112084 - What is your opinion of a Jumu'ah khutbah that, along with the prayer, lasts ten minutes?

the question

What do you say about an imam whose khutbah, along with the prayer, takes only ten minutes? Yes, ten minutes! Is this Jumu'ah valid?.

Detailed answer

Firstly:

There can be no doubt that keeping the Jumu'ah khutbah short is indicative of the khateeb's understanding of Islam, as he can compile many meanings in a few words, and does not speak for so long that the people forget the first things he said by the time he reaches the end. This was the way of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in his regular khutbahs; indeed this is what he enjoined, and it is the best way. Similarly his exhortations were few so that what he exhorted the people could be remembered. So his Jumu'ah khutbahs were short and the exhortations few.

Abu Waa'il said: 'Ammaar addressed us and he spoke briefly but eloquently. When he came down (from the minbar), we said: O Abu'l-Yaqzaan, you spoke eloquently but briefly, would that you had made it longer. He said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (S) say: "A man's lengthening his prayer and shortening his khutbah is a sign of his understanding (of religion), so make your prayers lengthy and your khutbahs brief, for there is charm in eloquent speech."

Narrated by Muslim (869).

There are many comments from the scholars to confirm this idea:

1.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

As for making the khutbah short, it is a Sunnah to be followed. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined that and did it. According to the hadeeth of ‘Ammaar ibn Yaasir: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) enjoined making the khutbah short. And he used to give khutbahs with good words and few, and he disliked prattle and long-windedness.

The scholars disapprove of exhortations in which some is forgotten because of the length, and they like that in which the listener can focus on what is said and learns from it after memorizing it. That can only occur when the exhortation is brief.

Al-Istidhkaar (2/363, 364).

2.

Ibn Hazm (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

It is not permissible to make the khutbah lengthy.

Al-Muhalla (5/60).

3.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

It is better to keep the khutbah short, because there are two benefits of keeping the khutbah short:

(i)The listeners do not get bored, because if the khutbah is lengthy – especially if the khateeb delivers it in a boring manner which does not move their hearts and does not motivate them – then the people will get bored and fed up.

(ii)That makes the listener remember better, because if it is too long, the first part of it is lost by the time he reaches the end, but if it is short, then it is possible to remember it and learn from it. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “A man’s lengthening his prayer and shortening his khutbah is a sign of his understanding (of religion),” i.e., it is

indicative of his understanding of religion and shows that he pays attention to people's circumstances. But sometimes there is a need for a lengthy exhortation, and if a person speaks at length because the situation requires that, it does not mean that he is excluded from the description of being one who understands religion, because length and shortness are relative matters. It is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would sometimes give a khutbah by reciting Soorat Qaaf, and Soorat Qaaf, when recited slowly and carefully (tarteel) and pausing at every verse, takes a long time.

Al-Sharh al-Mumti' 'ala Zaad al-Mustaqni' (5/65).

Secondly:

This keeping the khutbah short should not be done in such a way as to erode the khutbah altogether, so that the people do not benefit at all from the khutbah. They have not travelled long distances or come out of their homes merely to see the khateeb, or to hear the tone of his voice, rather they have come to attain some benefit by hearing his exhortation or an Islamic ruling and so on. Hence attention should be paid to moderation in this matter.

It was narrated that Jaabir ibn Samurah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: I was praying with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and his prayer was moderate and his khutbah was moderate.

Narrated by Muslim (1433).

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

i.e., it was somewhere between being very long or too short to be any benefit.

Sharh Muslim (6/159)

He also said:

It is mustahabb to keep the khutbah short, because of the hadeeth quoted above, and so that they do not get bored by it. Our companions said: Keeping it short should be done in moderation, and should not be taken to such extremes that (its benefit) is erased altogether.

Al-Majmoo' (4/358)

Thirdly:

But we cannot say that a khutbah that is very short does not count, when most of the scholars are of the view that if the khutbah contains the essential parts (lit. pillars) then it is valid. There is a great difference of opinion as to the definition of those essential parts. The correct view is that there is nothing that can be called the essential parts or pillars of the khutbah, and everything that may be called a khutbah, even if it is only a few words, is counted as such and is valid as a khutbah.

This is the view of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah and Shaykh Ibn Sa'di, whose views we have mentioned in the answer to question no. 115854. In the answer referred to, Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) supported this view, but he pointed out that it should not be followed. Please see his words in that answer.

Fourthly:

This khateeb whose khutbah and prayer together take ten minutes does not have deep understanding of Islam, rather he is ignorant, because understanding of the religion means keeping the khutbah short and making the prayer long, not effectively destroying them both!

Let us read what the Khateeb of al-Masjid al-Haraam, Shaykh Sa'ood al-Shuraym, says concerning the length of the Jumu'ah khutbah and prayer, with approximate length of time:

Shaykh Sa'ood al-Shuraym (may Allaah preserve him) said:

In order to reach an approximate definition of what is meant by the prayer being long and the khutbah being short in modern terms, I say – and Allaah is the source of strength –

If you recite in Fajr prayer, for example, al-Jumu'ah and al-Munaafiqoon at a moderate speed, the prayer will take you no less than ten minutes, if not fifteen. I tried it and I found that to be the case. All of this applies if you recite at a moderate speed, with the rukoo' (bowing) and sujood (prostration) of the prayer. So how about if the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be

upon him) was following the command of his Lord, “And recite the Qur’aan (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style” [al-Muzzammil 73:4], and he used to make the bowing, rising, prostration and sitting between two prostrations lengthy, and the narrator of the hadeeth said: “to such an extent that one would think he had forgotten”? In the hadeeth of al-Bara’ ibn ‘Aazib (may Allaah be pleased with him) it says: The prayer of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and his bowing, and when he raised his head from bowing, and when he prostrated, and the time between two prostrations were all nearly the same.

Al-Shaamil fi Fiqh al-Khateeb wa’l-Khutbah (p. 154)

From this it is clear that it is not possible for this khateeb to deliver the Friday khutbah and offer the Jumu’ah prayer in ten minutes, unless there is clear undermining of both matters, the khutbah and the prayer.

Such a person needs to be told, because perhaps he may have misunderstood something from the Sunnah with regard to this matter, so he is spoiling both the khutbah and the prayer, whilst thinking that he is one of those who do good!

If he does not respond to your telling him, then look for someone else who establishes the Sunnah in a proper way or close enough, and pray with him, and protect your prayer, and keep your heart sound. As for him who does not learn and does not want to, leave him to his own devices.

And Allaah knows best.