87768 - Ruling on raising the voice in dhikr after the prayer

the question

Some brothers raise their voices in dhikr after finishing the prayer, especially Fajr prayer, based on the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbas and others, to such an extent that they disturb other worshippers. When they are told about this they say: We are following the Sunnah and if they raised their voices like us they would not hear us and we would not be disturbing them. Is what they are doing correct? Should the others raise their voices when among them there are uneducated people and elderly people who cannot keep up with the group. How much should may the voice be raised?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The fuqaha’ differed with regard to raising the voice in dhikr after the prayer. Some of them were of the view that it is Sunnah and some regarded it as makrooh and said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not do that all the time; he only did that in order to teach people then he stopped doing it.

The reason for the difference of opinion is that they differed concerning the report narrated by al-Bukhaari (805) and Muslim (583) from Abu Ma’bad, the freed slave of Ibn ‘Abbas, that Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) told him that people used to raise their voices in dhikr when they finished an obligatory prayer at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Ibn ‘Abbas said: I used to know when they had finished (the prayer) by that, when I heard it.

According to a report narrated by al-Bukhaari (806) and Muslim (583), Ibn ‘Abbas said: We knew when the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had finished from the takbeer.

But they differed as to whether this indicated something that was done all the time or not, and whether it went against the verse (interpretation of the meaning): “And remember your Lord within yourself, humbly and with fear and without loudness in words in the mornings and in the afternoons, and be not of those who are neglectful” [Al-A’raaf 7:205] or not.

Among those who favoured raising the voice in dhikr after prayer were al-Tabari, Ibn Hazm, Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] and others.

Among those who were of the view that it was for teaching only were al-Shaafa’i and the majority.

Al-Shaafa’i (may Allah have mercy on him) said: My view is that the imam and the person praying behind him should remember Allah after they finish praying, but they should recite dhikr in a low voice unless he is an imam who is to be learned from, in which case he should recite in a loud voice until he thinks that it has been learned from him, then he should recite quietly, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And offer your Salaah (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice” [Al-Isra’ 17:110] , meaning – and Allah knows best – du’aa’; “neither aloud” means do not raise your voice and “nor in a low voice” means, so low that you cannot hear yourself.

I think that what Ibn al-Zubayr narrated about the tahleel (reciting Laa ilaaha ill-Allah) of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him),and what Ibn ‘Abbas narrated about his takbeer is like what we have mentioned above. Al-Shaafa’i said: I think he only raised his voice a little in order to teach the people, because most of the reports that we have quoted do not mention reciting tahleel or takbeer after saying the tasleem.

Some reports say that dhikr was recited after the prayer, as I have described, and some say that he did not recite any dhikr after prayer.

Umm Salamah stated that he would stay after the prayer and she did not refer to any dhikr out loud, and I think he only stayed to recite some dhikr that was not said out loud."(Al-Umm 1/127).

Ibn Hazm (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Raising the voice in takbeer following every prayer is good."(Al-Muhalla 3/180).

al-Bahooti said in Kashshaaf al-Qinaa' (1/366), referring to Ibn Taymiyah's view regarding reciting dhikr out loud as mustahabb: The Shaykh (i.e., Ibn Taymiyah) said: It is mustahabb to recite tasbeeh, tahmeed and takbeer out loud following every prayer.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about the ruling on this issue and he replied:

Reciting dhikr out loud following the obligatory prayers is Sunnah. This is indicated by the report narrated by al-Bukhaari from the hadith of 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), that the people used to recite dhikr out loud when they finished obligatory prayers at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said: I used to know when they finished (the prayer) by that, when I heard it. This was also narrated by Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawood. In al-Saheehayn it is narrated that al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say when he finished the prayer: "Laa ilaaha ill-Allah wahdahu laa shareeka lah… (There is no god but Allah alone, with no partner or associate…)." And words cannot be heard unless the speaker says them out loud.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) and a number of the earlier and later generations favoured this view, based on the hadiths of Ibn 'Abbas and al-Mugheerah (may Allah be pleased with them). Reciting out loud is general and applies to every dhikr that is prescribed after prayer, whether it is tahleel (saying Laa ilaaha ill-Allah (there is no god but Allah), tasbeeh (saying Subhaan Allah (Glory be to Allah)), takbeer (saying Allahu akbar (Allah is Most Great)) or tahmeed (saying Al-hamdu Lillaah (praise be to Allah)), because of the general meaning of the hadith of Ibn 'Abbas. There is no report from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to suggest differentiating between tahleel and other dhikrs, rather in the hadith of Ibn 'Abbas it says that they would know that the prayer of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had ended from the takbeers. Thus the view of those who say that the voice should not be raised in tasbeeh, tahmeed and takbeer is refuted.

