148358 - Ruling on applying the rules of tajweed to words other than the Qur’an

the question

What is the ruling on applying the rules of tajweed (idghaam, ikhfa’ and so on) to words other than the Qur’an – for example in hadeeths, adhkaar or even ordinary speech?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The scholars differed concerning the ruling on applying tajweed when reading hadeeth or other words in a manner similar to what is done when reading or reciting Qur’an. There are two views:

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The first view is that it is not allowed.

This is the view of Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him), Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allah have mercy on him), and some other contemporary scholars.

They quoted several things as evidence for that, including the following:

They said this is something that is newly introduced, and the basic principle concerning newly introduced matters that have to do with acts of worship is that they come under the heading of bid‘ah (innovations) unless proof is established that they are prescribed.

Reading hadeeth or reciting adhkaar in a manner that resembles recitation of Qur’an may give the impression that these words are from the Holy Qur’an. The basic principle is that the Book of Allah should be protected from being confused with other words.

Reciting words other than the words of Allah in the manner of scriptural recitation is the custom of the rabbis and priests of the Jews and Christians, and we have been forbidden to imitate or resemble them.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

Is it permissible to use tajweed with words other than the Qur’an, such as reading the hadeeths of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and so on?

He replied:

Some of the later scholars commented on the meaning of the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “And verily, among them is a party who distort the Book with their tongues (as they read), so that you may think it is from the Book” [Aal ‘Imraan 3:78]. Some of the later scholars said that this includes reciting something other than the Qur’an in the same manner as recitation of Qur’an, such as reading the hadeeths of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in the same manner as reciting the Qur’an, or reading the words of scholars in the same manner as reciting Qur’an.

Based on that, it is not permissible to chant words other than Qur’an in the manner in which Qur’an is recited, especially in front of the common folk who cannot distinguish between Qur’an and other words except by the intonation and recitation.

Fataawa Noor ‘ala ad-Darb (tape no. 212).

Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The bid‘ah of “singing” and intoning in the adhaan, dhikr, du‘aa’, sending blessings (salawaat) upon the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and of intoning in the Friday khutbah, and reciting dhikr and du‘aa’ out loud and shouting it in funerals at various stages, reciting dhikr in unison between each two rak ‘ahs of Taraweeh, reciting dhikr out loud when pilgrims depart and return home, yelling ‘Ameen” in the prayer, raising the voice and reciting Aayat al-Kursiy in unison after the prayer, the mu’adhdhin saying in a loud voice after the prayer

“Allahumma anta as-salaam…”, raising the voice after the prayer in sending blessings upon the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and other things may all be regarded as bid‘ah (innovation) and saying them out loud is an additional innovation.

Raising the voice is known as taqlees. at-Tartooshi stated in al-Hawaadith wa al-Bida‘ (63) that Imam Maalik (may Allah have mercy on him) denounced taqlees in du‘aa’, which means raising the voice in supplication.

It is also forbidden to raise the voice (taqlees) in recitation. Imam ash-Shaafa‘i (may Allah have mercy on him) described Imam Abu Yoosuf (may Allah have mercy on him) in these terms when he said: Abu Yoosuf was qallaas, i.e., he raised his voice when reciting. This is explained in Bida‘ al-Qurra’ (p. 15-16).

Some of these innovated matters have been adopted by some people, so you hear some imams in Ramadan saying du‘aa’ al-qunoot in an extremely loud voice, lowering and raising their voice according to the meaning of the du‘aa’, and exaggerating in intonation, vocalisation and recitation, until it is as if he is reciting a soorah from the Book of Allah, may He be exalted, playing with the emotions of the congregation so that he can make them weep.

Worshipping in accordance with these things that have been introduced into Islam and these innovations in voice and manner of reciting dhikr and du‘aa’ is basically one of the rituals of Jaahiliyyah that they used to do in al-Masjid al-Haraam, as Allah, may He be exalted, says, denouncing their action (interpretation of the meaning): “Their Salat (prayer) at the House (of Allah, i.e., the Ka‘bah at Makkah) was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands” [al-Anfaal 8:35].

