

Purposeful, Jurisprudential Research Papers



A research paper on Issues regarding Dhikr

Legality of Collective Dhikr and Uttering Dhikr with Movement

By

Dr. Khalid Naşr

Dean of International Institute For Islamic Studies

English translator: Ahmed Khaled



Purposeful, Jurisprudential Research Papers



A research paper on

Issues regarding Dhikr¹

Legality of Collective Dhikr and Uttering Dhikr with Movement

By

Dr. Khalid Naşr

Dean of International Institute for Islamic Studies

English translator: Ahmed Khaled

¹ Dhikr is an Arabic word has a combined meaning of remembrance and mentioning of Allah.



Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Ever Merciful, and may peace and blessings of Him be upon His Messenger, whom He has chosen and honored.

Here are two brief discussions on the topic of Dhikr about which there are excessive concerns. It was praised and criticized, accepted and rejected, and permitted and prohibited by some Muslim sects. Remembrance of Allah is one of the most important acts of worship that Muslims engage in to connect with their Lord.

The aim of this work is to clarify the truth while discussing these two issues, relying on authentic tradition and sound reason. I call these two issues: (Issues regarding Dhikr: Collective Dhikr – Uttering Dhikr with Movement). May Allah bless us with understanding in religion and knowledge of the keys of interpretation.

First: Collective Dhikr

The meaning of "Dhikr" (remembrance and mentioning) is what is uttered by the tongue and felt in the heart of the worshipper in remembrance of his Lord. This is achieved through the words spoken by Allah, the Highest, with their meanings and wording, the words of our Prophet, peace be upon him, about Allah, and our own words.

Therefore, the meaning here goes beyond the linguistic meaning, which is the opposite of forgetfulness. It is necessary that the remembrance be accompanied by the action of both the tongue and the heart. Allah the Almighty says: *“Remember Allah with*





much remembrance”¹, “And mention the name of your Lord and devout yourself to him with [complete] devotion”², and “He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself. And remembers the name of his Lord and prays.”³

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: *“The example of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not is like [the difference between] the living and the dead.”⁴*

All Muslims agree that individual Dhikr is recommended, but they differ on the permissibility of collective Dhikr with a single voice or repetition after a person from the group. The majority of scholars permit it, while some prohibit it.

What is the ruling on collective Dhikr (of Allah)?

I would like to point out that collective Dhikr refers to a group of people engaging in a specific type of Dhikr, such as reciting the Quran together, repeating the phrases of Takbīr, Taḥmīd, and Tasbīh together, or other forms of remembrance. It does not include simply gathering in one place where each person remembers individually.

First group: The proponents:

The proponents of collective Dhikr used some evidence to support their opinion, while the opponents used other evidence to support theirs. We will examine the evidence of each group in the following pages.

They supported their opinion with textual evidence (i.e., from the Quran and Sunnah) and rational evidence, as follows:

¹ Al-’Aḥzāb: 41

² Al-Muzzammil: 8

³ Al-’A’lā: 14-15

⁴ This Ḥadīth is recorded by Al-Bukhāriy in his Ṣaḥīḥ (6407), Dār Ṭawq an-Najāt print, edited by Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir an-Nāṣir, first edition 1422 H. It is also recorded by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ 1/539 (211/779), Dār ’Iḥyā’ at-Turāth al-’Arabiy print, edited by Muḥammad Fu’ād ’Abd al-Bāqiy.





1. The proponents relied on the apparent meaning of the verses of the Quran, which did not specify remembrance to a particular situation, rather it included all situations for both individuals and groups. Allah the Almighty says: *“Those who remember Allah, standing and sitting.”*¹ This verse is expressed in the plural, general form. Allah the Almighty also says: *“Remember Allah with much remembrance.”*² Much remembrance can be achieved by an individual or a group by gathering.
2. The proponents relied on some Ḥadīths, including:
 - A narration recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim on the authority of Abī Hurayrah from the Prophet (peace be upon him) as saying: *“Allah has mobile (squads) of angels, who have no other work (to attend but) to follow the assemblies of Dhikr and when they find such assemblies in which there is Dhikr (of Allah) they sit among them and some of them surround the others with their wings till the space between them and the sky of the world is fully covered, and when they disperse (after the assembly of Dhikr is adjourned) they go upward to the heaven and Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, asks them although He is best informed about them: Where have you come from? They say: We come from Your servants upon the earth who had been glorifying You (reciting Subḥān Allah), uttering Your Greatness (saying Allah 'Akbar) and uttering Your Oneness (Lā 'ilāha 'ill Allah) and praising You (uttering al-Ḥamd Lillāh) and begging of You.”*³
 - They also relied on a statement, recorded by Muslim and the compilers of Sunan collections, on the authority of Mu'āwiyah that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) went out to a circle of his Companions and said: *What makes you sit? They said: We are sitting here in order to remember Allah and to praise Him for He guided us to the path of Islam and*

¹ 'Aāl 'Imrān: 191

² Al-'Aḥzāb: 41

³ This Ḥadīth is recorded by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ 4/2069 (25/2689).





He conferred favors upon us. Thereupon he adjured by Allah and asked if that only was the purpose of their sitting there. They said: By Allah, we are not sitting here but for this very purpose, whereupon he (the Messenger) said: I am not asking you to take an oath because of any allegation against you but for the fact that Gabriel came to me, and he informed me that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, was talking to the angels about your magnificence.”¹

- There is another Ḥadīth recorded by Muslim and others on the authority of Abī Hurayrah that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Any group of people that assemble in one of the Houses of Allah to recite the Book of Allah, learning and teaching it, tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will engulf them, angels will surround them and Allah will make mention of them to those (the angels) in His proximity.”²*
3. The proponents claim that these texts of evidence are explicit in the occurrence of collective Dhikr, using the well-known phrases of remembrance such as Tasbīḥ, Taḥmīd, and Tahlīl. There is nothing in the texts that indicates that they (the companions) remembered Allah each one on his own, as the opponents claim. If their gathering to remember Allah with a single voice was prohibited, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would have forbidden it, as he would not have delayed clarifying something when it is necessary.
4. They cited evidence from the practice of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, including the following:
- Al-Bukhāriy reported: *“‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, used to utter Takbīr while he is staying in his tent in Minā so*

¹ This Ḥadīth is recorded by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ 4/2075 (2701) and At-Tirmidhiy in his Jāmi‘ (3379), Dār ‘Ihyā’ at-Turāth al-‘Arabiy print, edited by ‘Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir. It is also mentioned by An-Nasā’iy in his book (As-Sunan aṣ-Ṣuḡhrā) (5426), the office of Al-Maṭbū‘āt al-‘Islāmiyah print, Syria, edited by ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Abī Ghaddah, second edition, 1406H/1986.

² This Ḥadīth is recorded by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ 4/2074 (2699).





that the people in the mosque would hear him and they utter Takbīr and the people in the market utter Takbīr until Minā sound to be shaking with Takbīr. On the Day of Naḥr (‘Īd al-Adḥā), Maymūna used to utter Takbīr. During the nights of Tashrīq, women used to utter Takbīr, along with men, after ‘Abān ibn ‘Uthmān and ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in the mosque.”¹

- It is reported from ‘Umm ‘Aṭīyyah that she said: *“We used to be ordered to come out on the Day of ‘Īd and even bring out the virgin girls from their houses and menstruating women so that they might stand behind the men and utter Takbīr along with them and invoke Allah along with them and hope for the blessings of that day and for purification from sins.”²*
- The essence of Takbīr is explained in the following narration of Al-Bayhaqīy: *“He, ‘Umar, used to utter Takbīr while he is staying in his tent in Minā so that the people in the mosque would hear him and utter Takbīr and the people in the market would hear him and utter Takbīr until Minā sounds to be shaking with one Takbīr.”³*
- His saying *“as one Takbīr”* is a clear proof that they used to utter Takbīr with one voice, and his saying *“sounds to be shaking”* refers to the strength of their collective voice because the individual voice does not normally cause shaking.
- It is recorded in the two Ṣaḥīḥ collections of Ḥadīth that Abū Mūsā al-‘Ash‘ariy said: We were in the company of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) (during Ḥajj). Whenever we went up a high place we used to say: *“None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and Allah is Greater,”* and our voices used to rise, so the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, *“O people! Be merciful to yourselves (i.e. don't raise your voice), for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but One Who is with*

¹ This Ḥadīth is recorded by Al-Bukhāriy in his Ṣaḥīḥ as a commentary before Ḥadīth number (970).

² This Ḥadīth is recorded by Al-Bukhāriy in his Ṣaḥīḥ (971).

³ This narration is recorded in Sunan al-Bayhaqīy al-Kubrā (6267), Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah print, edited by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, third edition, 1424 H/2003 A.D.





you, no doubt He is All-Hearer, ever Near (to all things).¹ Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) reprimanded them for their loud voice not for their collective Dhikr.

Notice that the previous proofs are tradition-based texts.

For the rational proofs, gathering and doing something in congregation is a focal point in many acts of worship, yet some acts of worship are not valid without congregation such as the prayer of Jum'ah. Furthermore, praying in congregation is better than praying individually. The same thing goes for the prayer of Tarāwīḥ which is better to be performed in congregation for the following evidence: *“whoever stands for prayer with the Imam until he finishes...”²* As congregational prayer is a source of motivation and encouragement, so does uttering Dhikr in congregation, especially when there is no prohibition regarding it.

Second: The opponents:

1. The opponents seek support through the Saying of Allah the Almighty: *“Call upon your Lord in humility and privately (khufyah)”³*, and *“when he called to his Lord a private supplication.”⁴* in addition to the saying of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): *“The best kind of Dhikr is the private one.”⁵*
 - They claimed that audible Dhikr in congregation is a means of showing off which contradicts the previous statements.

¹ This Ḥadīth is recorded by Al-Bukhāriy in his Ṣaḥīḥ (2992) and Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ 4/2076 (44/2704).

² This Ḥadīth is recorded by At-Tirmidhiy in his Jāmi` (806), An-Nasā'iy in his As-Sunan aṣ-Ṣuḡhrā (1605), and Ibn Mājah in his Sunan (1327), Dār al-Fikr print, Beirut, edited by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqiy.

³ Al-'A'rāf: 55.

⁴ Maryam: 3.

⁵ This Ḥadīth is recorded by 'Aḥmad in his Musnad (1477), Mu'assasat ar-Risālah print, edited by Shu'ayb al-'Arnā'ūt, second edition, 1420 H/1999 A.D.





- We claim that the previous statements do not hold any evidence for the opponents because the word “*khufyah*” does not refer to secrecy, but rather to sincerity. If secrecy was intended, the Messenger of Allah would not have supplicated out loud. It was reported that he used to supplicate to Allah out loud as he did during the Jum‘ah prayers, the Day of Badr, and the prayer of Qunūt (humbleness).
 - Likewise, the scholars of Tafsīr differed on the interpretation of the saying of Allah the Almighty: “*call upon...*” as some said: it means supplication. Others said: it means worship. Others said: it means believe in one God.
 - Similarly, the saying of Allah the Almighty: “*a private supplication*” means a sincere supplication for the sake of Allah.
 - Even if the previous statements refer to secrecy, it is confined to supplication (Du‘ā’) which is a relation between the worshipper and his Lord, and it does not include Dhikr in general. If the meaning of secrecy was intended here, the recitation of the Quran out loud would have been forbidden.
 - Regarding the Ḥadīth that they mentioned, it is weak and not authentic because its chain of transmission is disconnected between Ibn Abī Labībah and Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.
2. They also seek support through some narrations in which the companions refused gathering for Dhikr, like the following:
- In brief, it was reported that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb received a letter from one of his workers. The letter contained that some people gather for making Du‘ā’ for their ruler and for Muslims. Upon that, ‘Umar sent back a letter to him commanding him to come over along with them, and ‘Umar said to the gatekeeper: prepare a whip. As they entered to meet ‘Umar, he struck their ruler with the whip. The man said: O Commander of the Believers, we are not the people





whom the man talked about. Those are people who come from the East.¹

- This narration is criticized in terms of its chain of transmitters. It contains Mu'āwiyah ibn Hishām who is considered weak by many scholars including 'Aḥmad, Yaḥyā, Ibn Ḥajar and Ibn Abī Shaybah. It also contains Sa'īd ibn 'Iyās al-Jarīriy whose accuracy of memorization changed when he got older, and Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd said about him: it is supposed to not narrate from him.
- It is also criticized in terms of its meaning because punishing someone without further investigation is not an attitude that befits a man like 'Umar. Even if it is true that he did so, he did not strike the ruler for gathering for Du'ā' but for making Du'ā' for him which is a probable means of flattery and self-interest.
- There is a long narration on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd which includes the following: Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'ariy came to us and said: *did Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān come out to you? We replied: not yet. Then, he sat with us until Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān came out when we all stood up for him. Abū Mūsā said: O Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, I have seen something in the mosque, which is despicable in my opinion, but I did not see anything except goodness, praise be to Allah. He replied: what is it? He said: one day you will see it. He added: in the mosque, I saw groups of people sitting in circles waiting for the prayer. Each circle has a head, and they hold pebbles. When the head says: utter Takbīr one hundred times, they utter Takbīr one hundred times. When he says: utter Tahlīl one hundred times, they utter Tahlīl one hundred times. When he says: utter Tasbīḥ one hundred times, they utter Tasbīḥ one hundred times. Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān exclaimed: what did you say to them? Abū Mūsā replied: I said nothing to them, waiting for your opinion and your judgment. He*

