

Doing Zikr On Date Stones etc...

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Many Scholars and laymen alike have spoken very harshly about the Zikr done on beads, i.e. the Rosary or Tasbeeh. Many have labelled it as Bidah.

Lets take a look at the evidence that proves the above accusations to be wrong.

"Shaykh Uthaymeen" wrote:

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (al-Liqa' al-Maftooh, 3/30) was asked whether using the *masbahah* for tasbeeh is bid'ah, and his reply was: "It is better not to do tasbeeh with the masbahah, but it is not bid'ah, because there is a basis for it, which is the fact that some of the Sahaabah did tasbeeh with pebbles.

Taking *Dhik'r* on the finger after Salah and in general is **better to be done upon the fingers** but using Masbahah (prayer beads/Dhik'r beads) cannot be considered as Bid'ah as there is basis for its usage.

Ahadeeth on making Dhik'r on other than Fingers:

Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas relates that he, along with Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, visited a woman who had in front of her some datestones or pebbles on which she was counting the glorification of Allah. So he said to her: "Shall I not inform you of something that would be easier or be better for you than this? Say: Glory be to Allah (Sub' hana'Li'lah) as many times as what He created in the heavens. Glory be to Allah as many times as what He has created on earth. Glory be to Allah as many times as what He created between them. Glory be to Allah as many times as what He is creating. Then Allah is greater (Allahu akbar) a like number of times; then Praise be to Allah (al' amduli'Li'lah) a similar number of times; then There is no deity worthy of worship save Allah (la ilaha illa'Li'lah) a like number of times; then There is no might nor power except Allah (la ' hawla wa la quwwata illa bi'Li'lah) a like number of times."

Abu Dawud, no.1500; al-Tirmidhi, no.3803, who said it is Hasan gharib. Al-Hakim deemed it Saheeh in al-Mustadrak, 1: 547, and al-Dhahabi concurred

Safiyah relates: Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, visited me whilst I had in front of me four thousand date stones upon which I was counting glorifications. He said: "Do you count glorifications on these? Shall I not teach you what surpasses this?" I replied: Teach me. He said: "Say, sub' ana'Li'lah 'adada khalqihi - Glory be to Allah as many times as what He has created."

Al-Tirmidhi, no.3789, who declared it gharib. Al-Hakim, 1:548, graded it as Sahih, and al-Dhahabi was of the same view. Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalani though, graded the Hadith Hasan in Nata'ij al-Afkâr, 1:79.

Athaar (from the Salaf) on making Dhik'r on other than Fingers:

"In Hilāl al-Haffār's monograph; by way of Mu'tamar b. Sulaymān; about Abu Safiyyah - the freedman (mawlā) of the Prophet, Peace be upon him - that a mat would be spread for him and then a palm-leaved basket would be brought, filled with pebbles, upon which he would count tasbih till noon. It would then be taken away and be brought back to him after he had prayed. He would then resume counting tasbih until evening. Imām Ahmad recorded it in al-Zuhd ...

"Ibn Sa'd records; from Hakim b. al-Daylami, that Sa'd b. Abi Waqqās would count tasbih on pebbles.

"Ibn Sa'd further records in his Tabaqāt ... that Fātimah, daughter of al-Husayn b. 'Ali, used to count tasbih on a thread stringed with knots.

"In Zawā'id al-Zuhd, 'Abd Allah, son of Imam Ahmad, records that Abu Hurayrah had a string with a thousand knots in it; and that he would not go to sleep until he had counted tasbih on them.

"Ahmad records in al-Zuhd; by way of al-Qasim b. 'Abd al-Rahmān; that Abu al-Dardā' used to have a bag filled with datestones and that whenever he finished the noon prayer he would bring them out, one by one, and count tasbih on them until they were finished ...

All of the above quoted from Al-Suyuti, 'Al-Min'ah fi'l-Sub'ah', in al-Hāwi li'l-Fatāwa (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1988), 1:1-5 and Nayl al-Awtār, 2:672-3.

Ameerul-Mumineen Fil Hadeeth: Yahya Ibn Said Al-Qattan (RA)

The student of Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) Imam Dhahabi (RA) quotes the practise of Yahya (RA) as cited in Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 1998), 9:180.

... **Ibn Ma'in (RA) said:** "Yahyā used to carry dhikr beads with him, and would put his hand in his tunic to count tasbih [on it]...

Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar Asqalani (RA)

Whenever he, may Allah have mercy upon him, would sit with a group after the 'Ishā prayer, or at any other time to teach, he would carry a sub'ah up his sleeve so that none could see it, and he would continuously count tasbih or dhikr on it ...

Al-Jawāhir wa'l-Durar fi Tarjumah Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Hajr (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 1999), 1:171.

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (RA):

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah states in Majmu' Fatāwā (Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1991), 22:506:

Counting tasbih on one's fingers is a Sunnah. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said to the women Count on your fingers, for they will be questioned and be made to speak. As for counting on date stones, pebbles and the like, then this too is good. Some of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, used to do this. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, once saw the Mother of the Believers [Safiyyah] counting tasbih on pebbles, and he approved it tacitly. It is related of Abu Hurayrah that he too would count tasbih on its like. 'As for counting on a string of beads, or something similar to it, there were some who held it was disliked, and others who held that it was not disliked. If the intention in doing so is sound, then it is something good and not disliked (fa huwa Hasan ghayr makruh). To use them without a need, though, or doing so only to show-off to others - like hanging it around one's neck or wearing it on one's wrist - then this is either ostentation (riya' li'l'inas), or it is resembling those who habitually show-off. The first case is forbidden; the second, lesser in sin and revolves around being detested.

Mullah Ali Qari (RA)

Mullā 'Ali al-Qārī said in his commentary to the Mishkāt, while discussing the hadith, states:

It contains an allowance for counting dhikr on the venerable sub`ah. Abu Hurayrah used to have a thread with many knots in it, upon which he would count tasbih`. As for the claim that it is a bid`ah, this is unsound; for it has a basis in the Sunnah ... Counting on one's fingers, though, is proven to be preferable ...

Imam Suyuti (RA): "Al-Suyuti cites all these reports in a monograph called, al-Min`ah fi'l-Sub`ah - which forms part of his collection of Legal Verdicts (fatāwā). Towards the end of it, he states:

"It is not related from any of the Predecessors or Later-Comers that they forbade the allowance of dhikr beads. Rather, many of them used to count on it and did not view it as being disliked (makruh).

Al-Suyuti, 'Al-Min`ah fi'l-Sub`ah', in al-Hāwi li'l-Fatāwa (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1988)

Imam Shawkani (RA):

Imam Shawkani (RA) after quoting the two Ahadeeth given above in his book states:

The last two hadiths both indicate the permissibility of counting tasbih on

datestones or pebbles, and likewise with dhikr beads - since there is nothing to distinguish between them. This is because the Prophet, upon whom be peace, tacitly approved what the women were doing and did not censure them. Also, being directed to what is preferable does not negate permissibility (wa'l- irshād ilā mā huwa afdal lā yunāf• al-jawāz)."

Nayl al-Awtār, 2:672.

Shaikh Abdur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri (RA):

Al-Mubārakpuri•, in his magisterial Tu`fat al-A`wadh• bi Shar` Jāmi` al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dār al- Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1990), 9:322, endorses the exact same words of al-Shawkāni.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (RA)

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (al-Liqa' al-Maftooh, 3/30) was asked whether using the masbahah for tasbeeh is bid'ah, and his reply was:

"It is better not to do tasbeeh with the masbahah, but it is not bid'ah, because there is a basis for it, which is the fact that some of the Sahaabah did tasbeeh with pebbles. But the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught that tasbeeh with the fingers is better, as he said, 'Count with the fingertips, for they will be made to speak.' Doing tasbeeh with the masbahah is not Haraam or bid'ah, but it is better not to do it, because the one who does tasbeeh with the masbahah has shunned something better. Using the masbahah may also be contaminated with some element of showing off, because we see some people carrying masbahahs that contain a thousand beads, as if they are telling people, 'Look at me, I do a thousand tasbeehs!' Secondly, those who use the masbahah for tasbeeh are usually absent-minded and not focused, so you see them doing tasbeeh with the beads, but their gaze is wandering all over the place, which indicates that they are not really concentrating. It is better to do tasbeeh with one's fingers, preferably using the right hand rather than the left, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to count his tasbeeh on his right hand. If a person counts his tasbeeh using both hands, there is nothing wrong with that, but it is better to use the right hand only."

See Also

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