

On Salaatut-Tasbeeh [The Prayer of Glorification] - Part Five *Is the Hadeeth Authentic or Not?*

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Questioner: [Is the hadeeth] about Salaatut-Tasbeeh authentic or not?

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) said: The scholars have differed greatly over the hadeeth about it, it has been said that it is authentic and that it is fabricated, and in between these two [opinions] are different levels. What I hold to be the stronger opinion, following on from some of the Huffaaz well-known for their precision in their checking of the Prophet's hadeeths ﷺ, like al-Haafiz Ibn Naasir ad-Dimashqee who was a contemporary of al-Haafiz add-Dhahabee ad-Dimashqee, [so al- Haafiz Ibn Naasir ad-Dimashqee] has a book in which he gathered the different paths of the hadeeths about Salaatut-Tasbeeh. And it will become clear to whoever studies it and studies the paths of this prayer or the paths of the hadeeth of Salaatut-Tasbeeh that the hadeeth is authentic based upon all of its chains of narration. As for the individual chains of narration then there isn't a hadeeth among them about which it can be said that it is authentic [Saheeh], indeed [there isn't a hadeeth among them about which it can be said that it is] hasan li-dhaatihee.¹

The authenticity came about through all of the chains of narration taken into account together. And this is the reason why the scholars have differed so greatly over it.

So you have Ibn al-Jawzee and with him Ibn Taymeeyah and others who held that this hadeeth was fabricated, not meaning by that that the chain of narration itself was fabricated, because some of its isnaads are in Sunan Aboo Daawood and other collections and they don't include anyone who has been accused as such, nor do they have anyone who was a [confirmed] fabricating liar, in fact the isnaad does not even have anyone who was [even simply] accused of lying or fabricating, what they do have are those whose memorisation has been criticised.

But Ibn al-Jawzee and Ibn Taymeeyah looked at the wording of the hadeeth and found that it was strange [ghareeb] in its wording and also strange in the excellence given to this prayer even if only performed once a year, so they said that a salaah like this has no resemblance to the well-known prayers mentioned in the authentic hadeeths, and so for this reason they inclined towards it being fabricated.

¹ it is a hasan li- dhaatihee narration when it is reported through another similar route or one even stronger.

And those who didn't go as far as to say that it was fabricated [yet who still didn't agree with it] looked at the apparent paths of narration and the isnaads—that is if they had collected and come across all of them, [again that is] if they had, because I am doubtful that they did that—because whoever did [actually] do that did not [then go on to] say that it was fabricated or weak. [These others] took a look at a few of its individual chains of narration and then said that the hadeeth was weak.

As for those who reported it and said that it was authentic, they took into consideration all of its paths of narration and saw that the hadeeth principle which the hadeeth scholars laid down in the Science of Hadeeth—i.e., that a weak hadeeth is strengthened if it is reported through many paths of narration—they [went and] looked at this numerousness and found a not insignificant amount of isnaads that were [of a level] sound enough to strengthen the hadeeth based on all such paths. So they held that the hadeeth was strong, with some saying it was hasan and others that it was Saheeh.

So therefore the difference between those [scholars] who call the hadeeth hasan and those who say it is Saheeh is not a fundamental difference since both of them are of the opinion that the hadeeth is established, and following on from that that acting on it is legislated.

And this ruling is supported by the fact that Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak [may Allaah be pleased with him] used to pray it. 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubaarak was one of the Imaams of the Muslims and one of the Shaykhs of the Imaam of the Sunnah Imaam Ahmad, [may Allaah have mercy on him]. So if he didn't have the opinion that the hadeeth was established he wouldn't have worshipped Allaah with this prayer which has that peculiarity in its form and manner. A peculiarity which led Ibn al-Jawzee and Ibn Taymeeyah to say that it was fabricated, but their ruling [that it was fabricated], as we mentioned earlier, was not about the isnaads of this hadeeth, [they were not saying] that they all consist of fabricating liars, no.

So all of what I have mentioned reassures me in concluding that the hadeeth is established from the Prophet ﷺ and that based upon that a Muslim should do it once every day, and if he can't then every week, and if he can't then once a month, and if he can't then once a year, and if he can't then at the very least, once in his lifetime.

This is my opinion about Salaatut-Tasbeeh.

And it crossed my mind now that I should add something further to clarify what has preceded, so I say: it is true that there is no equivalent to the peculiarity in the manner in which this prayer is performed, but after the hadeeth has been found to be established based upon what I mentioned earlier, the hadeeth should not be called defective based upon this peculiarity. Because we know that there is a prayer, authentically established by agreement of the scholars of hadeeth even though it also differs from the regular prayers: I am referring to the eclipse prayer.

So there was a solar eclipse in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and it so happened to occur on the day when Ibraaheem, the Prophet's son ﷺ, passed away. One of the customs of the Age of Ignorance [Jahileeyyah] was that they would say that an eclipse would occur because a great person had died. So when the solar eclipsed coincided with the death of Ibraaheem ibn an-Nabiyy ﷺ they said that the eclipse was because he had passed away.

So the Prophet ﷺ gave a sermon among them and said that, 'O People! Verily the sun and the moon are two of Allaah's Signs. They do not eclipse due to the death of anyone or his birth, so when you see it then pray and give charity and supplicate,' then he ﷺ prayed two rak'ahs bowing twice in each rak'ah—and here is the point: in each rak'ah he ﷺ bowed two times.

So this manner [of prayer] opposed all of the regular, known prayers, whether obligatory or optional, because all of them are distinct in having only one bowing and two prostrations ... in one rak'ah there is one bowing and two prostrations. As for this [eclipse] prayer it differed from all of the other prayers, because he ﷺ prayed two rak'ahs and in each one there were two rukoos and two sajdahs—so is it thereafter correct to say that this hadeeth is irregular [shaad] or munkar because it goes against the general form of all the [other] prayers?

We say no, as long as the hadeeth about it is Saheeh then it is an act of worship that Allaah ordained for His Slaves during an eclipse, so we should pray as he ﷺ used to pray.

So based upon [all of] this I say: this shows even if by way of comparison that even if Salaatut-Tasbeeh differed from the other known, regular prayers, the eclipse prayer also differed in some aspects from those same prayers but that was not seen as a defect in it and it remains an ordained act of worship until the Day of Judgement.

[Rihlatun-Noor, 48b.]