



## REGARDING USE OF OTHER THAN ARABIC IN THE PRAYER

SHAYKH UL-ISLAAM IBN TAIMIYYAH – rahimahullaah – SAYS IN ‘IQTIDAA· US-SIRAATIL-MUSTAQEEM’ (1/463):

“He [Imaam Ahmad] hated that a man should accustom himself to speaking other than Arabic – since the Arabic tongue is one of the signs of Islaam and its people. And the languages are one of the greatest signs – of the nations by which they are distinguished. Therefore many of the scholars or most of them used to hate the use of other than Arabic in the du`aa – which is in Prayer or in Dhikr.

And the scholars have differed regarding the different Dhikrs in the Prayer – can they be read in a language other than Arabic. And they are of three levels: (i) its highest: the Qur·aan, (ii) then the obligatory Dhikr not of the Qur·aan, (iii) then the non-obligatory Dhikr – whether du`aa or tasbeeh or takbeer, etc.

So as for the Qur·aan, then it is not to be read in other than Arabic – whether or not he is able to read it in Arabic. And this is the position of the great majority and it is what is correct about which there is no doubt. Rather some have said: it is impossible to translate a Soorah because of its ‘i`jaaz’ (miraculous nature)

And Aboo Haneefah and his companions differ about the one able to speak Arabic.

And as regards the obligatory dhikrs – then they differ with regard to those which are from the Qur·aan, may they be translated for the one who cannot speak or learn Arabic – in this regard the Companions of Ahmad have two positions. The nearest of them to Ahmads saying is that: it is not to be translated – and that is the saying of Maalik & Ishaaq.

And the second is that: it may be translated – and that is the saying of Aboo Yoosuf and Muhammad and ash-Shaafi`ee.

And as regards the rest of the Dhikrs, then what is reported is: (i) That they are not to be translated, and if that is done then the Prayer is nullified – and that is the saying of Maalik, Ishaaq and some of the companions of ash-Shaafi`ee.

And (ii) what is reported from ash-Shaafi`ee: that he hates that in other than Arabic, but it does not nullify the Prayer. And some of our Companions [the Hanbalees] say that he may do that if he cannot use Arabic.

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