

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

(I declare Allaah free from all defects; all Praise be to Allaah; none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah; Allaah is the Greatest; there is no might or power except by Allaah)¹.

He also said to "the one who prayed badly": If you know some of the Qur'aan, then recite it, otherwise praise Allaah, declare His Greatness and declare that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah; 2

The Abrogation of Recitation behind the Imaam in the Loud Prayers

He had given permission¹ for those being led by the Imaam to recite Soorah al-Faatihah in the loud prayers, when once:

"he was praying Fajr and the recitation became difficult for him. When he finished, he said: Perhaps you recite behind your imaam. We said: "Yes, quickly³, O Messenger of Allaah." He said: Do not do so, except for [each of you reciting] the opening chapter of the Book, for the prayer is not valid of the one who does not recite it.⁴

Later, he forbade them from reciting in the loud prayers at all, when:

"He finished a prayer in which he was reciting loudly (in one narration: it was the dawn prayer) and said: Were any of you reciting with me just now?! A man said: "Yes, I was, O Messenger of Allaah". He said: I say, why am I contended with? [Abu Hurairah said:] So the people stopped reciting with the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) when he was reciting loudly after hearing that from him [but they recited to themselves quietly when the imaam was not reciting loudly]."⁵

He also made silence during the imaam's recitation part of the completeness of following the imaam, saying: The imaam is there to be followed, so when he says takbeer, say takbeer, and when he recites, be silent⁶, just as he made listening to the imaam's recitation enough to not have to recite behind him, saying: He who

¹ Abu Daawood, Ibn Khuzaimah (1/80/2), Haakim, Tabaraani & Ibn Hibbaan who, along with Haakim, declared it saheeh and Dhahabi agreed. It is in *Irwaa'* (303).

² Abu Daawood & Tirmidhi, who declared it hasan; its isnaad is saheeh. (Saheeh Abi Dawood no. 807)

³ *hadhdhan*: reciting quickly, implying racing or hurrying.

⁴ Bukhaari in his pamphlet, Abu Daawood & Ahmad. Tirmidhi & Daaraqutni declared it hasan.

⁵ Maalik, Humaidi, Bukhaari in his pamphlet, Abu Daawood & Mahaamali (6/139/1). Tirmidhi declared it hasan; Abu Haatim ar-Raazi, Ibn Hibbaan & Ibn Qayyim declared it saheeh.

⁶ Ibn Abi Shaibah (1/97/1), Abu Daawood, Muslim, Abu 'Awaanah & Ruwayaani in his musnad (24/119/1). It is given in *Irwaa'* (332, 394).

has an imaam, then the recitation of the imaam is recitation for him¹ - this applying in the loud prayers.

The Obligation to Recite in the Quiet Prayers

As for the quiet prayers, he urged them to recite during them; Jaabir said, "We used to recite behind the imaam in Zuhr and 'Asr: soorah al-Faatihah and another soorah in the first two rak'ahs, and soorah al-Fatihah in the last two."²

However, he dissuaded them from confusing him with their recitation, when:

"he prayed Zuhr with his Companions and said (afterwards): Which of you recited "Glorify the name of your Lord the Most High" (soorah al-A'laa, 87) ? Someone said: It was I [but I was only intending nothing but good by doing so]. So he said: I knew that someone was contending with me by it.³ In another hadeeth: "They used to recite behind the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) [loudly], so he said: You have mixed up my (recitation of the) Qur'aan."⁴

He also said: Truly, the person praying is privately consulting his Lord, so he should be careful about what he consults him with, and you should not recite the Qur'aan loudly over each other.⁵

He also used to say: Whoever recited a harf (letter) from the Book of Allaah, it will count for him as one good deed, and a good deed is worth ten times over. I do not mean that "alif laam meem" is a harf, but "alif" is a harf, "laam" is a harf, and "meem" is a harf.⁶

¹ Ibn Abi Shaibah (1/97/1), Daaraqutni, Ibn Maajah, Tahaawi & Ahmad from numerous routes, *musnad* and *mursal*. Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah declared it strong, as in *al-Furoo'* of Ibn 'Abdul Haadi (48/2). Boosayri declared some of its isnaads saheeh. I have discussed it in detail and investigated its routes of narration in the manuscript version and then in *Irwaa' al-Ghaleel* (no. 500)

² Ibn Maajah with a saheeh isnaad. It is given in *Irwaa'* (506)

³ Muslim, Abu 'Awaanah & Siraaj.

⁴ Bukhaari in his article, Ahmad & Siraaj with a hasan isnaad.

⁵ Maalik & Bukhaari in *Af'aal al-Ibaad* with a saheeh isnaad.

* NB The view of the validity of recitation behind the imaam in quiet but not loud prayers was taken by Imaam Shaaafi'i initially, and by Muhammad the student of Abu Haneefah in a narration from him which was preferred by Shaikh 'Ali al-Qaari and other shaikhs of the madhhab; it was also the position of, among others, the Imaams Zuhri, Maalik, Ibn al-Mubaarak, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, several of the muhadditheen, and it is the preference of Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.
⁶ Tirmidhi & Ibn Maajah with a saheeh isnaad. Transmitted also by Aajuri in *Aadaab Haml al-Qur'aan*. As for the hadeeth, "He who recites behind the imaam, his mouth is filled with fire", it is fabricated (*mawdoo'*) and this is explained in *Silsilat al-ahaadeeth al-da'eefah* (no. 569) - see Appendix 5.