasulillaah" (on other occasions as separate phrases), Rasulullaah SAW. did not teach us? this (to recite this when sneezing). What Rasulullaah SAW. did teach us was to recite "Alhamdulillah alaa Kulli Haal.

NOTE: When the Sahabah RADI. could not tolerate little matters that were done individually like reciting Bismillaah loudly, saying " Alhamdulillah was Salaamu alaa Rasulillaah" after sneezing and reciting the Qunoot on a continuous basis, how could they tolerate a congregational act of performing twenty Rakaahs salaah? The matter was not something small like two or four Rakaahs, but twenty - that too in? Jamaa'ah!

22. When Hadhrat sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas RADI. passed away, Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. requested that the Janaazah salaah be performed in the Masjid so that she could also attend it. Despite the fact that the request was made by the mother of the Mu'mineen and despite the fact that Hadhrat sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas RADI. was the conqueror of Iraq, one of the earliest Muslims and amongst the Ashara Mubashara, the Sahabah RADI. refused to permit the act because performing the Janaazah salaah in the Masjid was in conflict with the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW.

Now if the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah was not performed by Rasulullaah SAW. and conflicted with the Sunnah, is it not surprising that the Sahabah RADI. allowed it to take place?

23. Hadhrat Umar RADI. once passed a verdict about blood money for a finger, but was then informed of a statement of Rasulullaah SAW. that opposed his verdict. He then immediately retracted his verdict.

NOTE: If twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh opposed the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. why did no one point this out to Hadhrat Umar RADI.

24. Hadhrat Umar RADI. once decreed that an insane woman who committed adultery be stoned to death. Hadhrat Ali RADI. however opposed the verdict, proving his opinion by quoting from Rasulullaah SAW. that three persons are not responsible for their actions. They are (1) the sleeping person until he awakens, (2) the child until he comes of age and (3) the insane person until he regains his sanity. Hadhrat Umar RADI. then immediately revoked the decree. Hadhrat Umar RADI. also thanked Hadhrat Ali RADI. for correcting him and stated, "Had it not been for Ali, Umar would have been destroyed."

Regarding as misleading an act that the Sahabah RADI. were unanimous about is pure obstinacy. Practising accordingly is necessary and it is only due to ignorance that one would look to other proofs and regard what they did as insufficient. Hadhrat Ayyoob Sakhtiyaani RAH. says, "When you tell someone about a Sunnah act and he says, 'Do not tell us about that, but rather tell us what the Qur'aan says', then know that such a person is astray."

The Fervour to Follow the Sunnah

1. Allaah says: ?Say (to the people, O Muhammad SAW.) "If you love Allaah then follow me (Muhammad SAW.), Allaah will then love you (He will reward you and grant you numerous material and spiritual blessings) and forgive your sins. Allaah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

2.Addressing the Mu'mineen, Allaah says, "There is definitely an excellent example in Allaah's Rosool SAW. for the one who fears Allaah and the Last Day, and who remembers Allaah abundantly."

3.Rasulullaah SAW. said, "None of you has Imaan until his desires are subservient to that which I have brought.

The Sahabah RADI. Were the best images of Rasulullaah SAW.'s life. While they strongly opposed any Bid'ah, they had tremendous fervour to emulate everything Rasulullaah SAW. did. Volumes can be filled with accounts of this, but we will suffice with just a few.

1.Rasulullaah SAW. once mounted the pulpit and instructed the people to sit. When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. who was at the door of the Masjid heard this, he immediately sat where he was, even though the instruction was for those inside the Masjid.

2.Rasulullaah SAW. was once leading the salaah when he suddenly removed his shoes. Seeing this, the Sahabah RADI. immediately removed their shoes as well. When the salaah was over. Rasulullaah SAW. asked them why they had removed their shoes and they submitted that they had done so because he had done so. Rasulullaah SAW. then explained that he had removed his shoes because Hadhrat Jibra'eel ALY. told him that there was some impurity beneath it.

