34605 - Soundness of the Hadeeth “Whoever persists in saying the first takbeer at the beginning of Fajr prayer for forty days…”?

the question

Is there a hadeeth which says that one who persists in saying the first takbeer (saying Allahu Akbar) at the beginning of Fajr prayer for forty days will be free of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

In Shu’ab al-Eeman by al-Bayhaqi there is a marfoo’ hadeeth (report) narrated from Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever prays Fajr and ‘Isha in congregation and does not miss one rak’ah, he will be recorded as being free from two things: free from the Fire and free from hypocrisy.” (Shu’ab al-Eeman, 3/62).

It says in al-‘Ilal al-Mutanahiyah: This hadeeth is not saheeh (authentic) and its narrators are not known apart from Bakr ibn Ahmad narrating from Ya’qoob ibn Tahiyyah, both of whose condition is unknown. (1/432).

But a different version was narrated in Sunan al-Tirmithi, where it says: “Whoever prays to Allah for forty days in congregation, catching up with the first takbeer, he will be recorded as being free from two things: free from the Fire and free from hypocrisy.” (al-Tirmithi no. 241; classed as da’eef by al-Tirmithi but as hasan/sound by al-Albani).

This hadeeth was also classed as da’eef by a number of earlier scholars, who stated that it is mursal (chain does not reach the Companions), but it was classed as hasan by some of the later scholars. See Talkhees al-Habeer, 2/27.

The hadeeth is not limited to Fajr prayer only, rather the reward mentioned in the hadeeth is

connected to being present for the opening takbeer of all the five daily prayers.

Undoubtedly being keen to catch up with the opening takbeer for this period of time is an indication of the strength of a person’s religious commitment.

So long as the hadeeth can be interpreted in a sound manner, there is the hope that the one who is keen to do what is mentioned therein will attain this great virtue. The least that he will attain by means of this keenness is training himself to regularly observe this important rite of Islam.

We ask Allah to write for us and for you freedom from hypocrisy and from the Fire, for He is the All-Hearing, Ever-Responsive.