



MUSIC AND RECITATION IN ISLAM

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Sahih Iman Publication

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PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

At the time of the advent of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) people who lived in and around Arabian Peninsula were mostly descendants of the followers of Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and Prophet Ismail (عليه السلام). Historians say that the period between Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) was over 2000 years. During this time, people gradually deviated from the teachings of Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام) and, though they believed in one God, they started worshipping idols of all kinds. Many of these idols were brought to Makka Al-Mukarrama from far off places where Arabs used to go for merchandise.

Some of these Arabs were the followers of other prophets; like Musa (عليه السلام) and Isa (عليه السلام), who were known as Jews and Christians respectively. In Islamic history, this period is known as 'the days of illiteracy' (أيام الجاهلية).

What changes took place after the advent of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)?

Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) brought the people back to Islam; introduced worship of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and imbibed in them the humanistic values taught by Islam. Certain practices of Arabs, like killing of girl child, wine drinking, usury, etc., were forbidden. Other practices were not discontinued, rather refined as per Islamic values. Like unlimited polygamy was stopped and people were permitted to marry a maximum of 4 wives with certain conditions.

If anyone tries to sum up the change in Arabs in the hands of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), will conclude that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) cleansed their hearts, and made them good human beings.

From their past traditions, what was allowed to be continued by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)?

The day to day lives of Arabs mostly remained unchanged with the exclusion of certain areas where Islamic reforms were introduced. Their living, their eating habits, their clothing, their cultural traditions, their practice of doing business, and many more things continued, and Islamic teachings further improved their living conditions.

For instances they were not required to change their names. They were allowed to continue with their wives and children. They were allowed to live in their own houses and encouraged to continue their businesses/agriculture as usual, except that usury was prohibited and mutual hatred between tribes and bloodshed was stopped. There were hundreds of tribes living in Arabian Peninsula and Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) did not force them to change anything except certain grey areas where Islamic reforms were introduced.

Arab tribes had different accent in their colloquial Arabic. They were allowed to recite Quran in their own accent. But these recitals did not have any bearing on the understanding of the Quran. These recitals were later known as ‘seven recitals’ and ten recitals. Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) did not force them to use the accent of Quraish in reading Quran. In all these recitals, Hazrat Hafsa (رضى الله تعالى عنه) recital was very close to the accent of Quraish.

It is in Hadith - It is narrated by Abu Huraira (رضى الله تعالى عنه) that the Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) does not listen to anything the way He listens to the loud vocal recital of Quran by the melodious voice of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). **(Bukhari, Muslim).**

It is in Hadith – It is narrated by Abu Huraira (رضى الله تعالى عنه) that the Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said, ‘one who does not recite Quran with rich (vocal) recitation, is not among us. **(Bukhari and Muslim).**

Singing as a show happiness was wide spread in Prophet’s (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) time. Certain cultural traditional dances remained unchanged. During Prophet’s (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) time, there were only two musical instruments, flute and tambourine and both were allowed to be played by people.

In a nutshell, Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) did not touch the cultural life of Arabs except in certain areas where Islamic values were introduced.

This book is written to emphasize the fact that it is not appropriate for anyone to try to freeze Islam within his misunderstanding of Quranic verses and Ahadith. Islam is versatile and happening religion. It is meant for the people of the whole world until the day of Resurrection. The cultural values of people of the whole world can be accommodated within the parameters of Islam. Islam has taught people certain basic requirements in their lives. These have to be as per the basic laws of Islam as taught by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). Islam does not impose anything against the basic nature of human beings. It reforms the extremes in nature and facilitates people to become good human beings.

It is in Quran – ‘O’ people of belief, do not consider forbidden those good things that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has allowed. **(Al-Ma’ida – 87).**

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MORALISTIC / RELIGIOUS RECITATION WITH OR WITHOUT MUSLIC IS ALLOWED IN ISLAM

Writing of poetry and its recitation was allowed by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

It is in Hadith - It is narrated by Buraida (رضي الله تعالى عنه) that I heard Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) saying, some (couplet) is convincing speech, some are ignorant talk, and some couplet is wisdom and some are narrow mindedness'. (Abu Dawood).

Writing of Na'at in praise of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and its recitation was very much liked by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

(i) **It is in Hadith** - Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) narrated that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) used to keep a Pulpit (stand) at the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) mosque for Hassaan Bin Saabith (رضي الله تعالى عنه) and Hassaan (رضي الله تعالى عنه) used to climb over it and used to express pride for, and defend Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) (meaning he used to recite Na'at) and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) used to say that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) supports Hassaan (رضي الله تعالى عنه) from Hazrat Jibreel (عليه السلام) as long as he expresses pride for and defends the Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). (Bukhari).

(ii) **It is in Hadith** - Narrated Hassan bin Thabit Al-Ansari: I asked Abu Huraira "By Allah! Tell me the truth whether you heard the Prophet saying O Hassan! Reply on behalf of Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) . O Allah! Help him with the Holy Spirit (Jibreel - عليه السلام)" Abu Huraira said, "Yes". (Bukhari, Book 8, # 444).

(iii) **It is in Hadith** - 'Amr b Sharid reported his father as saying: One day when I rode behind Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), he said (to me): Do you remember any Poetry of Umayya bin Abu Salt. I said: Yes. He said: Then go on. I recited a couplet, and he said: Go on. Then I again recited a couplet and he said : Go on. I recited one hundred couplets (of his Poetry). This Hadith has been reported on the authority of Sharid through another chain of transmitters but with a slight variation of wording. (Muslim. Book 28, # 5602).

(iv) **It is in Hadith** - Narrated Abdullah bin Dinar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) : My father said, "I heard Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) reciting the poetic verses of Hadhrat Abu Talib (رضي الله تعالى عنه).

'And a white (person) (the Prophet - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) who is requested to pray for rain and who takes care of the orphans and is the guardian of widows. '

Salim's father (Ibn Umar - رضي الله تعالى عنه) said, 'The following poetic verse occurred to my mind while I was looking at the face of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) while he was praying for rain.'

'He did not get down till the rain water flowed profusely from every roof and water passage'

And a white (person) (Prophet Mohammad - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) who is requested to pray for rain and who takes care of the orphans and is the guardian of widows.

And these were the words of Abu Talib (رضي الله تعالى عنه).! (Bukhari, Book 2, Volume 17, Hadith 122)

PLAYING OF INSTRUMENTS AND MORALISTIC JOYFUL DANCING IS ALLOWED IN ISLAM

Playing of Tambourine (Daf) and flute, and dancing in joy was allowed and liked by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

(i) It is in Hadith – Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) has narrated that the Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said 'make announcement for the marriage ceremony and perform the ceremony at Mosque and play on the tambourine (Daf)'. (Tirmizi).

(ii) It is in Hadith – It is narrated by Mohammad Bin Haatib (رضي الله تعالى عنه), and he narrates it from Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) who said that the difference between lawful (halal) and unlawful (Haram) is that in marriages singing and drum beating is performed. (Ahmad, Tirmizi, Nasai and Ibn Maja).

(iii) It is in Hadith – Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) narrates that when one Ansari's bride was sent to her groom's house in her bridal attire, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said that 'Don't you have some play and fun because the Ansar's like fun'. (Bukhari).

(iv) **It is in Hadith** – It is narrated by Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضي الله تعالى عنها), she said ‘I swear to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) I saw the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), and the Habashis (a tribe of Madina) are playing (dancing) with spears and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) hides me with his coverlet so that I could see their play from between his ear and shoulder. Then he stays for me until I myself will return back’. **(Bukhari, Muslim)**.

(v) **It is in Hadith** – It is narrated by Abu Musa (رضي الله تعالى عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, O’Musa (رضي الله تعالى عنه), you have been given a flute of the People of Dawood (عليه السلام). **(Tirmizi)**.

(vi) **It is in Hadith** – Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) narrates that Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) came to our home when two girls were clapping and playing on the tambourine (Daf) during ‘Mana’, and in another narration (the girls were) singing such couplets which were recited by Ansar during the war of Ba’as. When Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) chided these girls, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) took out the (bed) sheet from his face and said O’Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه), leave them, as this is festival time. And in one narration (it is said) O’ Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه), every nation has festival and this is our festival.’ **(Bukhari, Muslim)**.