3. Rasulullaah SAW. advised people that when they become angry, they should sit if they are standing and lie down if they are sitting. Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. was drawing water in an orchard one day when a person did something that caused all the water to flow outwards rather than inwards. This made Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. very angry, but, recalling the instruction of Rasulullaah SAW. he immediately sat down even though his clothing became wet and muddy in the water.

4.It was the teaching of Rasulullaah SAW. that when a morsel of food fell out of one's hand while eating, one should pick it up, clean it and eat it. When a morsel once fell out of the hand of the Sahabi Hadhrat Hudhayfah bin Yamaan RADI. whilst he was sitting in the company of some non-Arab leaders. Because these people would have regarded the act of picking up the food as uncultured, another Muslim advised Hadhrat Hudhayfah RADI. not to pick up the morsel. Hadhrat Hudhayfah RADI. however went ahead saying, "should I leave out the Sunnah of

Rasulullaah SAW. for the sake of these fools?

5. The incident of Hadhrat Umar RADI. is famous that when he kissed the Hajar Aswad on the occasion of Hajj, he addressed it saying, "I know well that you are a stone that can neither do good nor cause harm. but had I not seen Rasulullaah SAW. kissing you, I would never have done so.

6. the Kabah contains a treasure that the Mushrikeen amassed over the years, but which Islaam forbade. Hadhrat Shaybah RADI. says that Hadhrat Umar RADI. once approached the Kabah and mentioned that he intended removing the treasure and distributing it amongst the people. "But none of the two before you (Rasulullaah SAW. and Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. did that?" Hadhrat Shaybah RADI. remarked. Upon hearing this, Hadhrat Umar RADI. immediately cancelled his plans and said,

"Those are the two whom I have to follow.

7. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. knew all the places en route to Makkah where Rasulullaah SAW. performed salaah or did anything and would also perform salaah and do the same act wherever Rasulullaah SAW. did so. In fact, he even stopped in a valley between Arafaat and Muzdalifah to make wudhu at a place where Rasulullaah SAW. made wudhu.

8. There was a danger of a war taking place during the time of Hajj after Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Zubayr RADI. was martyred in the year 73A.H. When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. intended performing Hajj during this time, his sons prevented him saying, "You may be stopped from reaching the Haram." Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. however argued that Rasulullaah SAW. faced the same danger when he proceeded for Umrah, but he did not postpone it. Furthermore, he reasoned, being stopped from entering the Haram is another Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. (when Rasulullaah SAW. was stopped at Hudaibiyyah), in which case Rasulullaah SAW. slaughtered his animal and returned. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. therefore also took an animal along with him as Rasulullaah SAW. did so that he would be able to do exactly as Rasulullaah SAW. if he was stopped on the way.

It was with 1400 Sahabah RADI. that Rasulullaah SAW. proceeded for Umrah and was stopped by the Mushrikeen from entering Makkah at Hudaibiyyah. Rather than fighting, Rasulullaah

SAW. opted to enter into a peace treaty with the Mushrikeen and amongst others, the Mushrikeen sent Hadhrat Urwa bin Mas'ood, RADI. as their envoy. After negotiating with Rasulullaah SAW. this is what Hadhrat Urwa RADI. had to tell the Mushrikeen about the Sahabah RADI.

"O people! I have been to the royal courts of Caesars, Kisras and Najaashi. I have never seen the followers of any ruler so devoted to him as the followers of Muhammad SAW. are to him. By Allaah! Even when he spits, someone would catch it and rub it on his face and body. Whenever he issues any command the Sahabah RADI. would immediately carry it out and when he made wudhu, they get close to fighting with each other to get the water falling off his limbs. They always lower their voices when speaking to him and do not look him in the eye out of respect for him.

Like these, there are numerous other incidents of the love the Sahabah RADI. had for Rasulullaah SAW. When they could not allow his spit to touch the ground, would they ever allow his Sunnah to be trampled upon?