With regard to those who say that raising the voice in these dhikrs is an innovation (bid'ah), they are wrong. How can something that was known and practised at the time of the Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him) be a bid'ah? Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn Sahmaan (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It has been proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did that and approved of it, and the Sahaabah used to do that at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after he taught it to them, and he approved of them doing it, so they acted upon the teachings of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); they did it and he approved of that after teaching them and he did not criticize them.

As for the argument that reciting out loud is disapproved because of the verse "And remember your Lord within yourself, humbly and with fear and without loudness in words in the mornings and in the afternoons" [al-A'raaf 7:205], we say: the one who was enjoined to remember his Lord within himself, humbly and with fear, was the same one who used to recite dhikr out loud following obligatory prayers. Does the one who says this know better what Allah meant than His Messenger did? Or does he believe that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) knew what was meant but went against it? Moreover, the verse speaks of dhikr at the beginning and end of the day ("in the mornings and in the afternoons"), not the dhikr that is prescribed following prayers. In his Tafseer, Ibn Katheer interpreted reciting out loud as meaning too loud or extremely loud.

As for the argument that reciting out loud is disapproved because of the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "O people, take it easy", the one who said "O people, take it easy" is the same one who used to recite dhikr out loud following the prescribed prayers. There is a place for this and a place for that, and truly following means following every text when appropriate.

Moreover, the context of the phrase "take it easy" indicates that they used to raise their voices in a manner that caused them hardship, hence he said "take it easy", i.e., be kind to yourselves and do not exhaust yourselves; there should be no hardship or undue effort in reciting dhikr out loud.

As for the one who says that it disturbs others, it may be said to him: If you mean that it disturbs those who do not have the habit of doing that, once the believer understands that it is Sunnah, it will no longer disturb him. If you mean that it disturbs other worshippers, then if there is no one

among the worshippers who joined the prayer late and is making up what he missed, then the raising of voices will not disturb them at all, which is what actually happens, because they are all taking part in it. But if there is someone among them who joined the prayer late and is making up what he missed, if he is so close to you that you will be disturbing him, then you should not recite so loudly as to disturb him, so that he will not become confused in his prayer, but if he is far away from you then he will not be disturbed by your reciting out loud.

From what we have mentioned it is clear that the Sunnah is to raise the voice in dhikr following the obligatory prayers, and that does not go against any saheeh text or sound opinion. End quote.

He also said: When voices are mingled with one another then there will be no disturbance, as you can see on Fridays when the people all read Quran out loud, then someone comes and prays and he is not disturbed by that.

And he (may Allah have mercy on him) said: What matters is the correct view, which is that it is Sunnah to recite dhikr following the prayers in the manner prescribed, and it is also Sunnah to recite it out loud but not to raise the voice so much that it becomes annoying, because that is not appropriate. Hence when the people raised their voices in dhikr at the time of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when they were coming back from Khaybar, he said: “O people, take it easy.” What is meant by raising the voice is that which does not cause hardship or annoyance."(Majmoo’ Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen 13/247, 261).

Secondly:

From what we have mentioned above it is clear that the matter is broad in scope, and that the difference of opinion is an ancient matter. Perhaps the correct view is that which was mentioned by the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) about raising the voice, but it should be raised in a manner that does not cause annoyance.

What I mentioned about uneducated people and the elderly, I will repeat it once again. It may be appropriate to read the words of the Shaykh to them so that they may learn the Sunnah and be encouraged to apply it.

May Allah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allah knows best.