



## The Ruling and Guidelines of Listening to Audition of Poetry and Dancing

Shaykh Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Ajibah al-Hasanī<sup>1</sup>

Partially translated by Omar Hossino

Released by [www.marifah.info](http://www.marifah.info) 1428 H

(Ibn al-Banna)<sup>2</sup> then narrated his sixth ruling (concerning the manners of the path) regarding the permissibility of *samā'*, and so I say:

*Samā'* is defined as listening to poetry either with melody or with music. Here, the author discussed its ruling, rules, manners, and benefits. He began with its ruling stating:

***To people, samā' is an area of dispute (khawd)  
But for this group it is a garden (rawd)  
The 'Irāqīs said it is unlawful  
While the people of Hijāz said that it was permissible***

I say: the root meaning of *khawd* is entering into water, and because most often, entering water stirs it up and changes its state, this word (*khawd*) has been used to signify entering into problematic matters that entail much dispute regarding them. The meaning of the word *rawd* is known – it is the singular form of *riyādh* and refers to a place of joy and peace.

He ﷺ says: Concerning *samā'*, people have a major dispute regarding it, debating its permissibility or prohibition. This group however, meaning the Sūfīs, that is the party of Allāh, find in their hearts and souls a peace and spiritual wine. It was for this reason that when Junayd was asked about *samā'* he said, “Everything that gathers one upon Allāh is *halāl*” or something of this meaning.

He (Ibn al-Banna) then narrated the difference of opinion on the matter. He informed that the Iraqīs have ruled on its unlawfulness – and by (the Iraqīs) it refers to the *Hanafī* School and those who followed them. The people of Hijāz took the view of recognition, meaning that they ruled it

---

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from *al-futuhāt al-ilahīyya sharh al-mabāhith al-asliyya* by Sīdī Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ajībah al-Hasanī (died 1224 Hijrah).

<sup>2</sup> The author of the poem explained by Shaikh Ahmad ibn `Ajibah is; Abūl `Abbās Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Yūsuf, known as; Ibn al-Banna. He was originally from Saragossa Spain and settled permanently in Fes, Morocco. Shaikh Ahmad Zarrūq said about him: “I have not found his exact date of death, however most likely his death was very recent. Despite his firm foothold that is evident from his book, he is not well known for knowledge. He is to be considered from the amazing features of the city of Fez, because he was from it common folk, yet authored (this work)...”

to be permissible or that they avoided making a ruling (*al-waqf*). By them (the Hijāzīs) it refers to Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and whoever followed them. It was narrated by Abū al-Muʿsab that Mālik was asked about *samāʾ* and he said “Nothing has reached me concerning it except that the people of knowledge in our land do not reject it, nor do they sit with it, and none censures it except a stupid ignorant one or a pious Iraqi who is a little slow.”

I say: No reasonable person doubts that the default ruling on *samāʾ* is that of permissibility, and this is proven by the case of the slave girls that sang and beat the *duff* on the day of *Eid* when the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was present which is narrated in al-Bukhārī and others.

ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī said: It was narrated on the authority of ʿĀʾisha ؓ, who said:

There was once a slave girl that would sing for me and the Messenger of Allāh entered once while she was performing. ʿUmar entered shortly after, whereupon the singing girl fled. Upon seeing this the Prophet laughed. ʿUmar responded to this by asking, “What makes you laugh, O Messenger of Allāh.” The Prophet told him of what occurred, and he said “I will not leave until I hear what the Messenger of Allāh heard, and so he ordered her and she sang in front of him.

I say: This was also narrated by al-Tajībī as well, on this wording. Al-Sulamī continues:

Dhūl Nūn was asked about *samāʾ* and he said: “It is an overflowing of the truth which can make hearts take fright and run to Allāh, and so whoever listens to it in truth attains realization, and whoever listens to it because of his self (*nafs*) will become a heretic.”

Suray al-Saqāti said, *samāʾ* causes the hearts of the lovers to dance with happiness, the hearts of the repentant to fear, and the hearts of those who are yearning to become sad.

And it is said, *samāʾ* is like rain – if it falls upon dry earth it causes plants to sprout, thus is the purified heart – its beneficial treasures become manifest during *samāʾ*.

It is also said – it moves that which hearts contain of serenity and sadness, or hope and longing, and therefore sometimes it leads them to weeping, and sometimes it leads them to dancing.

It is said that in *samāʾ* there is a portion for every member – thus it might move one to tears, screaming, dancing, or losing consciousness.