During Prophet’s (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) time, there were only two musical instruments, flute and tambourine and both these instruments were permitted. Now a days many new musical instruments have been made. If someone uses them in rightful singing, why can’t these be allowed?

However, if someone is singing something which explains physical beauty of a woman or describes polytheism and infidelity or idolatry, its recital and singing is senseless, waste of time and will be considered as sin. Similarly, singing and dancing of young men and women together on stages cannot be allowed.

Every aspect of human activity has positive and negative features. Islam disallowed negative features and allowed the positive side. Fornication and infidelity is not allowed. But you can have legal marital bliss.

Similarly, singing, music and dancing which leads people towards sin cannot be allowed. But if someone recites the praise of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) with musical instruments, how can it be stopped? If someone sings in praise of his parents because they have supported him in his life, how can we disallow it? If someone sings in praise of his teacher for his services, how can it be disallowed? If someone recites a poetry in praise of his Shaikh who taught him Arabic, Quran and Hadith, how can this be disallowed? If someone sings, dances and plays musical instruments in times of joys, festivals, marriages, how can it be disallowed?

If someone arranges 'Sama' gatherings and recital of poetry in praise of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and Sahabah (رضي الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين) and Shuyookh of Ihsan and uses musical instruments, this will be treated as Sunnah because Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) has allowed it and liked it.

Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Saffarini al-Hanbali (d. 1188) relates in his book Ghidha' al-albab li-sharh manzumat al-adab from Ibrahim ibn `Abd Allah al-Qalanasi that Imam Ahmad said about the Sufis : "I don't know people better than them." Someone said to him: "They listen to music and they reach states of ecstasy (Wajd)." He said : "Do you prevent them from enjoying an hour with Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)?"

If people recite Salam and Durood in chorus with music on Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) it will be treated as Sunnah because Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) both like it. Hadith books are full of traditions of hearing of vocal music by companions of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and their first and second generation followers. All 4 Imams of Fiqh have supported listening of Sama with or without Musical instruments.

All Ahadith relating to prevention of Singing (Gina) have been proved weak by all Imams of fiqh.

CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF RELATED AHADITH

It is in Hadith - Narrated Abu 'Aamir or Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari that he heard the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) saying : "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks, and the use of musical instruments as lawful. And (from them), there will be some who will stay near the side of a mountain, and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him : 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) will destroy them during the night and will let the mountains fall on them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the day of Judgment. " (**Bukhari**)

It is obvious from the above Hadith that the singing will be judged as per the assembly of people and what they are singing. The group of the people mentioned in the above Hadith will be alcoholic drunkard, who will be doing zina and will use Music as sin. They will not be charitable people as well. Definitely, whoever is using musical instruments for the purpose of sin, will be punished.

Salafis, Deobandis and their likeminded groups impose this Hadith on the pious recitation of Na'at of the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) which is very much like by the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

It is in Hadith - Ibn Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) considered the Khawarij and the heretics (Salafis/Deobandis and their likeminded groups) as the worst beings in creation and said : "They went to verses (and Ahadith) which were revealed about the disbelievers and applied them to the Believers (Prophets, Sahabah, Awliya Allah and Muslims). **(Bukhari - Chapter Khawarijeen)**

Salafis, Deobandis and their likeminded groups impose Quranic verses and Ahadith meant for disbelievers and sinners, on good Muslims, in order to misrepresent Islam to the gullible people. Innocent people get carried away by their utterances and get mislead. They do not realize that by their actions, they may get some worldly benefits or may be leadership of the community, but what will happen in Hereafter should be a matter of concern for them.

If anyone denies authentic Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) Ahadith, he will go out of Islam as an arrow goes out of the bow.

Recitation of Salam, Sama, in praise of prophets and dignitaries of Islam with or without Music is allowed in Islam, because the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and Sahaba have liked it.

To do Wajd, or stand or cry slowly or loudly in Sama gatherings on couplets in praise of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) is Sunnah. Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and His Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) feel happy about it. All these actions are proved by the traditions of the companions of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and their followers.