¹ This narration is recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in his Muṣanaf (26715), Dār al-Qiblah corporate / 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān organization print, edited by Muḥammad 'Uwāmah, first edition, 1427 A.H./2006 A.D.





said: you could have commanded them to count their sins and assured them that none of their good deeds will not be lost. Then, we, along with Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, proceeded to one of those circles, and he stopped there and said: what is this thing you are doing? They replied: O Abā 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, we hold pebbles for counting Takbīr, Tahlīl and Tasbīḥ. He said: count your sins for I guarantee that none of your good deeds will be lost. Woe into the nation of Muḥammad! How fast you perish! Here are many of the Companions of your Prophet (peace be upon him) living among you, and his clothes have not yet worn out nor have his utensils been broken. By the One in Whose Hands my soul is, either you are on a path that is more guiding than the path of Muḥammad (peace be upon him) or you are opening a door of misguidance. They replied: O Abā 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, by Allah, our intention is good. He said: one's good intention is not enough for him to reach the truth. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) informed us of people who recite the Quran, and it does not go beyond their throats. By Allah, I have no idea, but most of you might belong to them. Then, he turned away from them. 'Amr ibn Salamah said: most of the people of those circles were fighting against us, supporting the Kharijites, on the Day of an-Nahrawān.¹

- The chain of transmission of this narration contains 'Amr ibn Yaḥyā ibn 'Amr ibn Salamah about whom the scholars of praise and criticism differed. It was reported that Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn considered him reliable or that he said about him: his narration is not considered. Ibn Ḥajar reported from 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Yūsuf ibn Kharāsh that he said about him: his narration is not satisfactory. Ibn 'Adiy said: he does not have many narrations, and I have not received anything from him to mention.
- Supposing that the narration is authentic, it is a proof for the permissibility of gathering for Dhikr not for its prohibition. Ibn

¹ This narration is recorded by Ad-Rāramiy in his Sunan (210), Dār al-Mughniy for publishing and distribution print, the Arab Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, edited by Ḥusayn Sulaym 'Asad, first edition, 1412 A.H/2000 A.D.





Mas'ūd and Abū Mūsā did not despise gathering for Dhikr but they despised counting it. Ibn Mas'ūd said: you could have commanded them to count their sins, but he did not say: how come you gather for Dhikr, as it is an innovation!

- They also seek support from what Ibn Waḍḍāḥ al-Qurṭubiy narrated in (Al-Bida') on the authority of Al-'A'mash from some of his companions that he said: *“'Abdullāh walked past a man narrating stories to his companions in the mosque and saying: utter Tasbīḥ ten times and utter Tahlīl ten times. 'Abdullāh said: either you are more guided than the companions of Muḥammad or you are more astray than them. I assume it is the latter i.e., more astray.”*¹
- The opponents claim that 'Abdullāh considered their gathering for Dhikr an innovation.
- However, the previous narration is not authentic because its chain of transmission contains Yaḥyā ibn 'Iisā. Ibn 'Adiy said about him: most of his narrations are not confirmed. Ibn Ḥibbān said about him: he is one of those whose accuracy of memorization got worse and whose forgetfulness increased. 'Aḥmad said about him: I do not approach his narrations. An-Nasā'iy said: his narration is not strong. Al-Jawzajāniy said: he is weak. Al-Bukhāriy said: his narration is disclaimed. Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn said: he is not considered.
- They also seek support from what Ibn Abī Shaybah narrated, following its chain of transmission, from 'Abdullāh ibn Khabbāb that he said: *“My father saw me sitting in the company of a storyteller. When he returned home, he held the baton and said: a new generation has challenged the giants [great scholars].”*²
- Their reference to this narration as a proof is exotic because the man in the narration did not despise gathering in general, but

¹ This narration is recorded in by Ibn Waḍḍāḥ al-Qurṭubiy in (Al-Bida') (p. 39), Ibn Taymiyah library in Cario / Al-'Ilm library in Jeddah print, edited by 'Amr 'Abd al-Mun'im Sulaym, first edition, 1416 A.H.

² This narration is recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah in (Al-Muṣannaf) (26717).





rather despised listening to such a storyteller. Moreover, it has no mention regarding gathering for Dhikr.

- They also seek support from what Ibn Waḍḍāḥ reported in his book (Al-Bida'), following its chain of transmission up to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd. The narration includes the following: "Al-Musayyib ibn Najabah went to 'Abdullāh and said: I left a group of men sitting in the mosque and saying: utter Tasbīḥ three hundred and sixty times. He replied: 'Alqamah, stand up and divert the people attention from looking at me. When they arrived there, 'Abdullāh heard them saying what they used to say. Upon that, he said: either you are sticking to the remains of misguidance, or you are more guided than the companions of Muḥammad, or something like that."¹
- The chain of the previous narration contains Abū az-Za'rā', 'Abdullāh ibn Hāni'. Al-Bukhāriy said about him: his narration is not confirmed.
- Even if it is an authentic narration, it has no relevance to the debated issue regarding collective Dhikr as 'Abdullāh despised numerical counting of Tasbīḥ, which was clarified in other narrations. Therefore, this narration has no point in the debate.

Overall, the opponents sought support from two categories of evidence:

- Narrations that are accepted in terms of their chains of transmission but are out of the scope of collective Dhikr or its prohibition.
 - Narrations that are mostly weak and unreliable. Most of them are mentioned by Ibn Waḍḍāḥ al-Qurṭubiy in his book (Al-Bida').
3. The opponents also rely on rational evidence. They claim that collective Dhikr was not reported from the noble Companions whose footsteps are most worthy to be followed as they are the great scholars.

¹ This narration is mentioned by Ibn Waḍḍāḥ in (Al-Bida') (p. 40).





- We claim that collective Dhikr was actually reported from them as we have mentioned narrations from ‘Umar and his son, Abī Hurayrah, ‘Abān ibn ‘Uthmān and others. This was a widespread practice during the early generation of the companions until it was approved by the scholars of the schools of law in their books. The following is some of what they said:
- In his book (Al-Majmū‘), An-Nawawiy said: *“There is no disapproval of collective recitation as a group, rather it is recommended. The same applies to reading in turns.”*¹
- In his book (Rawḍat aṭ-Ṭālibīn), An-Nawawiy said: *“There is no problem with repeating a verse for contemplation, nor with gathering as a group for recitation, nor with recitation in turns i.e., one group recites a portion, then another group recites a portion afterwards.”*²
- In his book (At-Tibyān fī ‘Aādāb Ḥamalāt al-Qur’ān), An-Nawawiy said: *“Know that congregational recitation is recommended based on clear evidence, as well as the manifested practice of the predecessors (As-Salaf) and the successors (Al-Khalaf). It was authentically narrated from Abī Hurayrah and Abī Sa’īd al-Khudriy, may Allah be pleased with them, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: “no group of people remember Allah, but the angels surround them, and mercy covers them....”*³
- He also said: *“Ibn Abī Dawūd narrated that Abū ad-Dardā’, may Allah be pleased with him, used to study the Quran with a group of people who were reciting it all together. He also narrated the practice of studying in gathering from groups of the praiseworthy*

¹ Al-Majmū‘ by An-Nawawiy, 2/166, Al-‘Irshād library in Jeddah print, edited by Muḥammad Najīb al-Muṭṭī‘iy.