It is also said that the people of *samāʾ* are three: repentant, truthful, or steadfast, and that those who listen to *samāʾ* are three: ones who hear by their Lord, ones who hear by their heart, and ones who hear by their self (*nafs*).

It is said: he who listens to *samāʾ* necessitates three things: finesse (*diqqa*), delicacy (*riqqa*), and burning (*hirqā*) in annihilation and the entering into realities. Many of the Shaykhs said, *samāʾ* is not valid except for he whose desires have been annihilated, realities have been sustained, and attachments to the world have died. This is why he said that *samāʾ* has influence according to the purity of the inward and the strength of the overflowing. One of the Shaykhs said that *samāʾ* is not valid except for the one with a live heart and a dead self, and not the one with a dead heart and a live self.

It is said that one of the *Abdal* stated: “I saw the Prophet ﷺ and so I said, ‘What do you say of the *samā’* that some of our companions are on?’ And so he replied, “It is the purity upon which none but the feet of the scholars remain firm”

It is sufficient in speaking of this to mention the words of Ibn Layun at-Tujībī in his *al-Inalā* in which he said:

None reject listening to poetry except one ignorant of the *sunna*. Sālih ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal said that he saw his father listening to songs from his neighbor which was at one of the houses of the neighbors, and then he said, “It was narrated from Anas that he was with the Prophet ﷺ when Jibrīl descended upon him and said, “O Messenger of Allāh, the poor of your *ummah* will enter *jannah* before the rich ones by five hundred years<sup>3</sup>” and it is one half of one day, and so he rejoiced and said, “Who among you can sing *nasheed* for us (*yanshiduna*)?” And so al-Badrī stated, “Yes, O Messenger of Allāh,” and so he said “Go on (*bat*)!” Badrī then sang and said:

***The serpent of love has bitten my liver, and there is no cure or one to perform  
incantation,  
Except the Beloved with whom it is passionately in love.  
To Him belongs my incantation and my ascent.***

The Prophet went ecstatic and the companions experienced ecstasy with him, until his cloak fell from his shoulders. Then when they left and went back to their places Mu’āwiyah said “How beautiful is your playing O Messenger of Allāh,” and so the Prophet replied “O Mu’āwiyah!! The one who is not moved by the remembrance of the Beloved is not generous.” Then his cloak was divided into four hundred pieces, and taken by those present. This was narrated by al-Maqdisī and al-Suhrawardī and many people spoke much about this hadīth<sup>4</sup>.

I say: In reality there is detail regarding *samā’* – as for the people of realities there is no doubt that they find it permissible, or that indeed some find it recommended due to what it gives and their reliance of it regarding that which it takes away. As for the people of the sacred law: if the place contains women or young boys then it is prohibited as a blocking of the means for unlawful desires, and Allāh knows best. And it is upon this division that I return to (Ibn al-Banna)’s words and so he said:

***For the Shaykhs it is an art  
Since they made it (samā’) a pillar of the path  
It is considered lawful for the abstinent  
And it is recommended for the Shaykhs of the path  
And it is unlawful for the common man  
And these rulings are from renowned Shaykhs of the path***

---

<sup>3</sup> It was narrated by Ibn Hibbān 2:676 on the authority of Abu Hurayra with the wording, “The poor will enter *jannah* before the rich by five hundred years.”

<sup>4</sup> Al-Hāfiz Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī said in his work *al-Hāwī al-Fatāwī* 1:332 what means: “The hadīth which contains the words “The serpent of love has bitten my liver,” - and then he continued to narrate two other hadīth and said, “These hadīth are false and fabricated by the agreement of the people of hadīth.....”

I say: He pointed to the fact, *may Allāh have mercy on him*, that *samā'* for Shaykhs and the righteous is an art. They have in *samā'*, increases, experiences of ecstasy, states, and gifts and it is for this reason that they made it a pillar that they came to, but do not depend on it. For indeed it is a dispensation (*rukhsa*) for the weak ones of them, as for the strong then they have no need for it. Junayd was asked about *samā'* – is it permissible? He replied, “Everything which gathers the slaves upon their Lord is permissible”

Thus it is divided into categories as is mentioned by the writer of the poem:

1. The permissible
  2. The recommended
  3. The forbidden
1. The permissible category is for the abstinent (*zubbād*) because their selves (*nufūsubum*) have died from desires and lusts, thus it is not harmful for them such that it is forbidden, but it is not beneficial to them so that it be recommended - as it is for those who have not reached the level of realization and tasting.
  2. The recommended category is for the gnostic Shaykhs. It is recommended because it ignites in them ecstasy and love until when *samā'* is sung in the field of bodies the fields of Presence become broader and everyone present has a part. Whoever realizes a state, those present take some part of it.
  3. The forbidden category is for the common people, or at least it is *as if* it was forbidden – because it spreads in them desires, sins, blameworthy traits, and worldliness, however if these effects are removed it becomes permissible except when the people of corruption are present, in that case it is absolutely prohibited as blocking the means to harm, and it is indeed prohibited on the common people because singing is the door to fornication and it plants the seeds of hypocrisy in the heart.

It was also said, “*samā'* is relief which is drunk by the souls in the cups of the ears through melodious songs – and every one will have that which they intended, ‘It is a water of Zam-Zam if it is drunk for that’ and *samā'* is for what it is heard for.”

They also said, “Whoever listens to heresy will become a heretic, whoever listens to reality will attain realization, and if he remembers his desires then for every matter is that for which it was intended.”

And some of them used to say, “You sing as you would like, and we will listen as we like, and only in Allāh is success.”

He then narrates its effects and so he says:

***And in it there is a fast horse of states.  
It shows the low and the high***

The word *meelāq* in (the Arabic) language means rapidly – such as *fars meelāq* or a very fast horse, and this line means: *samā'* rapidly manifests pure states, and so whoever’s heart is with his Lord is shaken rapidly to the presence of Holiness, and whoever’s heart is with his desires and lusts then

it will be shaken to its lusts. The result therefore is being lowered to the lowest of lows or being raised to the highest of highs.

He then spoke of other effects of *samā'* and so he said:

***And it (as-samā') to them is a means which has clear boundaries  
Which is crossed by the one who experiences (ecstasy) and the deprived?***

I say: *Samā'* to the Sufis is a way with clear limits and its boundaries are drawn and known. The word "*yu'abirahu*" in Ibn al-Banna's poem means "it is travelled" by the one who experiences ecstasy in his state and he is the one who is veiled with union from separation, or the one who is not veiled by his union from his separation, or by his separation from his union. This path is also traveled by the deprived in his state – and he is the one who is veiled by his separation from his union, and hence everyone will find apparent that which is located in his soul (*sirrāhū*). Therefore, the one who experiences ecstasy will find himself increased in the presence of longing for *al-Haqq*, and the deprived will find himself further and increased in distance from his Lord, and so each will find that which he is upon.

Junayd ؓ said, "Every *murīd* that you see inclined toward *samā'*, know that there is in him the remains of idleness." And he also said, "*Samā'* is a limited path, crossed by the one of certainty and ecstasy, and by the one of doubt and denial, or it can raise its possessor to the highest of highs or throw him to the lowest of lows, as Allāh says, "***Then will they be hurled therein, they and the seducers,***"<sup>5</sup> and "***He who obeyeth Allāh and His messenger, and feareth Allāh, and keepeth duty (unto Him): such indeed are the victorious.***"<sup>6</sup>

It is upon this that the author states,

***And so one person reaches the levels of the highest  
And the other is dropped down to sijjīn***

I say: The one who reaches the highest of levels this is whoever attains realization of the One, understands the signs, tastes the sweetness of spiritual wine, and so what occurs is that when he listens by Allāh and from Allāh until he is removed from his senses and drowns in the presence of Allāh's Holiness, and thus he becomes one of those who Allāh has blessed from the Prophets and the righteous.

The one who is dropped down to the hellfire is the one who hears with his *nafs*, and he remembers its desires and lusts which his soul is worked up in. What occurs with him is that the Shaytān annoys him and meets with him in the oceans of wrongdoing and caprice – and so Shaytān makes them forget about the remembrance of the Most Merciful, indeed this is the party of the Shaytān and they are the losers, and this person will be written amongst the corrupt. Allāh says, "Nay, but the record of the vile is in the hell fire (*sijjīn*)." We ask Allāh to be protected from this, *Ameen*.

