231217 - Was reciting al-Faatihah originally obligatory for one who is praying behind the imam in a prayer in which recitation is done out loud, then abrogated?

the question

Please do explain to me the oblogation of reading fatiha in loud prayer.i used to read but before couple of weeks my teacher told me u dont have to read it in louder prayers and refered me to sheikh nasir ul din albani RA in which sheikh says it was obligatory but then it got abrogated which u would have read ..please clear this matter that "is it obligatory to read fatiha even if imam is reading it and it is not abrogated" with some proofs because i need to show them to my teacher"keeping the daleel of sheikh albani RA in mind"

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

We have previously mentioned the difference of scholarly opinion concerning this matter, and some of the evidence that they quoted, and we noted that the more correct view is that it is obligatory for the one who is praying behind an imam to recite al-Faatihah in the prayers in which recitation is done out loud. Please see fatwa no. 10995 and 26746.

Secondly:

With regard to Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him), his view is that recitation behind the imam was abrogated, and he quoted as evidence for that the report narrated by Abu Dawood (826), at-Tirmidhi (312), Ahmad (7270) and Ibn Hibbaan (1851) from Abu Hurayrah, according to which the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) completed a prayer in

which he recited out loud, then he said: “Was one of you reciting with me just now?” A man said: Yes, O Messenger of Allah. He said: “I was saying to myself, what is wrong with me that someone is fighting to wrest the Quran from me.” So the people stopped reciting with the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in prayers in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) recited out loud, when they heard that from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

But the scholars explained that the words in this hadith – “So the people stopped reciting…” – are not the words of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him). Rather they are the words of Ibn Shihaab az-Zuhri (may Allah have mercy on him), therefore they do not constitute evidence.

Abu Dawood said, after narrating the hadith:

I heard Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Faaris say: The words “So the people stopped reciting…” are the words of az-Zuhri.

This was also stated by at-Tirmidhi, who said:

One of the companions of az-Zuhri narrated this hadith and mentioned these words, saying: “So the people stopped reciting … when they heard that from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).”

Al-Bayhaqi said in as-Sunan (2/226):

Al-Awzaa‘i mentioned that these were the words of az-Zuhri, so he separated them from the hadith.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to the words in this hadith – “So the people stopped reciting…” to the end of the report – most of the narrators from whom Ibn Shihaab narrated this hadith regarded them as being the words of Ibn Shihaab. End quote from al-Istidhkaar (1/464)

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

The words “So the people stopped reciting…” to the end of the report are a gloss on the text, and are the words of az-Zuhri. This was stated by al-Khateeb, and al-Bukhaari agreed with him in at-Tareekh, as did Abu Dawood, Ya‘qoob ibn Sufyaan, adh-Dhuhli, al-Khattaabi and others.

End quote from at-Talkhees al-Habeer (1/565).

Ibn al-Mulaqqin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “So the people stopped reciting…” are the words of az-Zuhri, and are not to be regarded as part of the hadith. This was stated by al-Bukhaari, adh-Dhahabi, Ibn Faaris, Abu Dawood, Ibn Hibbaan, al-Khattaabi and others.

End quote from Mirqaat al-Mafaateeh (2/701)

One of the things that indicate that these words are not those of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) is the fact that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) used to instruct people to recite al-Faatihah behind the imam.

Al-Bayhaqi said in al-Ma‘rifah (3/77):

How can that be attributed to Abu Hurayrah, when Abu Hurayrah used to instruct people to recite al-Faatihah behind the imam, both in prayers in which recitation is done out loud and those in which it is done quietly? End quote.

An-Nasaa’i narrated this hadith of Abu Hurayrah in al-Kubra (2895) and classed it as da‘eef, saying:

Regarding the soundness of the narration of this hadith from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) there is some discussion, because its narrator is Ibn Ukaymah al-Laythi, who is unknown and did not narrate anything except this one hadith; no one narrated it from him except az-Zuhri, and az-Zuhri did not know anything about him except the fact that he saw him talking to Sa‘eed ibn al-Musayyab. Al-Humaydi said concerning the hadith of Ibn Ukaymah: This is a hadith that was narrated by an unknown man from whom nothing else was ever narrated.

An-Nasaa'i said: In the proven hadith, from al-'Ala' ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmaan, from Abu's-Saa'ib, from Abu Hurayrah, it says that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever offers a prayer in which he does not recite the Essence of the Quran [i.e., al-Faatihah], it is defective." I [Abu's-Saa'ib] said: O Abu Hurayrah, sometimes I am (praying) behind the imam. He poked me in the arm and said: O Persian! Recite it to yourself. Abu Hurayrah was the narrator of both hadiths, which indicates that the report of Ibn Ukaymah is da'eef, or that what was meant in the hadith of Ibn Ukaymah was to tell people not to recite out loud behind the imam, or to tell them not to recite another soorah among what is recited out loud. End quote.

Conclusion: the correct view is that these words are a gloss and are the words of az-Zuhri, not the words of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

Assuming that they are indeed the words of Abu Hurayrah, what is meant is to tell people not to recite out loud behind the imam, or not to recite another soorah after al-Faatihah, and so on.

With regard to telling people not to recite al-Faatihah, and saying that it is abrogated – as was the view of Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) in Sifat as-Salaah (p. 97) – we have discussed the flaws in the report on which he based this view.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah which is also narrated in as-Sunan, in which it says, "So the people stopped reciting with the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in prayers in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) recited out loud", what is meant by the reciting that the people stopped doing is recitation of a soorah other than al-Faatihah, because they could not have stopped reciting a soorah of which the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Do not do anything but the Essence of the Quran [al-Faatihah], for there is no prayer for the one who does not recite it.

Hence the correct view is that the view of one who claims that it is abrogated – i.e., that recitation behind the imam who is reciting out loud is abrogated – is a view that is not correct, because one cannot claim that abrogation has taken place when it is possible to reconcile between the reports,

and it is well-known that if it is possible to reconcile between reports by means of suggesting that one report is general and the other is specific, then we cannot move onto saying that abrogation took place.

End quote from Majmoo‘ Fataawa wa Rasaa’il al-‘Uthaymeen (13/131)

Quoting this hadith as evidence that recitation behind the imam was abrogated is not valid, because these words are not proven to be the words of Abu Hurayrah; rather they are the words of az-Zuhri.

Even if we assume that they were the words of Abu Hurayrah, what is meant is that the people stopped reciting anything more than al-Faatihah. Thus we may reconcile the reports that were narrated concerning this issue.

We should point out that this issue is one of the issues that are subject to ijtihad. Whoever has the ability to examine the evidence and determine what is more sound should act upon what he thinks is more correct in his view. Whoever does not have the ability to do that should follow a scholar who is trustworthy in his religious commitment and knowledge. It is not permissible to take this matter of ijtihad as a means of casting aspersions upon scholars, or to engage in arguments that lead to factionalism, division and dissent among people.

And Allah knows best.