² Rawḍat aṭ-Ṭālibīn 11/228 by An-Nawawiy, edited by Zuhayr ash-Shāwīsh, Al-Maktab al-‘Islāmiy, Beirut, Dimashq, Oman, third edition, 1412 A.H./1991 A.D.

³ At-Tibyān fī ‘Aādāb Ḥamalāt al-Qur’ān by An-Nawawiy (p. 101), Dār Ibn Ḥazm for printing, publishing, and distributing, Beirut, edited by Muḥammad al-Ḥajjār, third edition, 1414 A.H./1994 A.D.





predecessors, successors, and judges of the early generations....”¹

- Furthermore, An-Nawawiy reported the disapproval of congregational recitation by Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn ‘Arzab and Mālik. He said: *“This disapproval by both of them is contrary to what is established by the predecessors and successors and what the textual evidence requires. Therefore, it is abandoned, and reliance is placed on what has been previously mentioned about being congregational recitation recommended.”²*
- In his book (Mughniy al-Muḥtāj), Ash-Shirbīniy said: *“No problem with recitation in turns by having one group recites a portion, then another group recites another portion afterwards, and no problem with the repetition of a verse for contemplation, nor with gathering as a group for recitation or reciting with melodies.”³*
- In his book (Sharḥ Muntahā al-‘Irādāt), Al-Buhūtiy said: *“It is not disliked having a group reciting with one voice.”⁴*
- In his book (Al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā), Ibn Taymiyah said: *“Many scholars consider recitation in turns recommended, which also includes congregational recitation with one voice.”⁵*
- In his book (Al-Furū‘), Ibn Maflaḥ said: *“Regarding a group of people gathering for reading Du‘ā’ or Dhikr, many statements were narrated on his authority [Ibn Maflaḥ’s]. It was reported that he said: it is the best thing! It was also reported that he said: no problem with it. It was also reported that he said: it is innovated. I claim that the truth relies on the condition of the individual. If he feels more pious and humbler by doing this rather than reading*

¹ The same previous source (p. 102).

² The same previous source (p. 102, 103).

³ Mughniy al-Muḥtāj by Al-Khāṭib ash-Shirbīniy, 4/429, Dār al-Fikr print, Beirut.

⁴ Sharḥ Muntahā al-‘Irādāt by Al-Buhūtiy, 1/255, ‘Aālam al-Kutum print, Beirut, 1996 A.D.

⁵ Al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā by Ibn Taymiyah, 5/344, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah print, first edition, 1408 A.H./1987 A.D.





alone, reading in congregation is preferred for him. Otherwise, it is not.”¹

- In his book (Al-Barqiyat al-Maḥmūdiyyah), the Ḥanafiy scholar Al-Khādimiy said: *“It was despicable to read the Quran in congregation because it leads to the abandoning listening and attentiveness, which are required. It was also reported that: no problem with it, and no problem with gathering for reciting Sūrat al-’Ikhlāṣ out loud on the completion of Quran.”*²
- In his book (Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ), our great scholar Mullā ‘Aliy al-Qāriy said: *“This indicates gathering for Dhikr has a virtue and high status.”*³
- In his book (Al-Ḥāshiyah), Ibn ‘Aābidīn said: *“Imam Al-Ghazāliy compared uttering Dhikr individually and collectively to calling out the ‘Adhān (the call of prayer) individually and collectively. He said: just as the voices of those who call out the ‘Aādhān cut through the air more effectively than the voice of one person who is calling out the ‘Aādhān, similarly, uttering Dhikr collectively with one heart has a greater impact in lifting the dense veils [away from the heart] than uttering Dhikr individually.”*
- In his book (Al-Mi‘yār al-Mu‘rab), Al-Wansharīsiy said: *“After collecting all views, it is concluded that the practice of the great scholars have continued from past times in the mosques of congregations (mosques of gatherings), and in the mosques of tribes which are the mosques of territories and suburbs. It has been performed in the same way that is recognized nowadays, involving the attendees, saying ‘Aāmīn by the listeners, and stretching hands for supplications and making Du‘ā’. Furthermore, no one opposed this practice.”*⁴

¹ Al-Furū’ by Ibn Maflaḥ, 2/385-386, Ar-Risārah organization print, Beirut, edited by ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muḥsin at-Turkiy, first edition, 1424 A.H./2003 A.D.

² Al-Barqiyat al-Maḥmūdiyyah by Al-Khādimiy, 3/270, Dār al-Kutub al-’Ilmiyyah print, Beirut.

³ Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ by Mullā ‘Aliy al-Qāriy, Dār al-Fikr print, Beirut, first edition, 1422 A.H./2002 A.D.

⁴ Al-Mi‘yār al-Mu‘rab by Al-Wansharīsiy, 1/292, published by the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs of the Moroccan Kingdom, documented by a group of jurists under supervision of Dr. Muḥammad Ḥajjiy, 1401 A.H./1981 A.D.





- From the previous discussion, it becomes clear that collective Dhikr which we defined in the beginning of this paper is permissible based on abundant evidence. In addition, the prohibitive evidence cannot be held true due to its weakness or non-relevance to the point discussed here.
- It should be pointed out that some of the opponents have attempted to interpret the evidence of permissibility of gathering for Dhikr with one voice as referring to gathering in one place but each one utters Dhikr on his own. It is clear that this is an exotic interpretation which leads to opposing the apparent meaning and connotations of the texts. Shaykh 'Aḥmad Zarrarūq, the Mālikiy scholar, expressed his surprise at this interpretation in his book (Qawā'id at-Taṣawuf) as he said: *“If it is said that people gather and each one utters Dhikr individually, I claim that the connotation of uttering Dhikr privately is not clear, and the connotation of uttering Dhikr out loud but individually is a way of distraction which is an improper manner in people’s conversations, not to mention the remembrance of Allah. Therefore, it [collective Dhikr] must be permissible and even recommended, but with conditions.”*
- For full benefit of this discussion, we will follow this paper with a treatise written by Imam As-Suyūṭiy, may Allah have mercy on him, entitled (Natījat al-Fikr fī al-Jahr bi adh-Dhikr [The Conclusion of Thought Regarding Loud Dhikr]), which explores the permissibility of loud Dhikr and gathering for it.