The Taraaweeh salaah and Preservation of the Qur'aan

Whereas Saamrodi states that the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeh salaah is not proven even from a weak narration, people with deeper insight will realise that the Taraaweeh salaah has a profound link with the preservation of the Qur'aan and the promises of Allaah when He says: "Without doubt only We have revealed the Reminder (the Qur'aan) and (by various means) We shall certainly be its protectors (ensuring that it remains unchanged throughout time) and the verse, "Verily, it is Our responsibility to collect it (to make you memorise the words of the Qur'aan) and to make you recite it.

It was not long after Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. became the Khalifah that the Muslims waged Jihaad against the false prophet Musaylama Kadhaab. Although the Muslims were victorious, the battle took a heavy toll on the Muslims because seven hundred Huffaadh were martyred. As the Qur'aan was being revealed to Rasulullaah SAW. scribes always wrote down the various verses, but all of the various parchments and other writing material were never collected together. It was because of this that Hadhrat Umar RADI. felt that if more Huffaadh had to be martyred in battles to come, there was the danger of losing parts of the Qur'aan. He therefore approached Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. with the proposition to have the entire Qur'aan compiled into one volume.

Because of the dislike for acts of Bid'ah that was ingrained into the hearts of the Sahabah RADI. Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. asked, "How can we attempt to do something that Rasulullaah SAW. never did?" However, Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. says, "Umar RADI. then continued convincing me until Allaah put my heart at ease about the matter just as his heart was at ease and I shared Umar's opinion on the matter." They then sent for Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. who was a young and intelligent Sahabi who was also a scribe of revelation, to charge him with the task. However, he posed the same question when he said, "How can you do something that Rasulullaah SAW. never did?" Hadhrat Zaid RADI. narrates. "Abu Bakr RADI. then continued convincing me until Allaah put my heart at ease about the matter just as the hearts of Abu Bakr RADI. and Umar RADI. were at ease. I then also shared their opinion on the matter."

Hadhrat Zaid RADI. then launched an intensive search for parts of the Qur'aan that had been preserved on various materials and exercised tremendous caution and meticulousness in the matter. After Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. passed away, the manuscript was handed over to Hadhrat Umar RADI. who entrusted it to his daughter Hadhrat Hafsa RADI. for safekeeping.

It was then during the Khilaafah of Hadhrat Umar RADI. that the Sunnah of the Taraaweeh salaah in Jamaa'ah was restarted, which Rasulullaah SAW. carried out when he led the Sahabah RADI. in twenty Rakaahs for two nights. Furthermore, Rasulullaah SAW. did say, "Whoever stands in salaah during Ramadhaan with Imaan and the hope of being rewarded will have all his previous sins forgiven." Because of this, the Sahabah RADI. used to engage in salaah at nights and some even made small Jamaa'ahs. Hadhrat Umar RADI. however, collected them all into one Jamaa'ah and appointed as Imaam Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI. about whom Rasulullaah SAW. said, "He is the most proficient in reciting the Qur'aan."

In fact, when Hadhrat Umar RADI. proposed the matter to Hadhrat Ubay RADI. his concern was also about doing something that was not done in that manner during the time of Rasulullaah SAW. However, after discussion and deliberation, he was also convinced of the necessity. The Taraaweeh salaah in Jamaa'ah as we have it today was then formerly started.

Although this was how the matter transpired, Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes that in essence this was Allaah's method of fulfilling the promises of "Without doubt only We have revealed the Reminder the Qur'aan) and (by various means) We shall certainly be its protectors (ensuring that it remains unchanged throughout time) and the verse, "Do not move your tongue with the (words of the Qur'aan to hasten it. Verily, it is Our responsibility to collect it (to make you memorise the words of the Qur'aan) and to make you recite it. He says, "it must

be noted that the collection of the Qur'aan in one manuscript as enacted by Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. and Hadhrat Umar RADI. was a route to preserving the Qur'aan and really Allaah's doing in fulfilling His promise to safeguard the Qur'aan.