The author then mentioned another result of *samā'* and so he said:

***And it is relief for a passing hour***

---

<sup>5</sup> Sūrat al-Shu'arā: 94

<sup>6</sup> Sūrat al-Nūr: 52

***Yes! And the poison of an hour which can kill***

I say: *Samā'* is indeed joy for an hour which then goes away, however whoever's joy was for the sake of Allāh will receive its fruits and be given victory through the knowledge of his Lord and his pleasure. And he who's joy was for the sake of his desires; he will receive the anger of Allāh. Therefore, *Samā'* is also a poison to whoever it moves to evil desires.

al-Sulamī ؓ said: It reached me that Abu `Umaru ibn Najīd said to Abu al-Qāsim al-Nasir Abadhī, "It has reached me that you are addicted to *samā'*". He said, "Yes. It is better than sitting and slandering others." He said, "Alas, O Abu al-Qāsim, a wrong action in *samā'* is worse than many years slandering." I say perhaps he said this because he was following him, and Allāh the Exalted knows best.

The author then mentioned more results of *samā'* and said:

***Its example is like the one who digs in hearts  
And then lowers his rope and then tastes.***

I say: *Samā'* is a measure of intellects (*al-`uqūl*) whether in good or evil, and so through it we learn which of those are completed in good from those who are deficient in it, and those who are completed in evil from those who are moderate in it.

1. The completed in good – he is the one has achieved *ma`rifah*<sup>7</sup> for he is as a mountain and is unmoved by *samā'* and unshaken by the wind, as Allāh says ***“And you see the mountains, you think them to be solid, and they shall pass away as the passing away of the cloud.”***<sup>8</sup> Junayd was asked, “Why is it that you used to be moved by *samā'* and now nothing appears in you?” and so he read this *āyāh*.
2. The one imperfect in good – these are the *murīdūn* and therefore they will experience ecstasy, move, and dance if they hear *samā'* and this is due to their state overwhelming them however in normal times they are men. So whoever is persistent in his traveling, his good will become apparent and he will have reached that which others have reached.
3. The completed in evil – he is the one overtaken by heedlessness, if he hears *samā'*, his evil overtakes him and his *nafs* overwhelms him and impels him at that moment to that which comes over it of sinfulness.
4. The one in the middle – he is the one whose *nafs* is moved (by *samā'*) and is taken over for a time, therefore if it remains standing it impels him to seek that which he was moved towards, except if Allāh protects him with his preservation.

And *samā'* is also an analogy for the hearts, and so that which is in it comes out from both good and bad, , it is analogous to water – if it is pure then one would drink from it, and if it is impure one would reject it.

---

<sup>7</sup> The scholars define *ma`rifah* as: the station in which the witnessing of Allāh by one's heart is the state of one's heart at most times. (*ḥaqā'iq `an al-tasawwuf*: Abdal Qādir `Isa)

<sup>8</sup> Sūrat al-Naml: 22

The author's words, "*As the state descends in him and then rises up*" this is the imagery concerning the aforementioned analogy because *samā'* is analogous to whatever state is within a person – whether it is Lordly, or Satanic, or from the *nafs*, or all that which gives and takes. If it is Lordly, its marks will remain of fear of Allāh, satisfaction of the heart, humbleness, abstinence, and good character while if it is Satanic, or from the *nafs*, then nothing will remain except coarseness, covetedness, and other bad character traits.

In the *Hikam* of Ibn 'Ata Allāh it is said, "Do not attest to the validity of an inspiration (*warīd*) whose fruits you know not. The purpose of rain clouds is not to give rain; their only purpose is to bring forth fruit." This is what we mean when we say: "Whoever is not affected by *samā'* to have greater than what he has, then he is deficient in its right." Because the inspirations are not wanted for their own sake but rather only for their fruit – and Allāh knows best.

The author then compared the Lordly state to rain which comes down to the roots of a tree – as we narrated in the *Hikam*, when he said:

***Its influence in the orchards of the hearts is like flowing  
Water or pouring rain on the straight green branch***

I say: "*Arasāt*" or chambers is the plural form of *arsāb* and refer to the spacious places in which trees are present, and in this case it refers to a place in the heart which is empty of being worked up in things. He states that *samā'* leaves its fruits in the hearts of the righteous - those who have purified their hearts from their desires, and whose hearts are empty of love of other than Allāh, just as rain leaves its fruits in trees with heavy branches – and it is first a flower, then a fruit. Thus, the purpose of rain is not its falling, rather the purpose of rain is that which it gives of fruit, and Allāh Most High knows best.

