119636 - Turning off the cell phone during the Friday khutbah – does this come under the heading of idle action that invalidates the reward of Jumu’ah?

the question

During the Friday khutbah, some brothers’ cell phones ring whilst the khateeb is delivering the khutbah on the minbar, and some of them have musical tones that are similar to the tunes of promiscuous songs. Those whose cell phones ring turn them off during the khutbah. Is this regarded as coming under the heading of idle action to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) referred in his hadith? Does this mean that there is no Jumu’ah for the one who engages in idle action, and that the reward of Jumu’ah becomes like the reward for Zuhr only? We hope you can clarify this matter.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Using musical tunes as the ring tones for cell phones is an evil action and is haram, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade all musical instruments. See the answer to question no. 47407.

The one who forgets to turn off his cell phone during the Friday khutbah has to turn it off if it rings, even if the ring tone is permissible, because leaving it disturbs the khateeb and other worshippers, and distracts them from the obligation of listening to the khateeb.

We hope that switching it off does not come under the heading of idle talk that is forbidden during the Friday khutbah, which is referred to in the question. This is mentioned in the words of the

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), “but whoever touches the pebbles has engaged in an idle action.” Narrated by Muslim (857).

The hadith applies to the one who fiddles with something that distracts him from listening to the khutbah, such as a cell phone, a carpet and so on.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar, in Fath al-Baari, commentary on hadith no (934), narrated that the majority of scholars said that the one who needs to enjoin something good or forbid something bad at the time of the khutbah may do so by gesturing.

Al-Nawawi said in Sharh Saheeh Muslim:

This hadith indicates that all kinds of speech are haram during the khutbah. … Rather the way to do it if one wants to tell someone else not to speak is by gesturing to him to be quiet, if he will understand it. End quote.

Based on this, then a slight movement that is done for a good reason is acceptable and is not idle action, and there is nothing wrong with doing it during the Friday khutbah.

Secondly:

The meaning of the Prophet’s words, “There is no Jumu’ah for him”, concerning the one who engages in idle action during the Friday khutbah, is that it will be recorded for him as Zuhr, and he will be deprived of the reward for Jumu’ah prayer.

It was narrated from ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Aas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If a person engages in idle action or steps over people’s necks, it will be Zuhr for him.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (347); classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Al-Nadr ibn Shameel said: “you engaged in idle action” means: you lost something of your reward; and it was said: you invalidated the virtue of your Jumu’ah. And it was said: Your Jumu’ah became

Zuhr.

I [Ibn Hajar] said: The comments of the scholars of [Arabic] language are close in meaning, and the latter view is supported by what Abu Dawood and Ibn Khuzaymah narrated from ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Amr in a marfoo’ hadith: “If a person engages in idle action or steps over people’s necks, it will be Zuhr for him.” Ibn Wahb – one of the narrators – said: What it means is: His prayer is still valid but he is deprived of the virtue of Jumu’ah."(Fath al-Bari 2/414).

Badr al-Deen al-‘Ayni (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “it will be Zuhr for him” mean: his Jumu’ah will be Zuhr for him, in the sense that the virtue that he would have attained from Jumu’ah will not be attained, because he failed to fulfil the condition of this virtue."(Sharh Sunan Abi Dawood 2/169).

What those who come to Jumu’ah prayer should do is respect the symbols of Allah, which includes keeping the physical faculties still and refraining from fidgeting, and keeping the tongue still and refraining from talking, otherwise he has sinned and his Jumu’ah has become Zuhr.

Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan (may Allah preserve him) said:

Undoubtedly the Muslim is enjoined during the khutbah to listen and pay attention, and stop moving. He is enjoined to do two things:

1.Be silent and still, and refrain from moving or fidgeting.

2.He is enjoined to be quiet and refrain from speaking. It is haram for him to speak whilst the imam is delivering the khutbah, and it is also haram for him to move, fidget, touch the pebbles, draw lines on the ground, or anything else of that nature. End quote.

Al-Muntaqa min Fataawa al-Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan (5/71).