Second: Uttering Dhikr with Movement

Many people object to some of those who perform Dhikr with movements such as moving their heads, bodies, or the upper part of their body, or even dancing on a rhythmic tone with Dhikr. They deny and consider such acts as innovations that some Ṣūfiys commit.





The question is whether movement in its various forms is permissible during Dhikr?

The answer is that movement during Dhikr is not prohibited in itself unless it goes beyond the circle of the known norms and manners of Dhikr such as resembling the dancing and movements of immoral people, female dancers, or resembling a dance specific to people of another religion.

The evidence that supports its permissibility is the following:

- **Firstly**, the generalization in the Saying of Allah the Almighty: *“Those who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides...”*¹ i.e., they remember Allah in all situations, in their prayers and Dhikr, whether they are alone or combine between these situations; that is why prayer is accepted from those who pray while standing, sitting, or combining between both standing and sitting. The default principle is that the general ruling remains general unless otherwise is proven. Mujāhid said: *“A worshipper is not considered a person uttering Dhikr unless he remembers Allah while standing, sitting and lying on his side.”*²
- **Secondly**, the Saying of Allah the Almighty: *“And when affliction touches man, he calls upon Us, whether lying on his side or sitting or standing....”*³ The meaning of *“lying on his side (lijanbih)”* is lying down because it is in apposition to a noun. If standing and remaining still were the ultimate level of good manners, supplication would not have been allowed while lying down, and the same applies to Dhikr.

¹ Aāl `Imrān: 191.

² Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr 5/283, Dār Ṭībah for publishing and distributing print, edited by Sāmiy ibn Muḥammad Salāmah, second edition, 1420 A.H./1999 A.D.

³ Yūnus: 12.





- **Thirdly**, Imam 'Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others narrated a Ḥadīth on the authority of 'Anas that he said: “The Abyssinians were swinging, i.e., dancing, in front of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). During their dancing, they were saying: Muḥammad, the righteous worshipper. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) asked: “*what are they saying?*” The people said: they are saying: Muḥammad, the righteous worshipper.”¹ The chain of transmission of the previous Ḥadīth is sound according to the conditions of Muslim. This Ḥadīth has an indication that they were combining Dhikr with movement, be it a particular style of their dancing or playing with spears as stated in the narration recorded by Al-Bukhāriy and Muslim.
- **Fourthly**, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudriy said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: “*Increase the remembrance of Allah until they you are crazy.*”² In this context, craziness is a visible state that attracts people's attention, and it is not real

¹ Musnad 'Aḥmad (12540) and Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān (5870), Ar-Risālah institution print, Beirut, edited by Shu'ayb al-'Arnā'ūṭ, second edition, 1414 A.H./1993 A.D.

² This narration is recorded by 'Aḥmad in his Musnad (11653) and 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd in (Al-Muntakhab) (925), As-Sunnah library print, Cairo, edited by Ṣubḥiy al-Badriy as-Sāmīrā'iy/Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khalīl aṣ-Ṣa'īdiy, first edition, 1408 A.H./1988 A.D. It is also recorded by Abī Ya'lā in his Musnad (1376), Dār al-Ma'mūn for traditional heritage print, Dimashq, edited by Ḥusayn Sulaym 'Asad, first edition, 1404 A.H./1984 A.D. It is also recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān (817) and Aṭ-Ṭabarāniy in (Ad-Du'ā') (1859), Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah print, Beirut, edited by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā, first edition, 1413 A.H. It is also recorded by Al-Ḥākim in (Al-Mustadrak) 1/498, Dār al-Ma'rifah print, Beirut, revised by Yūsuf 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Mar'ashliy. It is also recorded by Al-Bayhaqiy in (Shu'ab al-'līmān) (523), Ar-Rushd library print, Riyadh, edited by Mukhtār 'Aḥmad an-Nadawiy, first edition, 1423 A.H./2003 A.D. It is also recorded by Ibn as-Sunniy in ('Amal al-Yawm wa al-Laylah) (4), Dār al-Qiblah print, Jeddah/Beirut, edited by Kawthar al-Barniy. It is also recorded by Ibn Shāhīn in (At-Targhīb) (156), Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah print, Beirut, edited by Muḥammad Ḥasan Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Ismā'īl, first edition, 1424 A.H./2004 A.D. It is also recorded by Ibn 'Asākir in (Tārīkh Dimashq) 17/220, Dār al-Fikr print, edited by 'Umar ibn Ghurāmah al-'Amrawiy, 1415 A.H./1995 A.D. Additionally, it is authenticated by Ibn Ma'in.





craziness. It is an outcome of the feelings of ecstasy that the one who is remembering Allah experience.

- **Fifthly**, 'Aḥmad, Al-Bazzār, and Al-Bayhaqiy narrated from 'Aliy ibn Abī Ṭālib that he said: I went to the Prophet (peace be upon him), along with Ja'far and Zayd. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Zayd: *“You are my freed slave.”* Upon that, Zayd moved with hopping. Then, he said to Ja'far: *“You resemble me in creation and manners.”* Upon that, he moved hopping after Zayd. Then, he said to me: *“You belong to me, and I belong to you.”* 'Aliy said: upon that, I started hopping after Ja'far¹. The same Ḥadīth is narrated by Jābir in the story of Ja'far's arrival from Abyssinia, in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Ja'far: *“You resemble me in creation and manners.”* Upon that, Ja'far started hopping in front of him². A similar Ḥadīth was recorded by Ibn Sa'd in his book (Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt) on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, in which the three companions (Zayd, 'Aliy and Ja'far) disputed regarding 'Imārah bint Ḥamzah ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, whose mother is Salmā bint 'Umays, the sister of 'Asmā' bint 'Umays. Zayd ibn Ḥārithah claimed guardianship to her as he was Ḥamzah's partner during Ḥijrah (immigration). 'Aliy claimed guardianship to her for blood relationship between them and he helped her to come out from Makkah. Ja'far also claimed guardianship to her because he is married to her maternal aunt. Upon that, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“I will judge between you. Zayd, you are Allah's freed servant and His Messenger's freed servant. 'Aliy, you are my brother and my companion. Ja'far, you resemble me in creation and manners, and you have preference to claim*

¹ This narration is recorded in Musnad 'Aḥmad (857) and Musnad Al-Bazzār (744), Al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam library print, edited by Maḥfūz ar-Raḥmān Zaynullāh, first edition, 2009 A.D. It is also recorded by Al-Bayhaqiy in (Shu'ab al-'līmān) (5123).

² This narration is recorded by Aṭ-Ṭabarāniy in (Al-Mu'jam al-'Awsaṭ) (6559), Dār al-Haramayn print, Cairo, edited by Ṭāriq 'Awaḍullāh, 1415 A.H./1995 A.D.