Then he mentions the etiquette in such a gathering and says

***In these gatherings speaking is forbidden  
And fooling around, and smiling***

I say: Speaking is forbidden in these gatherings, because, to the righteous they are a place of experiencing ecstasy and spiritual wine. Speaking disturbs hearts and ruins presence, and is far from the Haqīqa. Thus it is obligatory to leave it (speech), for whoever wants to cure his heart – as for those other than the righteous they are dispensations because they are close to the false stations and so at the very least it returns it to them.

Al-Salmī said: Calmness with the present of hearts and the gatheredness of yearning and pausing at the sayings of the singers (*al-munshidīn*) is better than entrance because it is a place where the etiquette of the listener is of silence, calmness, guidance, and quietness. Allāh Most High said, "***so when they came to it, they said: be silent.***"<sup>9</sup> and he said, "all sounds shall humble themselves in the Presence of the Most Gracious: nothing shall thou hear but the tramp of their feet."

As for "fooling around" then this necessitates that the person has nothing within him present from the perspective of the heart, and that he simply intends to give his *nafs* relief. The signs that one is fooling around in these gatherings is that he be mindless of it through his heart or body by being worked up in something else.

---

<sup>9</sup> Sūrat al-Ahqāf 29

As for “laughing in it” then it is somewhat against etiquette as it is mostly leaving (the presence) of the gathering and there should be no absentmindedness.

Al-Salmī said, “The one who laughs or fools around should not attend the gatherings of *Samā’*.”

It is said that Shaykh Abu ‘Abd Allāh ibn Khafif used to say,

“I attended a *samā’* session with my Shaykh Ahmad ibn Yahya in Bushrān. At one time the Shaykh experienced ecstasy – and it was in this state that some worldly people came and one of them laughed, and so the Shaykh took a large tall object and threw it at them and it hit the wall and its three legs were embedded in the wall – and he (Shaykh ibn Khafif) would pray *fajr* for thirty years with the *wudu* of ‘*isha*.”

The author then forbade the young from attending these gatherings saying:

***The adolescents are forbidden from attending  
But if they do they must stand in the back***

I say: One thing which is made sure of in these *samā’* gatherings is the prohibition of the inexperienced attending – whether they are the young, or inexperienced in religion or intelligence, and we will define what we mean here.

1. The young – they are moved to witness corruption (*fitna*) from poetry or metered sounds and they enjoy the beautiful sounds – as the *nafs* has in this a great interest and great plot (*makār*).
2. The inexperienced in religion or intelligence – indeed their attendance inhibits spiritual support, and the experience in the *dbiker* or discourse of reminding (*mudhakara*). *Samā’* to the Sufis is the remembrance of the heart, and if these people must attend then they should be far from view and with low voices.

Thus their attendance must be from behind the people attending the *samā’* and Allāh knows best.

Al-Salmi said, “There is no dispensation allowing the inexperienced to stand and be moved in the first place, and most of the scholars disliked their presence in the gatherings of *samā’* and would not allow them to attend.”

I heard my father ﷺ say, “I entered Baghdad visiting Ja’far al-Khalidī and so I saw with him Abu al-’Abbās al-Nahwandī, and he was an adolescent, and so whenever we attended an invitation which included *samā’* he would order Abu al-’Abbās to leave and would order him not to sit with the gathering of *samā’*.”

The author then prohibited dancing and moving in *Samā’* except for the one who is overcome by a state, and so he said:

***And dancing in it without being overcome by a state  
Is not upon the way of men (of the path)  
And if the person remains calm and still  
It is better and less likely to cause misunderstandings***

I say: Dancing is raising and lowering, meaning that dancing and moving during *Samā'* without being overcome by a spiritual state is not the perfect way, nay the perfect way is calmness, stillness, lowering one's voice, and listening – for it is indeed better for people who may have misunderstandings because there is no safety from creation. Then know that dancing falls into much disagreement between the Sufis and the scholars of the sacred law, and our answer to this question is to say – the base ruling (*asl*) concerning dancing is permissibility if there is no explicit text of the sacred law to prohibit or permit it<sup>10</sup>. Nay, actually the apparent explicit texts (*nusus*) give the ruling of permissibility, and I will mention them, by the will of Allāh.