Commenting on the verse of Surah Qiyaamah, Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RADI. states that Allaah alleviated Rasulullaah SAW. of the difficulty of repeating a verse constantly to memorise it and miraculously made him remember every verse as soon as Hadhrat Jibra'eel ALY. recited it to him. All Rasulullaah SAW. needed to do was listen. Hadhrat Shah RAH. also adds that every Muslim who has the Qur'aan today owes it to the efforts of Hadhrat Umar RADI. whom Allaah used in its preservation.

It was Hadhrat Umar RADI. who spearheaded the compilation of the Qur'aan, the intensive research into every verse and it was also him who encouraged memorisation of the Qur'aan and the appointment of teachers for the purpose. Another important service that he did in this regard is clear from the narration of Bukhaaris in which Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Abd Qaari RADI. says, "I accompanied Hadhrat Umar RADI. to the Masjid one night in Ramadhaan, where he saw scattered groups of the Sahabah RADI. performing salaah. Some were performing salaah individually while others had appointed an Imaam behind whom they performed salaah. Hadhrat Umar RADI. said, 'It would be excellent if they could all be gathered behind a single Imaam.' He then had them all performing salaah behind Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI.

It was this preservation of the Qur'aan that Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. Hadhrat Umar RADI. And Hadhrat Zaid RADI. Had as their purpose when they discussed the matter and it had nothing to do with following their whims. In fact, the accepted leader of the Ahle Hadith Molana Sayyid Nadheer Husayn Muhaddith Dehlwi RAH. writes, It was the habit of the Sahabah RADI. Never to initiate any Deeni act by themselves and without The permission and command of Rasulullaah. SAW.

The Sahabah RADI. are a Criterion for what is Right and what is Wrong as Stated by the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth

The statement of Saamrodi reeks of insolence when he says, "There is no doubt about the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. never performed twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth. It was the people (Sahabah RADI.) after him who increased the number of Rakaahs. Now one needs to think whether it is Rasulullaah SAW. we have to follow or the people (the Sahabah RADI.)? Has Allaah given the rights to the Deen and the Shari'ah to any of the followers of Rasulullaah SAW.? Do not fall into the deception of the extra (twenty Rakaahs of Taraaweeth that the people have started."

These words make it evident that in the eyes of Saamrodi, the Sahabah RADI. are people just like us and, like us, they are not a criterion for what is right and what is wrong. This makes it clear to us that Saamrodi has no knowledge of the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth. If indeed he does recite the Qur'aan, he must certainly be amongst those about whom Rasulullaah SAW. said,

"people who will recite the Qur'aan, but it will not even pass their collarbones.

In his famous work Izaalatul Khifaa, Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. quotes almost a hundred verses of the Qur'aan that make it clear that it is wrong to paint the Sahabah RADI. with the same brush as other Muslims because Allaah has granted them a special status. Not only are they the best people of the Ummah and the most fitting examples of a "moderate Ummah", but it will not be wrong to describe them as the people of mankind after the Ambiyaa ALY. They are guiding stars to humanity and truly a criterion for what is right and what is wrong. We will now quote only three of the many verses of the Qur'aan the Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Mia (DAMAT BARKAATUH) has quoted in his Urdu translation of Izaalatul Khifaa. Please refer to the original references for more details.

Allaah says:

1. "Allaah sent His tranquillity to the heart of His Rasool SAW. and to the hearts of the Mu'mineen and stuck the word of Taqwa (the Kalimah) onto them as they are most deserving of it and worthy of it. Allaah always has knowledge of everything.

2. (Addressing the Sahabah RADI., Allaah says,) "However, Allaah has made Imaan beloved to you, has made it beautiful within your hearts and has made kufr, sin and disobedience abhorrent to you. Such people (with these qualities) are rightly guided. What better testimony than that of the Qur'aan? Because the common person is infested with the germs of kufr, sin and disobedience, he cannot be a criterion for what is right and what is wrong. However, Allaah has purified the souls and minds of this chosen group of the Sahabah RADI. and made such acts abhorrent to them. Imaan had been entrenched in their hearts and permeated their every nerve and sinew. Allaah sent tranquillity to them and stuck the Kalimah firmly to their hearts. Imaan was their crown and it was because of this that the Qur'aan announces that they are the rightly guided ones.