Author: Dr. Khalid Nasr



guardianship to her because you are married to her maternal aunt, and a woman cannot be married to a person who is married to her maternal aunt or paternal aunt.” Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar said: upon that, Ja‘far stood and started hopping i.e., dancing around in front of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)¹. These narrations indicate that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) did not rebuke his Companions for hopping, i.e., dancing, in his presence in the mosque.

¹ (Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt), 8/159, by Ibn Sa‘d, Dār Ṣādir print, Beirut.





The Conclusion

I have presented tradition-based texts as evidence for permissibility. As for the rational evidence, I argue that the prohibition of uttering Dhikr with movement is either for physical movement in general or for a certain style of movement. If it is due to physical movement in general while uttering Dhikr, Dhikr would be prohibited in circumambulating around the Ka'bah and walking between Şafā and Marwā, as people remember Allah while walking, pointing, Raml (speeding up one's pace small steps), and moving shoulders. Similarly, Dhikr is uttered while standing and sitting up in prayer. Moreover, if the prohibition of Dhikr with movement is held true in such cases, it should also be applied to uttering Dhikr while jogging or exercising.

Hence, one reason for the prohibition is left which is its prohibition for a certain style of movement. However, if the prohibition was due to a certain style of movement, Allah would have prohibited lying down for supplications, which is worse than movement and on contrary to the manners of respect among people.

After all, Allah is the best Bestower of truth and guidance.

Written by

Dr. Khalid Naşr

Quincy

2022 A.D./1444 A.H.





APPENDIX

The Conclusion of Thought Regarding Loud Dhikr

The permissibility of gathering for loud Dhikr

By Al-Imam al-Ḥāfiẓ

Jalāl ad-Dīn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr as-Suyūṭiy

(d. 911 A.H.)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Especially Merciful. All praise is due to Allah who provides, and peace be upon His worshippers whom He has chosen. May Allah honor you, you have asked about the permissibility of what the Ṣūfiy masters do regarding forming circles for uttering Dhikr out loud in mosques and raising the voice with Tahlīl.

The answer:

This practice is not despicable. There are some Ḥadīths that recommend uttering Dhikr out loud and other Ḥadīths that recommend uttering Dhikr privately. The compromise between these different Ḥadīths is its convenience with different situations and people respectively. An-Nawawiy worked out such a compromise for reconciling between the Ḥadīths that recommend reciting Quran out loud and the other Ḥadīths that recommend reciting it privately. Now, I am going to clarify this issue in detail.





Citing the Ḥadīths that explicitly or implicitly recommend uttering Dhikr out loud.

(First Ḥadīth)

Al-Bukhāriy recorded on the authority of Abī Hurayrah that he said: the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said: *“Allah the Exalted says: 'I am as my slave expects me to be, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me inwardly, I will remember him inwardly, and if he remembers Me in an assembly, I will remember him in a better assembly.’”* Remembering Allah in an assembly necessitates loudness.

(Second Ḥadīth)

Al-Bazzār and Al-Ḥākim recorded a Ḥadīth, which is mentioned by Al-Ḥākim in (Al-Mustadrak) and authenticated by him, on the authority of Jābir that he said: the Prophet (P.B.U.H) went out to us and said: *“O people, Allah has squads of angels who stop by and engage with the gatherings of Dhikr on earth. So, indulge yourselves in the gardens of Paradise.”* They said: *where are the gardens of Paradise?* He replied: *“They are the gatherings of Dhikr. So, go in the morning and in the evening for remembrance of Allah.”*





(Third Ḥadīth)

Muslim and Al-Ḥākim with his own wording recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī Hurayrah that he said: the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said: *“Allah has mobile (squads) of angels, who have no other work (to attend to but) to follow the assemblies of Dhikr and when they find such assemblies in which there is Dhikr (of Allah) they sit in them and some of them surround the others with their wings till the space between them and the sky of the world is fully covered, and when they disperse (after the assembly of Dhikr is adjourned) they go upward to the heaven and Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, asks them although He is best informed about them: Where have you come from? They would say: We have come from Your servants upon the earth who had been glorifying You (uttering Subḥān Allah), uttering Your Greatness (saying Allah 'Akbar) and uttering Your Oneness (Lā 'ilāha 'ill Allah) and praising You (uttering al-Ḥamdu Lillāh) and begging of You and seeking Your protection. Allah would say, and He best knows the answer: What do they beg of Me? They would say: They beg of You the Paradise. He (Allah) would say: Have they seen it? They would say: No, our Lord. He would say: (What it would be then) if they were to see it? Then, He would say, and He best knows the answer: what do they seek My protection of? They (the angels) would say: (They seek Your protection) of the Hellfire. He would say: Have they seen it? They would say: No. He would say: What it would be if they were to see it? Then, He would say: Witness that I grant pardon to them and confer upon them what they ask for and grant them protection against which they seek protection. They (the angels) would again say: Our Lord, there is one amongst them who is sinful. He sat with them, but he is not like them. Allah would say: I also grant him pardon, for they are a people the seat-fellows of whom are in no way unfortunate.”*





(Fourth Ḥadīth)

Muslim and At-Tirmidhiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī Hurayrah and Abī Saʿīd al-Khudriy (may Allah be pleased with them) that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“No group of people remember Allah but the angels surround them, mercy covers them, tranquility descends on them, and Allah mentions them among those who are with Him.”*

(Fifth Ḥadīth)

Muslim and At-Tirmidhiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Muʿāwiyah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) went out to a circle of his companions and said: *“Why are you gathering?” They said: We are gathering to remember Allah and praise Him. He said: “Jibrīl has come to me and told me that Allah is boasting of you before the angels.”*

(Sixth Ḥadīth)

Al-Ḥākim recorded a Ḥadīth which he authenticated, and Al-Bayhaqi also recorded it in (Shuʿab al-ʿīmān), on the authority of Abī Saʿīd al-Khudriy that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Increase remembering Allah until they say he is crazy.”*

(Seventh Ḥadīth)

In his book (Shuʿab al-ʿīmān), Al-Bayhaqi recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī al-Jawzāʾ (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Increase the remembrance of Allah until the hypocrites say: you are showing off.”* This Ḥadīth is Mursal (disconnected). This Ḥadīth and the previous one inevitably indicate that Dhikr is uttered loudly not privately.