It is also the case that the base ruling concerning all actions is permissibility, while another opinion is remaining silent until proof is given either way, and there is nothing in the Book of Allāh or in the Sunna of his Messenger ﷺ which gives the ruling of prohibition. The Imams have forbidden it because the people of wrong action gather in it, free mixing of men and women, and musical instruments. The ruling relates to the cause, regarding its presence or absence, and therefore dancing is divided into three categories:

1. The forbidden.
2. The permissible.
3. The recommended.

1. The forbidden category is the dancing of the common with ladies and youths present. This can lead to spoiling and uncontrolled lower natures and satanic selves, and so on. Its purpose is to show off and to exhibit a state which is not real. This is also forbidden. This is why certain people have said that dancing is forbidden.<sup>11</sup>

2. The permissible category of dancing is the dancing done by the right-acting ones and the *fuqarā* without ecstasy or finding. They do it as a relaxation to the self and energy for their hearts, fulfilling the conditions of time and place and the brothers. No women participate in it, or youths. This is permissible, and it does not call for prohibition, because the causes of forbidding dancing are what were mentioned before. The latter case is free of these conditions. If this dancing is compared to what the Samīris did when they worshipped the cow, it is seen that their dancing was forbidden because their purpose was spoiled. Their purpose was to glorify the calf, and to be happy with it. This is *kufr*. If their dancing had been free of that it would not have been forbidden for them.

---

<sup>10</sup> Sheikh Nuh Ha Mim Keller writes of this: “Islamic scholars point out that if something which is permissible, such as singing poetry or dancing, is conjoined with something that is recommended, such as dhikr or gatherings to make dhikr, the result of this conjoining will not be offensive (*makruh*) or unlawful (*haram*)... Imam Nawawī in the *Minhāj al-Talibīn*, constitutes an authoritative legal text (*nas*) in the Shafīʿī school establishing that circles of dhikr which comprise the singing of spiritual poetry and dancing are neither offensive (*makruh*) nor unlawful (*haram*)—unless associated with other unlawful factors such as listening to musical instruments or the mixing of men and women—but rather are permissible. (*The Public Dhikr (Hadra)* Nuh Keller, 1996.)

<sup>11</sup> Imam Nawawī said: “Dancing is not unlawful, unless it is languid, like the movements of the effeminate. And it is permissible to speak and to sing poetry, unless it satirizes someone, is obscene, or alludes to a particular woman” (*Minhāj al-Talibīn Wa ʿUmdat al-Muttaqīn*. Cairo 1338/1920. Reprint. Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, n.d., 152)

It is confirmed that Ja'far ibn Abū Tālib ؑ danced in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, when he said to him, "You resemble me in my creation and my behaviour."<sup>12</sup>

This was mentioned by Shaykh Sanūsī in his *musrat al-faqīr*.

Ibn Layun at-Tujībī said,

“As for dancing in the mosque, it is in the *sahīh muslim* collection from A`isha ؓ who said,

‘An army came from Ethiopia beating drums on the day of the feast in the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ invited me and I put my palms on his shoulders and watched them play.’”

Ibn `Aynia said that *‘zafaf’* was to dance. So it is confirmed that dancing is permissible. If it was forbidden in its essence, it would not have been done in the presence of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

3. The category of dancing which is recommended is the dancing of the Sūfīs, the people of taste and state, whether they are in ecstasy or seeking ecstasy, whether that is in the presence of the *dhikr*, or in *Samā`*. There is no doubt that the cure of the heart of forgetfulness and gathering with Allāh ﷻ is sought by whatever means there are, as long as they are not forbidden with a clear and definite declaration of them as forbidden. We have seen the speech of al-Junayd when he was asked about *Samā`*.

Al-Fāsī said in his *sharh al-bisn* from [Shaykh al-Islam] al-Suyūtī ؓ that he [al-Suyūtī] said:

“How can one condemn making dhikr while standing, or standing while making dhikr, when Allāh #SWT# says, “. . . **those who invoke Allāh standing, sitting, and upon their sides**”<sup>13</sup>. And A`isha ؓ said, “The Prophet ﷺ used to invoke Allāh