3. "Allaah is pleased with the first to lead the way from the Muhaajireen, the Ansaar, and those who followed them with sincerity and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them such Jannaat beneath which rivers flow, in which they shall live forever. This is the ultimate success.

You may decide for yourself that people whom Allaah has declared to be rightly guided and with

whom He is pleased must most certainly be a criterion for what is right and what is wrong. Can anyone with Imaan ever doubt this fact?

Now let us look at a few Ahadeeth of Rasulullaah SAW. in this regard.

1. Describing the Sahabah RADI. as a criterion for right and wrong, Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Every condition that came to the Bani Israa'eel shall come to my Ummah just as a footprint follows another, While the Bani Israa'eel divided into seventy two groups, my Ummah will divide Into seventy three groups, all of whom will end up in Jahannam except one.? When the Sahabah RADI. asked who this group will be Rasulullaah SAW. replied, "Those who follow the path on which my companions and I are on.

2. Rasulullaah SAW. also said, "wherever .on earth any of my sahabah RADI. pass away, they will. be raised as a leader and light for the people of that region.

3. Rasulullaah SAW.added, "My sahabah RADI. are like stars. You will be rightly guided by following any one of them.

4. A narration states, "Allaah looked at the hearts of his bondsmen, selected the heart of Muhammad SAW. and sent him with His message. He then looked at the hearts of His bondsmen again, selected his companions and made them assistants in (the propagation of) his Deen and ministers? of His Nabi SAW. Therefore, what these Muslim (the sahabah RADI.) view as good, is good in the sight of Allaah and whatever they view as evil, is evil in the sight of Allaah.

5. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The best of periods is my period' followed by those after them and then those after them.

It is the special attribute of the Sahabah RADI. that whatever they regard as a virtue is regarded as the by Allaah' The above make it evident that the sahabah RADI. were certainly a criterion for what is right and what is wrong and following them is to follow what is right' Apart from being the practise of the Sahabah RADI. in general, the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeth salaah was

especially promoted the likes of Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI. both of whom were amongst the Khulafaa Raashideen. It is with regard to the practices of these Khulafaa Raashideen that Rasurullaah SAW. instructed Muslims to bite onto with their back teeth. Saamrodi states, "Has Allaah given the rights to the Deen and the shari'ah to any of the followers of Raslullaah SAW.?" It is evident that the Sahabah RADI. never initiated a new Deen and new shari'ah. This discussion revolves around the sunnah and understanding Rasulullaah SAW.'s thinking. Did the Sahabah RADI. better understand the thinking of Rasulullaah SAW. or does saamrodi and his companions? If saamrodi and his friends wish to be an obstacle, then must they be regarded as a criterion for what is right and what is wrong or must the Sahabah RADI. be regarded as such? Based on the verses of the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth, the Ulema have concluded that it is the Sahabah RADI. who are a criterion for what is right and what is wrong, that it is Waajib (compulsory) to follow them and that following them is to follow the Shari'ah.

The advice Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. gave the Ummah was, "Whoever wishes to follow the ways of another, should follow the ways of those who have passed away. These were the companions of Muhammad SAW. who were the best people of this Ummah. Their hearts were most pious, their knowledge was deepest and they were least pretentious. They were people whom Allaah had chosen to be companions of His Nabi SAW. and for the transmission of His Deen. You people should therefore emulate their character and mannerisms. They were firmly stationed on correct guidance.

Hadhrat Hasan Basri RAH. said, "From the entire Ummah, this group (the Sahabah RADI. had the most righteous hearts, the deepest knowledge and were the most un-pretentious. Allaah selected them to be Rasulullaah SAW.'s companions and they were always striving to emulate his character and mannerisms. I swear by the Rabb of the Kabah that they were firmly stationed on the straight path.