Al-Aloosi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: What is meant is that such actions cannot be worship; rather they are rituals of the Jaahiliyyah. What some ignorant Muslims do nowadays of whistling and clapping in the mosque, claiming that they are remembering Allah (dhikr), is more akin to the practice of the Jaahiliyyah. How wise are the words of the one who said (in verse): ‘Did Allah say, Clap and sing for Me, and say words of kufr (disbelief) and call it dhikr (remembrance of

Allah)'?

What accompanies that of singing, intonation, vocalisation and chanting is more akin to what the Christians have introduced into their prayers of chanting, which neither the Messiah nor the disciples instructed them to do; rather the Christians introduced that innovation, as Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Hence we see and hear nowadays people chanting and intoning in du'aa', especially the Raafidis and Sufis. Ahl as-Sunnah should be careful lest they follow their way. End quote.

Tasheeh ad-Du'aa' (82-84).

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The second view is that there is nothing wrong with intoning with tajweed when reading hadeeths of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and scholarly texts, or when reciting dhikr and du'aa' as prescribed in Islam, provided that one does not go to extremes in that. This is the view of some of the later fuqaha', and is the view favoured by more than one of our contemporary scholars, such as Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) and Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allah preserve him and others).

Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Budayri ad-Dimyaati (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to reading hadeeth with tajweed like that of the Qur'an, with the various rules of pronunciation and elongation of vowels, and so on, it is recommended, as was stated by some of the scholars.

But I asked my shaykh, the prominent scholar Shaykh 'Ali ash-Shabraamalsi (may Allah bestow abundant mercy upon him) about that, when I read to him Saheeh al-Bukhaari, and he replied that it is obligatory, and he told me that he had seen that quoted from a book called al-Aqwaal ash-Shaarihah fi Tafseer al-Faatihah. At that point the shaykh gave the reason for that as being that tajweed is part of speaking well, and is part of the language of the Arabs and of eloquence in speaking. All of these factors were combined in the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon

him), so whoever speaks of his hadeeth should pay attention to the way in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) spoke them.

End quote from Haashiyat al-Ajhoori ‘ala Sharh az-Zarqaani ‘ala Manzoomat al-Bayqooniyyah (p. 227).

In fact it seems that this is an ancient custom among the scholars. It says in Qafiyyaat al-A‘yaan (4/282), in the biography of al-Humaydi al-Andalusi: He was known for his intelligence, knowledge, precision, religious commitment and piety, and he had a melodious voice when reading hadeeth. End quote.

They quoted several things as evidence for that, including the following:

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The text which clearly states that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon) called upon his Lord in the manner of rajaz (in a poetic manner). This is seen in the hadeeth of al-Bara’ ibn ‘Aazib (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

I saw the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) on the day of al-Khandaq (the Ditch), moving the soil (whilst digging the ditch), and I saw the soil on the hair of his chest, and he was a man with a lot of hair. He was chanting the rajaz (poetry) of ‘Abdullah, raising his voice with the words:

“O Allah, were it not for You we would not have been guided

Or given charity or offered prayers.

Send down assurance upon us

And make our feet steadfast when we meet (the enemy in battle).

The enemy has transgressed against us,

But if they want mischief we shall refuse.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (3034) and Muslim (1803)

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The rules of tajweed are no more than rules in accordance with Arab custom when reciting and pronouncing words; they are not limited only to the Holy Qur’an. Whoever perfects his reading of the hadeeths and the words of the scholars is only following the rules of the Arabic language.

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Moreover, there is a good reason for intoning the Holy Qur’an; it is not solely an act of worship. The reason for that is the idea of beautifying the Holy Qur’an with melodious voices and sound recitation, reciting it carefully and helping people to focus on its recitation and endear it to people’s hearts. These aims can also be achieved by intoning du‘aa’s and hadeeths, and intoning when reading the books of the scholars in specialised lessons.

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Beautifying the voice does not come under the heading of “singing” which is not permissible; rather beautifying the voice when reading the Qur’an and when reciting dhikr is a good thing. End quote.

And Allah knows best.