153815 - Repeating Remembrance of Allah Along With Computer Programme

the question

I know it is required for us to say the du‘as (supplications) for morning and evening (adhkar/words of remembrance) between dawn and sunrise, and after ‘Asr (late afternoon). Is there anything wrong with playing a CD on the computer with the adhkar (which are from the sunnah/prophetic teachings) in our house and listening to it, and sometimes saying the adhkar with it. This isn’t bid‘ah (an innovation), is it?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The adhkar for morning and evening – which are also called the adhkar of day and night or the adhkar of the two ends of the day – are adkhar and du‘as that a person says on his own, between him and his Lord, may He be exalted. It was not the practice of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or his companions to recite them together. If they are recited together, that is a blameworthy innovation (bid‘ah). Ways of reciting them together which are innovations include the following:

1. When they are recited together in unison.

2. When they are recited together with a leader, so the leader of the group recites them and the people present recite them after him, or they say Ameen to his du‘a when he says du‘a.

There is no difference in the ruling whether the dhikr comes from a person or from a recorder or radio or satellite channel. The program “Adhkar al-Sabah wa’l-Masa” has become widespread on many Islamic channels, but they should tell the people about the ruling on repeating it with the program or after it.

It was narrated that Abu'l-Bakhtari said: A man told Ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him) that some people sat in the mosque after Maghrib, among whom was a man who said: Magnify Allah (say "Allah akbar") this many times, and glorify Allah (say "Subhan Allah") this many times, and praise Him (say "al-hamdu Lillah") this many times. 'Abd-Allah said: If you see them doing that, then come to me and tell me about it. When they gathered, the man came to him and told him, and 'Abd-Allah ibn Mas'ood came and said: By the One besides Whom there is no other god, you have brought a wrongful innovation, or you think you have surpassed the companions of Muhammad in knowledge. 'Amr ibn 'Utbah said: We ask Allah for forgiveness. He said: You have to adhere to the path and not drift from it; if you drift right or left you will go far astray. [al-Darimi, al-Suyooti in al-Amr bi'l-Ittiba]

Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The wird (set portion) for morning and evening consists of du'as and adkhar that are connected to time; the Muslim should limit himself to what is proven from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in the manner that is proven. So he should recite them on his own, in a humble and quiet manner. Hence anything that is added to that, such as reciting the prescribed wird in unison, or if one person recites it and the rest repeat after him or say Ameen, whilst swaying or standing, all of these are innovations that have been added, and it is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever introduces anything into this matter of ours that is not of it will have it rejected." Tasheeh al-Du'a.

See another quotation from Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd in the answer to question no. 132538.

An exception from this prohibition is made in the case of one who is listening to the adhkar for morning and evening directly from another person or on a CD or via the satellite channel, if it is with the aim of learning the proper pronunciation and wording, such as if he does not read very well and needs someone to correct his recitation of the adhkar, or he is an ordinary person who does not have a good memory, so he needs to repeat it behind someone else because he cannot memorise it, so long as he only does that for a while and then stops it when he has achieved what he wanted. When he has learned to recite them by himself, he should do it without that repetition.

The same applies if he manages to learn them properly and memorise them.

Imam al-Shafi'i (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The best is for the imam (leader of prayer) and the person who prayed behind him to remember Allah after the prayer is over and for them to recite the dhikr quietly, unless the imam has to teach others, in which case he may recite out loud until he thinks that the people have learned from him, then he should recite quietly. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And offer your Salah (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice" [17:110]

referring – and Allah knows best – to du'a (supplication), which should be recited neither in a loud voice nor in such a low voice that you cannot hear yourself. Al-Umm.

And Allah knows best.