---

<sup>12</sup> Shaykh Gibril Fouad Haddad in *Sunna Notes 2* states: "One of the most explicit proofs of the licitness of such movements while in a state of spiritual elation is the hadīth related by our liege lord `Alī ibn Abī Tālib: "I visited the Prophet with Ja`far (ibn Abī Tālib) and Zayd (ibn Hāritha). The Prophet ﷺ said to Zayd: "You are my freedman" (*anta mamlay*), whereupon Zayd began to hop on one leg around the prophet (*hajalā*). <The Prophet then said to Ja`far: "You resemble me physically and morally"> (*ashbabta khalqī wa kbuluqī*), whereupon Ja`far began to hop behind Zayd. The Prophet then said to me: "You are part of me and I am part of you" (*anta minnī wa ana minka*) whereupon I began to hop behind Ja`far. A fair narration from `Alī by Imām Ahmad (Shakir ed. 1:537 /857 "with a *sahīh* chain", 1:108), al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (8:6 /15548, 10:226 /20816), and al-Bazzār with a *sahīh* chain according to al-Haythamī (5:176). Al-Arna`ut based his grading on Hānī` ibn Hānī` but overlooked that al-Bayhaqī narrates it from Hānī` and Hubayrā ibn Yarīm, a combined narration which, as Shaykh Shu`ayb himself said elsewhere (*Musnad Ahmad* 2:161), "makes their hadīth hasan as they corroborate one another.". He also declares that combined chain "strong" (*jayyid*) in Ibn Hibbān (15:520 /7046). This authentication is confirmed by the fact that Dīya` al-Maqdisī included the narration in his compilation of authentic narrations, *al-Abadīth al-Mukhtāra* (2:392, *isnād hasan* according to its editor). Also narrated by Ibn Abī Shayba (12:105) and Ibn Sa`d mursal chapters on Ja`far ibn Abī Tālib. The bracketed segment is also narrated by itself from `Alī by Ibn Hibbān (15:520 /7046 *sahīh*), Ibn Abī Shayba (1:105), Ibn Sa`d, and al-Hākim (3:120) who declared it sound while al-Dhahabī concurred."

<sup>13</sup> Sūrah al-Imrān, 191

at all of his times and if he ﷺ was standing he swayed.’<sup>14</sup> And if dancing is added to this standing, it may not be condemned, as it is of the joy of spiritual vision and ecstasy, and the Hadīth exists<sup>15</sup> that Ja`far ibn Abī Tālib ؓ danced in front of the Prophet ﷺ when the Prophet ﷺ told him, ‘You resemble me in looks and in character,’ dancing from the happiness he felt from being thus addressed, and the Prophet did not condemn him for doing so, this being a basis for the legal acceptability of the Sūfīs dancing from the joys of the ecstasies they experience.”<sup>16</sup>

Among these people are great *Imams*, and one of them was the Shaykh of Islam, `Izzuddīn ibn `Abdul Salām, as is mentioned in the *ihya*<sup>17</sup>. This is also confirmed by the hadith reported from A`isha ؓ and the people from Ethiopia who were dancing. The Prophet ﷺ, said to her, “Would you like to look at the dance of the Ethiopians?” Ibn Zakrī mentioned it in the commentary of the *nasibaj*.

It is reported from previous times, from both the east and the west that the Sūfīs used to gather to remember Allāh and that they used to dance. It is not reported that any of the worthy scholars denied them. I have seen in Fez, in the Zawiyya of as-Siqillī, a group who used to do dhikr and dance from the *`asr* on the day of *jumu`a* until the *isha*, with a lot of scholars around. No one denied what they were doing. It has reached me that our Shaykh, the Shaykh of the group Sīdī at-Tawdī ibn Sūda used to be present with them sometimes. He did not deny anything to the *fūqarā*, except someone who was a cold imitator or an argumentative competitor.

---

<sup>14</sup> Sahīh Muslim, 1.282: 373

<sup>15</sup> In many sources, such as *Musnad al-Imām Ahmad*, 1.108, with a *hasan* chain of transmission.

<sup>16</sup> *Al-hāwī lil fatāwī*. 2 vols. Cairo 1352/1933–34. Reprint. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyya, 1403/1983, 2.234

<sup>17</sup> It is authentically reported that al-`Izz ibn `Abdul Salām “attended the *sama`* and danced in states of ecstasy”. Stated by Ibn al-`Imād, *Shadharat al-Dhabab* 5:302; Ibn Shakir al-Kutabi, *Fawat al-Wafayat* 1:595; al-Yafī`i, *Mir`at al-Jinān* 4:154; al-Nabhānī, *Jāmi` Karamat al-Awliyā* 2:71; Abu al-Sa`adat, *Taj al-Ma`arif* p. 250. Imam Ibn Hajar Al-Haytamī also mentions “it is permissible to stand and dance during gatherings of remembrance [of Allāh] and audition according to a group of great scholars, among them being Shaykh al-Islam Ibn `Abdul Salām.” (*Fatawa Hadīthiyya*, p. 298)