When Hadhrat Muhammad bin Seereen RAH. was asked a question, he replied, "Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. regarded it to be Makrooh. If this was based on their knowledge (of the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth), then their knowledge is greater than mine and if it was based on their personal opinions, then their opinions are better than mine.

Hadhrat Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. said, "O Baqiyya! Knowledge was that which came from the Sahabah RADI. of Muhammad SAW. Whatever did not come from them is not knowledge at all.

Hadhrat Aamir Sha'bi RAH. said, "Accept what they report to you from the Sahabah RADI. of Rasulullaah SAW. and leave with contempt whatever they say of their own opinions.

The eminent Taabi'ee Hadhrat Umar bin Abdul Azeez RAH. once wrote a letter saying, "You must therefore adopt the ways that the people (the Sahabah RADI.) adopted because when they stationed themselves on something. they did so with full knowledge and when they prevented people from something, they did so with great insight. Without doubt, they were able to unravel complicated points of wisdom and academic intricacies and whatever they did was what really is the most virtuous of actions. Therefore, If you regard what you are doing as being true guidance (as Saamrodi does concerning the issue of Taraaweeh), it means that your virtuousness has surpassed theirs (which is impossible).

Imaam Rabbani Hadhrat Muiaddid Alf Thaani RAH. writes. "Rasulullaah? SAW. has stated that this group can be recognised by the fact that they 'follow the path on which my companions and I are on', While it would have sufficed to say 'the path on which i am'. Rasulullaah SAW. specifically mentioned the Sahabah RADI. so that it may be known that the path the Sahabah RADI. follow is his path as well and that salvation can be attained by following the Sahabah RADI. This is just as the verse that says 'Whoever obeys the Rasool has obeyed Allaah'. This tells us that obeying Rasulullaah SAW. really is obeying Allaah and disobeying him really is disobeying Allaah. Therefore, claiming to obey Rasulullaah SAW. while opposing the ways of the Sahabah RADI. (as Saamrodi does) is a false claim because this is really disobedience to Rasulullaah SAW. How can one then expect salvation?

Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes, "The understanding of the Sahabah RADI. and the Taabi'een is a criterion for right and wrong. It is Waajib (compulsory) to accept what they understood from the teaching of Rasulullaah SAW. as they kept the conditions and words of Rasulullaah SAW. in mind.

Hadhrat Umar bin Abdul Azeez RAH. wrote: "While Rasulullaah SAW. detailed many practices. his successors also detailed many. Accepting what they detailed entails believing in the Book of Allaah, perfecting one's obedience to Allaah and assisting the Deen of Allaah. Whoever practises them shall be rightly guided, whoever seeks assistance through practising them shall be assisted and whoever opposes them follows a path other than that of the Mu'mineen, he shall be allowed to do that which he is doing and then entered into Jahannam. which is the worst of abodes.

Responses to the Fallacious Proofs that the Ghayr Muqallideen use to Disprove the Twenty Rakaahs Taraaweeh salaah

THEIR FIRST PROOF': Hadhrat Abu Salamah reports that he once asked Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. about the salaah Rasulullaah SAW. performed during Ramadhan. She replied, "Whether it was during Ramadhan or out of Ramadhan, Rasulullaah SAW. never performed more than eleven Rakaahs, which he performed four at a time. Don't even ask about the length and beauty of the salaah. He then performed four Rakaahs and don't even ask about the length and beauty of the salaah. Thereafter, he performed three Rakaahs Witr salaah. I then asked. 'O Rasulullaah SAW. You sleep before performing the Witr salaah?' He replied" 'Although my eyes sleep, my heart does not.

The lack of understanding that Saamrodi and those like him is astonishing. In this Hadith, Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. discussed the Tahajjud salaah that Rasulullaah SAW. performed out of Ramadhan as well. The question related to this and not to the Taraaweeh salaah because it would not make sense that someone would ask about the Taraaweeh salaah and Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. would give a reply concerning the Tahajjud salaah. It makes no sense especially because Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. was an extremely intelligent woman who would not do something like that.

