

CHAPTER SIXTY-FIVE

POETRY OF PRAISE – NAAT / NASHEED

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our lord and master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) as many times as there are creatures in the sea.

Jihad of the tongue

Naat is the name given to poetry that is written in praise of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). Many Companions were skilled in the art of writing poetry in praise of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) asked his companions if anyone of them were prepared to do jihad against the disbelievers with the pen by writing verses praising Allah, The Exalted, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and Islam. Hassaan bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) volunteered for this. Hassaan (may Allah be pleased with him) would stand and read naats whilst the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and other companions would listen.

Ibn Sirin (may Allah's mercy be upon him) said, "It has reached me that as the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was riding on a camel on his way (to raid al-Taif after the battle of Hunayn) he called Kab (ibn Malik) to him and said, "Recite." Kab (may Allah be pleased with him) recited the entire poem (of 24 lines), then the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), these lines will be harder upon them than the hurling of arrows." Then accepted Islam after hearing Kab's words.

The hadith master (hafiz) and historian ibn Sayyid al-Nas (d. 732) compiled a four-hundred-page anthology of over 180 male and female Companion-poets who recited naat in praise of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). In his book, entitled *Minah al-Madh* (The gifts of praise), he lists each Companion alphabetically, identifying them by name and tribe, and quoting a few representative lines of naat from each.

To name a few companions who would praise the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)

1. 'Abbad bin Bashir (may Allah be pleased with him)
2. 'Abd Allah bin Rawah (may Allah be pleased with him)
3. 'Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him)
4. Abu Ayyub Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him)
5. Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him)
6. Dhakwaon bin 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him)
7. Hassan bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him).
8. Ka'ab bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him)
9. Mughira bin Shu'ba (may Allah be pleased with him) ⁱⁱ
10. Muhammad bin Maslama (may Allah be pleased with him)
11. Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas (may Allah be pleased with him)
12. Sa'ad bin Mu'adh Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him)
13. Zubair bin Al'Awaam (may Allah be pleased with him)

Bara (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to Hassaan bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) with the idol worshippers, Jibrail (upon

whom be peace) is with you. And the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to Hassaan (may Allah be pleased with him) you answer them on my behalf. ⁱⁱⁱ

The greatest reciter of naat among the Companions was undoubtedly the Ansari Hassaan ibn Thabit. His title was 'Shair al-Rasul' (The Prophet's poet), as reported from 'Aisha.

'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) has related that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would have a special pulpit (Mimbar) in the mosque for Hassaan bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) to stand on it and recite couplets in appreciation of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) or answer on his behalf. He also prayed to Allah (The exalted) to strengthen him by spirit of holiness- Gabriel (peace be upon Him) (Ruhul Kudus) so long as he served the cause of Islam. ^{iv}

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Verily, Allah (The Exalted) supports Hassaan with the Spirit of Holiness as long as he praised or defends Allah's Messenger." ^v
Hassaan Bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) said in one of his poems:

Wa Ahsanu Minka Lam Traqatu 'Aynee
*My eyes have never seen anyone;
More handsome than you;*

Wa Ajmalu Minka Lam Talidin Nissa'
*No women has ever given birth
To anyone more beautiful than you.*

Khuliqta Mubarra-am Min Kulli 'Aybin
*You have been created free from
All faults,*

Ka-Annaka Qad Khuliqta Kama Tasha'
*It is indeed as if, you have been created
With your own wishes.*

Whose Sunnah is it?

It is the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), the companions, and the pious predecessors to recite, to write, or to listen to naat in praise of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Merits of reciting Naat

1. To invoke blessings and greetings on the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to the utmost, as naat is known to rouse in the soul an overwhelming desire to invoke blessings and salutations upon him.
2. To purify one's sincere love for the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) above all other loves of the world, including that of parents, children, spouses, nation, and self. Naat rouses in the soul greater intensity and clarity for such rare love.
3. To preserve the exalted fame of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), as Allah (The Exalted) Himself has raised him in His Book. The characteristics of naat are that it expresses and renews in vivid terms the great measure each national group understands best.
4. To support the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and give him aid. It is known that praise a leader as the unifying symbol of a nation rouses people's souls to bear arms and fight under his banner. This Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the leader of Islam until the end of time.

5. The Qur'an is full of the highest praises for the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Important Rules:

1. There is no problem in saying verses that are permissible. If a verse contains description of a woman and she is alive then to say them is Makrooh and if she is dead then there is no problem.^{vi}
2. It is forbidden for males to listen to the voice of a female praying or singing.
3. To dance, clapping, guitar, sitar, keyboard etc. are all not permissible.^{vii}
4. To play any instrument is totally forbidden in Islam except a one sided plain duff with no bells. This can only be played with a 'dab' 'dab' sound and not by making music out of it. ^{viii}
5. People nowadays use music and Qawwali, jump and dance, to go to these gathering and to sit there is all not permissible.
6. The only thing that has been proven from the Mashaiks, Sufis and pious people is that when someone said a verse of a poem their inner state (spiritual state) would change (Wajd) with the love of Allah (The Exalted) and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and they would stand up and do things without intention. Nowadays it is all a show and the people who gather in these sorts of gatherings are open sinners (Fasiqs) who don't keep a beard, miss Salaah, commit fraud, lie, etc. do these people really lose consciousness with the love of Allah (The Exalted) and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)? Do you think that the Sufis would dance and play instruments in their gatherings, certainly not, this is degrading the names of the pious people, and you will have to answer for this on the day of judgement¹. ^{ix}

“On the Day of Judgement, Allah (The Exalted) will pour molten lead into the ears of whoever sits listening to a songstress.”

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, “*Song makes hypocrisy grow in the heart as water does herbage.*”^x

May Allah (The Exalted) give us the understanding and open our minds, give us the ability to sit with rightly guided scholars and give us the ability to seek knowledge of Islam, Ameen!

ⁱ Ibn Kathir, al-Bidaya wa al-nihaya's Sirat Rasul Allah.

ⁱⁱ Sirate Mustafa

ⁱⁱⁱ Bukhari & Muslim

^{iv} Bukhari, Abu Dawud & Tirmidhi

^v Tirmidhi said this hadith was Hasan Sahih Gharib.

^{vi} Alamgiri

^{vii} Radul Mukhtar

^{viii} Radul Mokhtar / Alamgiri

^{ix} Alamgiri

^x Bayhaqi

¹ For further reference see Fatawa-e-Radhwiyya, vol. 4 or EHKAM-e-Shariat by Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan.