

To Call The Azan



Azan means 'public announcement' in certain Arabic phrases in prescribed order. It is not azan to say its translation. Even if it makes its meaning understandable, it cannot be recited in Persian or other languages. The first azan was performed in Makka on the night of Mi'raj [1] before the Hegira. In the first year of the Hegira, it became a command to call the azan to announce the time of salat [2]. At district mosques, it is sunnat to call it at a high place, and the voice must be loud. But one should not exert oneself to shout aloud. [As it is understood, shouting is necessary as loud as to be heard in one's own district. More than this is not permitted. There is no need to use a loud-speaker. It is a bid'at [3] to practice the azan or iqamat through a loud-speaker or radio broadcast. An ibadat (worshipping) done with bid'at is not acceptable but sinful.]

It is sunnat-i muakkada [4] for men to call the azan for five prayers each day, for performing the omitted [qada] prayers that are fard, and towards the khatib at Friday prayers. It is makruh [5] for women to say the azan or the iqamat. For it is haram (prohibited) for them to raise their voice. The azan is said at a high place in order to announce the time to others. But the azan that is said for the ready jama'at (congregation) or for oneself is said on the ground.

The azan or the iqamat is not said for the salat of witr, 'lyd, tarawih or janaza. It is not acceptable to call the azan before the prescribed time, it is a grave sin. The azan or iqamat which is said before the time (of prayer) begins must be repeated after the time begins. It is not permissible to call the azan like a song so as to add vowel points or letters or prolong the letters, or to listen to the azan said or the Qur'an read in this manner.

GLOSSARY

[1] Mi'raj: i) the Prophet's ascension from Jerusalem to heaven. ii) Prophet's Ascension from Jerusalem to the skies.

[2] salat: i) prayer; (with salam)= salawat; ii) ritual prayer of at least two rak'as; "namaz", in Persian; salat janaza: funeral prayer.

[3] bid'at: (pl. bida') heresy; false, disliked belief or practice that did not exist in the four sources of Islam but which has been introduced later as an Islamic belief or 'ibada in expectation of thawab (blessings) ; heresy.

[4] Sunnat-i muakkada / Sunnat-i huda: Emphatic, practised regularly by our blessed Prophet. They are the shi'âr (symptoms) of the Islamic religion. [That is, they are peculiar to Islam; they do not exist in other religions.] Sunnat-i huda are like i'tikaf in a mosque, calling the azan or iqamat, and performing salat in jama'at. They are the characteristic traits of Islam, properties peculiar to this Ummat. [It is written in Ibni Abidin, at the end of the last volume that circumcision of children is also a sunnat of this kind.] The rawatib, that is, the muakkad sunnats of three of the fard five daily prayers are of this kind, too.

[5] makruh: (act, thing) improper, disliked and abstained by the Prophet ('alaihi 's-salam); makruh tahrîma: prohibited with much stress.