(Eighth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of 'Anas that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, indulge yourselves therein.” They exclaimed: O Messenger of Allah, what are the gardens of Paradise? He said: “The circles of Dhikr.”*

(Ninth Ḥadīth)

Baqiy ibn Makhlad recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed by two assemblies, one is supplicating to Allah and begging of Him, and the other is teaching knowledge. He said: *“Both assemblies are good, but one of them is better than the other.”*

(Tenth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Mughaffal that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“No group of people gather to remember Allah but an announcer from the heaven calls out: stand up, you are forgiven. Your sins have turned into rewards.”*

(Eleventh Ḥadīth)

Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī Sa'īd al-Khudriy that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“On the day of judgement, Allah the Almighty would say: the people of today's gathering will know who the people of generosity are. It was said: who are the people of generosity, O Messenger of Allah? He said: the assemblies of Dhikr in mosques.”*





(Twelfth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd that he said: *“The mountain calls out to the mountain by its name: O so-and-so, has any person remembering Allah passed by you today? If it says: yes, it rejoices.”* Then, ‘Abdullāh recited: *“You have done an atrocious thing. The heavens almost rupture therefrom and the earth splits open, and the mountains collapse in devastation.”* (Maryam: 89-90) Afterwards, ‘Abdullāh commented: *“Do they hear falsehood and not hear goodness?”*

(Thirteenth Ḥadīth)

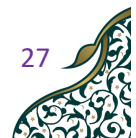
Ibn Jarīr recorded a Ḥadīth in his Tafsīr book on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that he said regarding the verse, *“And the heaven and earth wept not for them, nor were they reprieved.”* (Ad-Dukhān: 29): when a believer dies, the earthly spot where he used to pray and remember Allah cries over him.

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī ‘Ubayd that he said: *“When a believer dies, all the earthly spots call out: the believing worshiper of Allah has died. The earth and the sky would cry over him, and the Most Merciful would say: what makes you cry over My worshiper? They would reply: our Lord, he never passed by any corner of us unless he was remembering You.”*

These narrations indicate that the mountains and the earth hear which is only achieved through loudness of Dhikr.

(Fourteenth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bazzār and Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth with a sound chain of transmission on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Allah the Almighty said: “O my worshiper, if you remember Me alone, I will mention you alone, and if you remember me in an assembly, I will remember you in a way better assembly than theirs.”*





(Fifteenth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bayhaqiy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Zayd ibn 'Asalm that he said: Ibn al-'Adra' said: I went along with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) outside in the evening, and he passed by a man raising his voice in the mosque. *I said: O Messenger of Allah, is he probably showing off? He replied: "No, he is compassionate."*

Al-Bayhaqiy also recorded on the authority of 'Uqbah ibn 'Aāmīr that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said about a man who is called Dhu al-Bijādayn: *"He is compassionate."* The man was uttering Dhikr of Allah.

Moreover, Al-Bayhaqiy recorded on the authority of Jābir that a man was raising his voice while uttering Dhikr. So, another man said: I wish that man could lower his voice. Then, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *"Let him continue. He is compassionate."*

(Sixteenth Ḥadīth)

Al-Ḥākim recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Shaddād ibn 'Aws that he said: we were sitting in the company of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he said: *"Raise your hands and say, "There is no God but Allah (Lā 'ilāha 'illā Allah),"* and we did so. Then, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *"O Allah, you have sent me with this word, enjoined it on me, and promised me with Paradise for it. You do not fail in [Your] promise."* Then, he added: *"Rejoice, Allah has forgiven you."*

(Seventeenth Ḥadīth)

Al-Bazzār recorded on the authority of 'Anas that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *"Indeed, Allah has squads of angels who search for the circles of Dhikr. When they come across them, they surround them. Then, Allah the Almighty says: cover them with My mercy as they are people whoever sits with them is never unfortunate."*



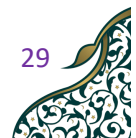


(Eighteenth Ḥadīth)

At-Ṭabarāniy and Ibn Jarīr recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Sahl ibn Ḥunayf that he said: one day, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was staying at one of his homes, a verse was revealed: *“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.”* (Al-Kahf: 28) Then, the Prophet (peace be upon him) went out searching for those people. He came across a group of people who were remembering Allah the Almighty, one of whom has unkempt hair, another one has harsh skin, and another one wears one piece of garment. When he saw them, he sat with them and said: *“All praise to Allah who made in my followers those with whom He ordered me to keep myself patient.”*

(Nineteenth Ḥadīth)

In (Az-Zuhd), Imam ‘Aḥmad recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Thābit who said: Sulymān was in the company of a group of people who are remembering Allah. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) walked past, they stopped. Then, he said: *“what were you saying?”* We said: *we were remembering Allah.* He said: *“I saw the mercy [of Allah] coming down upon you. So, I wanted to participate with you for it.”* Then, he added: *“All praise to Allah who made in my followers those with whom He ordered me to keep myself patient.”*





(Twentieth Ḥadīth)

In (At-Targhīb), Al-'Aṣbahāniy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Abī Razīn al-'Aqīliy that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to him: *“Shall I tell you the essence of everything through which you can gain the best of the two worlds i.e., the worldly life and the hereafter?”* He replied: *Yes.* He said: *“Hold fast to the councils of Dhikr, and when you are alone, move your tongue with the remembrance of Allah.”*

(Twenty first Ḥadīth)

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā, Al-Bayhaqiy and Al-'Aṣbahāniy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of 'Anas that he said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Sitting with a group of people who are remembering Allah after the Fajr prayer until the sun rises is dearer to me than anything over which the sun rises, and sitting with a group of people who are remembering Allah after the 'Aṣr prayer until the sun sets is dearer to me than the whole world and its contents.”*

(Twenty second Ḥadīth)

Al-Bukhāriy and Muslim recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās that he said: *“Dhikr in a loud voice after obligatory prayers was (a common practice) during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him); and when I heard that I came to know that they (the people) had finished the prayer.”*





(Twenty third Ḥadīth)

Al-Ḥākim recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“If anyone says on entering the market, “There is no god but Allah alone who has no partner, to whom belongs the dominion, to whom praise is due, who gives life and causes death, and to everything He is Able,” Allah will record for him a million good deeds, obliterate from him a million evil deeds, raise him a million degrees, and build him a house in paradise.” In another narration, he said: “if anyone calls out.”*

(Twenty fourth Ḥadīth)

There is a Ḥadīth that is recorded by ‘Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd, At-Tirmidhiy who rendered it authentic, An-Nasā’iy and Ibn Mājah on the authority of As-Sā’ib that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“Jibrīl came to me and said: “Command your companions to raise their voices while uttering Takbīr.”*

(Twenty fifth Ḥadīth)

In his book (Al-‘īdayn), Al-Marwaziyy recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Mujāhid that ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar and Abū Hurayrah used to visit the market during the first ten days of Dhul Ḥijjah, and they used to utter Takbīr. They would come to the market only for this reason.

