## 9476 - When did the adhaan begin?

### the question

I heard that the Islamic call to prayer (adhaan) was known from the time of Ibraaheem al-Khaleel (peace be upon him), because Allaah says in His Book (interpretation of the meaning): “And proclaim [adhdhin] to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage)” [al-Hajj 22:27]. Is this correct?

### Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Some people do say that, and some even say that the adhaan was known to all the Prophets from the time that Adam (peace be upon him) came down to this earth. Some of them say that it was known to Prophet Ibraaheem when his Lord said to him (interpretation of the meaning): “And proclaim [adhdhin] to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel” [al-Hajj 22:27]. This is a strange thing to say and it is not correct.

The correct view is that the adhaan was prescribed during the time of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah, not in Makkah and not during the Israa’ as was narrated in some da’eef (weak) ahaadeeth.

Ibn Hajar says:

One of the strangest things that was narrated concerning the beginning of the adhaan was the report of Abu’l-Shaykh, whose isnaad contains someone who is majhool (unknown), from ‘Abd-Allaah ibn al-Zubayr, according to which he said, “The adhaan was taken from the adhaan of Ibraaheem, “And proclaim [adhdhin] to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage)” [al-Hajj 22:27]. So the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) gave the adhaan. (al-Fath, 2/280).

The (report about) the adhaan of Adam is also da’eef (weak). Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy

upon him) said:

What was reported by Abu Na'eem in al-Hilyah about Jibreel calling out the adhaan to Adam when he came down from Paradise has an isnaad which contains people who are majhool (unknown). (al-Fath, 2/280).

The saheeh evidence indicates that the adhaan was first prescribed during the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in Madeenah. Among these reports are the following:

It was reported from Naafi' that Ibn 'Umar used to say: when the Muslims came to Madeenah, they used to come together and try to find out if the time for prayer had come, for there was no call to prayer. One day they were talking about that and some of them said, Let us use a bell like the bell of the Christians. Others said, Let us use a horn like the horn of the Jews. 'Umar said, Let us send a man to call us to prayer. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "O Bilaal, get up and call the people to prayer." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 569).

It was reported from Abu 'Umayr ibn Anas from his paternal uncles among the Ansaar: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was concerned about the prayer and how he could bring the people together to pray. It was said to him, Raise a flag when the time for prayer comes, and when they see it they will call one another – but he did not like this idea. Then the ram's horn or shofar was suggested to him. Ziyaad said, the shofar of the Jews. But he did not like this idea, and said, "This belongs to the Jews." A bell was suggested to him, but he said, "This belongs to the Christians." 'Abd-Allaah ibn Zayd ibn 'Abd Rabbihi went away, thinking about the concern of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). He saw the adhaan in a dream, and the next morning he came to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and told him about it. He said, "O Messenger of Allaah, whilst I was half-asleep, someone came to me and showed me the adhaan. 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allaah be pleased with him) had also seen it before that, but he kept quiet for twenty days. Then he told the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who said to him, "What stopped you from telling me about it?" he said, " 'Abd-Allaah ibn Zayd beat me to it, and I felt shy." The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "O Bilaal, get up and see

what ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Zayd tells you to do, and do it.” So Bilaal gave the adhaan. (Narrated by Abu Dawood – may Allaah have mercy on him – in his Sunan, 420).

According to a report narrated from ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Zayd: when the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded that a bell should be made so that it could be used to tell the people to gather for prayer, I had a dream in which I saw a man carrying a bell in his hand. I said, “O slave of Allaah, will you sell that bell?” he said, “What will you do with it?” I said, “We will call the people to prayer with it.” He said, “Shall I not show you something better than that?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “Say, Allaahu akbar Allaah akbar, Allaahu akbar Allaahu akbar, ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasool-Allaah, ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasool-Allaah. Hayya ‘ala’l-salaah, hayya ‘ala’-salaah, hayya ‘ala’l-falaah, hayya ‘ala’l-falaah. Allaahu akbar, Allaahu akbar, laa ilaha ill-Allaah (Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great. I bear witness that there is no god but Allaah, I bear witness that there is no god but Allaah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. Come to prayer, come to prayer. Come to success, come to success. Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great. There is no god but Allaah).” Then he went a short distance away from me, and said, “When the prayer is about to start, say, Allaahu akbar Allaah akbar, ash-hadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasool-Allaah. Hayya ‘ala’l-salaah, hayya ‘ala’l-falaah. Qad qaamat il-salaah, qad qaamat il-salaah. Allaahu akbar, Allaahu akbar, laa ilaha ill-Allaah (Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great. I bear witness that there is no god but Allaah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. Come to prayer, come to success. The prayer is about to begin, the prayer is about to begin. Allaah is most Great, Allaah is most Great. There is no god but Allaah).” When morning came, I went to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and told him what I had seen. He said, “This is a true dream, in sha Allaah. Get up with Bilaal and tell him what you have seen, so that he can give the call, because he has a more beautiful voice than you.” So I got up with Bilaal and started telling him what I had seen, and he gave the call to prayer. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab heard that whilst he was in his house, and he came out, dragging his cloak behind him, saying, “By the One Who sent you with the truth, O Messenger of Allaah, I saw the same as he saw.” The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be

upon him) said: “To Allaah be praise.” (Narrated by Abu Dawood, 499).

These ahaadeeth indicate that the adhaan was first prescribed during the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in Madeenah. Perhaps this is one of the distinguishing features of this ummah which Allaah has favoured over all other nations. And Allaah knows best.