The narration concerning Rasulullaah SAW.'s Taraaweeh salaah was the narration of Bukhaari in which Rasulullaah SAW. led the Sahabah RADI. for two nights and then did not come out to lead it again. This he performed together with the Jamaa'ah of the Sahabah RADI. It would be foolish to regard this salaah as Tahajjud salaah. Rasulullaah SAW. performed the tahajjud salaah throughout the year, but never in Jamaa'ah. It is for this reason that the Muhadditheen state that the Hadith of Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. refers to the Tahajjud salaah.

1. The commentator of Bukhaari, Allaama Shamsud Deen Kirmaani RAH. clearly mentions that the question and the reply concerned the Tahajjud salaah. He states further that while this seems to contradict the narration stating that Rasulullaah SAW. the Sahabah RADI. in twenty Rakaahs for two nights. there is no contradiction because this narration (of twenty Rakaahs) really affirms, Rasulullaah SAW.'s act and will be given preference to any narration that seems to negate it. This is a principle adopted in the case of an apparent contradiction.

2. Shah Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes, "The eleven Rakaahs that Rasulullaah SAW. performed were the Tahajjud salaah.

3. Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes, "The salaah that Rasulullaah SAW. performed both in and out of Ramadhaan was the Tahajjud salaah.

4. Imaam Ghazaali RAH. writes, "Rasulullaah SAW. performed the Witr as one, three, five, seven and even eleven Rakaahs. Narrations stating thirteen Rakaahs are doubtful, while there is even a rare narration stating seventeen Rakaahs. All these Rakaahs for which we have used the word Witr refer to the Tahajjud salaah. "

What makes it even clearer that the Hadith of Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. referred to the Tahajjud salaah is the fact that the scholars of Hadith have quoted the narration in the chapter of Tahajjud. This can be seen in Muslim (Vol.1 Pg. 254), Abu Dawood (Vol.1 Pg. 192), Tirmidhi (Vol.1 Pg.58), Nasa'ee (Vol.1 Pg. 145) and Mu'atta of Imaam Maalik (Pg.42). In fact, in his famous work Qiyaamul Layl, Imaam Muhammad SAW. bin Nasr Marwazi RAH. wrote a chapter pertaining to salaah during the month of Ramadhaan, but has not quoted this Hadith of Hadhrat Aa'isha RAH. there. This proves that even according to him, the Hadith does not refer to the

Taraaweesh salaah.

Haafidh Ibnul Qayyim RAH. has also quoted the Hadith for the Tahajjud salaah in his Zaadul Ma'aad (Vol. 1 Pg. 86). How can it therefore be assumed that the narration concerns the Taraaweesh salaah when no book of Hadith quotes it in the chapters of Taraaweesh? In fact, even if the narration is quoted in a chapter of Taraaweesh, it will not mean that it refers to the Taraaweesh salaah because the Tahajjud salaah is also regarded as an Ibaadah of Ramadhaan just as the Taraaweesh salaah is.

Let us not also forget to quote what Imaam Qurtubi RAH. says about this Hadith. He says that according to many scholars, this narration is Mudhtarab. The essence of it all is that the narration in question cannot be used to prove eight Rakaahs Taraaweesh. On the contrary, the narration of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. proves twenty Rakaahs and it is this that the Ummah has been practising. Consider the following statements:

1. Imaam Maalik RAH. (passed away 199 A.H.) said that when there are two conflicting narrations about what Rasulullaah SAW. did and it is known that Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. and Hadhrat Umar RADI. practised on one of them and not the other, what they do will be sufficient to prove that, that is the right way.

2. Imaam Abu Dawood Sajistaani RAH. (passed away 275 A.H.), "When there are two conflicting narrations about what Rasulullaah SAW. did, it must be seen what the sahabah RADI. did.