He also recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr that he said: *“‘Umar used to utter Takbīr while he was staying in his tent, then the people in the mosque and the market would utter Takbīr to the extent that makes Minā trembles with Takbīr.”*

He also recorded a Ḥadīth on the authority of Maymūn ibn Mihrān that he said: *“I noticed the companions uttering Takbīr during the [first] ten days [of Dhu al-Ḥijjah] to the extent that made me resemble it [i.e., Takbīr] with waves due to its severity.”*





Inference from the previous hadiths

If you contemplate on the previously mentioned Ḥadīths, you will know that loud Dhikr is not despicable. They allude to recommending loud Dhikr explicitly or implicitly as we stated earlier. Contradicting this view with the Ḥadīth that states, “*The best Dhikr is the private one*” is similar to contradicting the Ḥadīths that recommend loud recitation of the Quran with the Ḥadīth that states, “*The one who recites the Quran privately is like the one who gives charity privately.*” However, An-Nawawiy argued that there is no contradiction between them as he states that private Dhikr is better when one fears showing off or disturbing people who are performing prayer or sleeping.

Other than that, loud Dhikr is better because it involves more action, benefits listeners, awakens the heart of the reciter, intensifies the thought, awakens the ears, dispels sleeping and increases vitality. Some scholars said that it is recommended to recite some portions loudly and other portions privately because the one who recites privately may get bored and prefer to recite out loud, while the one who recites out loud may get tired and prefer to recite privately to take rest.

We adapt the same detailed view regarding Dhikr which suggests a compromise between the Ḥadīths. There are three points raised from the opponents:

Point 1

If you argue that Allah the Almighty said: “*And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear without being apparent in speech...*” (Al-’A’rāf: 205), I say: the answer regarding this verse comes in three points, as follows:

1. This verse is Makkiy (was revealed in Makkah) such as the verse that says, “*And do not recite [too] loudly in your prayer or [too] quietly but seek between that an [intermediate] way.*” (Al-’Isrā’: 110) The latter verse was revealed because the Prophet (peace





be upon him) used to recite the Quran out loud which made the polytheists hear him and insult both him and the Quran. Therefore, Allah commanded him to stop reciting out loud as a precautionary measure, just as he was prohibited from insulting idols in the verse: *“And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge.”* Later, this meaning no longer existed as Ibn Kathīr alluded to in his book of Tafsīr.

2. Some of the interpreters of the Quran such as ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn ‘Aslam, the teacher of Mālik, and Ibn Jarīr interpreted this verse as referring to uttering Dhikr while Quran is being recited. Therefore, uttering Dhikr in such a way was established as an act of reverence for the Quran and to not raise voices while it is being recited. This view is supported by the verse that comes before the one we are discussing, which is, *“So when the Qur’an is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy.”* (Al-‘A‘rāf: 204). I would like to say that when Allah commanded paying attention to recitation, it was feared that this might lead to idleness. Therefore, Allah decreed that even if the tongue should not move, the heart should stick to and heed remembering Allah; that is why Allah said at the end of the verse, *“And do not be among the heedless.”* (Al-‘A‘rāf: 205)
3. Thirdly, some Ṣūfiy scholars argued that the command in the verse is particular to the Prophet (peace be upon him), the perfect and perfected man. As for others, who are subject to lay whispers and thoughts, they are commanded to recite loudly because this is effective in dispelling these lay whispers and thoughts. I would like to say that the previous view is supported by a Ḥadīth that is recorded by Al-Bazzār on the authority of Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal who said: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: *“If any one of you performs prayer at night, let him recite out loud as the angels pray with his prayer and hear his recitation. The believing Jinn who are in the air and his neighbors in his home also pray with his prayer and hear his*





recitation. Due to his loud recitation, the deviant Jinn and rebellious devils flee away from his home and the surrounding homes.”

Point 2

If you say: Allah the Almighty said: *“Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors.”* (Al-’A’rāf: 55) In this verse, Allah interprets transgression as referring to loudness in supplication.

I say: the refutation of this argument comes in two points.

1. The preferred interpretation of this verse illustrates transgression as going beyond what is commendable to do or inventing a supplication that has no basis in Islamic law. This interpretation is supported by a Ḥadīth that is recorded by Ibn Mājah and Al-Ḥākim, in his (Mustadrak) in which he authenticated it, on the authority of Abī Na‘āmah (may Allah be pleased with him) that ‘Abdullāh ibn Mughaffal heard his son saying: O Allah, I ask You for the white palace on the right side of Paradise. He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying: *“Some people among my followers will transgress in supplication.”* This is an interpretation provided by a companion who is more knowledgeable of the intended meaning.
2. Supposing that the argument is true, yet the verse talks about Du‘ā’ not Dhikr. Privacy for Du‘ā’ in particular is better because it is more probable to be accepted this way; that is why Allah the Almighty said: *“When he called to his Lord a private supplication.”* (Maryam: 3) Similarly, it is agreed by consensus of opinion that uttering the ’Isti‘ādhah (seeking protection from Satan) privately in prayer is recommended because it is a type of supplication.

Point 3

If you say: it was reported that Ibn Mas‘ūd noticed a group of people raising their voices with Takbīr in the mosque and said: *“I*





do not see you except as innovators.” Then, he led them out of the mosque. I say: this narration requires assessment to its chain of transmission and authentication based on the books of the scholars of Ḥadīth. Supposing that it is authentic, it contradicts the authenticity of numerous Ḥadīths that have been previously mentioned. In case of conflict of proofs, precedence goes to the Ḥadīths that have been previously mentioned.

Then, I came across what necessitates rejecting this attribution to Ibn Mas‘ūd. In (Az-Zuhd), ‘Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad related to us that Al-Mas‘ūdiy related to us, from ‘Aāmīr ibn Shaqīq, from Abī Wā’il that he said: *“To those who claim that ‘Abdullāh forbade uttering Dhikr, I never sat with ‘Abdullāh in a council unless he mentions Allah therein.”* Moreover, ‘Aḥmad recorded a Ḥadīth, in (Az-Zuhd), on the authority of Thābit al-Bunāniy that he said: *“Indeed, the people of Dhikr sit together to remember Allah, and they have sins like mountains, by Allah, when they finish remembering Allah, nothing of their sins remains.”*





Transliteration Guide

Arabic	English	Arabic	English
ء	'	ب	B
ت	T	ث	Th
ج	G/J	ح	H
خ	Kh	د	D
ذ	Dh	ر	R
ز	Z	س	S
ش	Sh	ص	Ṣ
ض	Ḍ	ط	Ṭ
ظ	Ẓ	ع	'
غ	Gh	ف	F
ق	Q	ك	K
ل	L	م	M
ن	N	ه	H
و	W	ي	Y
َ	a/A	ِ	i/I
ُ	u/U	ا	ā
ي	ī	و	ū



Purposeful, Jurisprudential Research Papers



A research paper on
Issues regarding Dhikr

Legality of Collective Dhikr and Uttering Dhikr with Movement

By

Dr. Khalid Naşr

Dean of International Institute For Islamic Studies

English translator: Ahmed Khaled