3. Imaam Abu Bakr Jassaas RAH. (passed away 370 A.H.) also said that when there are two conflicting narrations about what Rasulullaah SAW. did and it is known that our pious predecessors practised on one of them, the one they practised on will be best to practice on.

4. Imaam Bayhaqi (passed away 458 A.H.) reports that Hadhrat Uthmaan Daarmi RAH. said, "When Ahadeeth of one subject conflict with each other and the most acceptable cannot be determined, it will be seen what the Khulafaa Raashideen did after Rasulullaah SAW. In this manner, we will be able to choose a viewpoint.

5. Khateeb Baghdaadi RAH. (passed away 463 A.H.) reports that Imaam Maalik RAH. (passed away 199 A.H.) said, "If we were to practise on the Hadith stating that the followers should sit and perform salaah when the Imaam does, then the leaders Hadhrat Abu Bakr RAH. Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. would have practised accordingly.

6. Muhaqqiq Ibn Humaam RAH. (passed away 861 A.H.) wrote that the fact that Ulema practise on a Hadith lends to its authenticity.

7. Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. (passed away 1176 A'H') writes. "The consensus of the pious predecessors and what they had passed on from generation to generation is a great source of proof in Islaamic jurisprudence."

8. Shah Abdur Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. (passed away 1339 A.H.) writes, "The understanding of the Sahabah RADI. and the Taabi'een is a criterion for right and wrong. It is Waajib (compulsory) to accept what they understood from the teachings of Rasulullaah SAW. as they kept the conditions and words of Rasulullaah SAW. in mind.

THEIR SECOND PROOF: Saamrodi is extremely proud of this proof detailing eight Rakaahs Taraaweeh. which is reported from Hadhrat Jaabir RADI. He is even prepared to engage in

Mubaahala because of this. The strange thing about it is that the chain of narrators has no credence whatsoever. One of the narrators of the Hadith is a person named ibn Humayd Himyari. This is what the critics of narrators have to say about him.

1. "He is weak" - Haafidh Dhahabi RAH.
2. "He narrates many unacceptable (Munkar) narrations" - Ya'qoob bin Shaybah RAH.
3. "There are objections raised against him" Imaam Bukhaari RAH.
4. "He lies Abu Zur'ah RAH.
5. "I can testify that he is a liar" - Is'haaq Kowsaj RAH.
6. "He narrated Ahadeeth about everything. I have never seen anyone as daring as he is against Allaah because he takes Ahadeeth from others and completely distorts them" - Saalih Jazrah RAH.
7. "I swear by Allaah that he is a liar" Ibn Kharaash RAH.
8. "He is unreliable" - Imaam Nasa'ee RAH.

The chain of narrators also contains a narrator called Ya'qoob bin Abdullaah Ash'ari Alqami. about whom the critics have the following to say:

1. "He is not at all reliable" * Imaam Daar Qutni RAH. About a third narrator, the critics have the

following to say:

- 1.. "He is responsible for many unacceptable (Munkar) narrations Ibn Ma'een RAH.
2. "His narrations are unacceptable (Munkar)" - Imaam Nasa'ee RAH.
3. "His narrations are ignored (Matrook)" - Imaam Nasa'ee RAH.
4. "His narrations are unacceptable (Munkar)" Imaam Abu Dawood RAH.
5. "He is amongst the weak narrators?"

Apart from this, there is a narration in Bulooghul Maraama also from Hadhrat Jaabir RAH. but stating a different figure. Another discrepancy the narration is that it states that Rasulullaah SAW. did not come out to lead the salaah afterwards because he feared that the Witr salaah would become Fardh (obligatory). Other

Ahadeeth state that it was the Taraaweeth salaah that Rasulullaah SAW. feared becoming Fardh (obligatory).

These are the supports for the eight Rakaahs Taraaweeth, because of which people wish to destroy their Aakhirah. How sad indeed!

Fatawa Rahimiyyah vol.2