

'There is no god but Allah alone without associate. His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He gives life and He gives death, and He is living, He does not die. In His hand is the good and He has power to do all things,' then Allah will write for him one thousand thousand good actions and efface for him one thousand thousand wrong actions, and raise him up one thousand thousand degrees."³⁸

In another hadith, "The one who remembers Allah among neglectful people is like someone who remains fighting while others flee. The one who remembers Allah among neglectful people is like a green tree in the middle of dry trees."³⁹

Abū 'Ubaydah ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd said, "As long as a man's heart remembers Allah then he is in *ṣalāh* even if he is in the market, and if his lips move with it it is better."

One of the right-acting first generations used to go intentionally to the market to remember Allah in it in the midst of the people of forgetfulness [of His remembrance].

Two men from among them met in the market and one of them said to his companion, "Come let us remember Allah among the neglectful people," and they went apart in a place and remembered Allah. Then later they separated. Later one of them died and the other met him in his dream. So he said to him, "I was given to know that Allah forgave us the evening we met in the market."

SECTION: ON SPECIFIC APPOINTED DHIKRS IN THE DAY AND THE NIGHT

It is well known that Allah ﷻ made it obligatory for the Muslims to remember Him five times every day and night by establishing the five prayers in their prescribed times, and He prescribed for them along with these five obligations that they should remember Him with other optional (*nāfilah*) acts. And optional (*nāfilah*) is extra, so that that should be over and above the five prayers. This is of two sorts:

First, that which is of the same sort as the prayer, and so He laid down that they should pray along with and before the five prayers or after them, or both before and after other Sunnah prayers which are over and above the obligatory prayers, so that if there is any shortcoming in the obligatory prayers He will heal their shortcomings with these optional prayers, but if there is not [any shortcoming] then the optional prayers will be over and above the obligatory.

The longest space of time between the times of prayer in which there is no obligatory prayer is that between the prayer of 'Ishā' and that of *Fajr*, and then that between *Fajr* and the prayer of *Zuhr*, and so He laid down between each of these two prayers [other] prayers which would be optional so that the time of forgetfulness of the remembrance [of Allah] should not be too long.

³⁸ At-Tirmidhī (3428-9), Ibn Mājah (2235), Aḥmad (1:47), ad-Dārimī (2:293) and al-Hākim (1:538)

³⁹ Ibn 'Adī in *al-Kāmil* (5:1745)

Remembrance of Allah

He laid down for between the prayer of 'Ishā' and *Fajr* the prayer of the *witr* and the standing of the night [in *tahajjud*], and between the prayer of *Fajr* and *Zuhr* the prayer of *Duhā*.

Some of these prayers are more firmly established than others, and the most firmly established is the *witr* – and so the people of knowledge differed as to whether or not it is a duty – and then the standing in prayer at night upon which the Prophet ﷺ persisted both when resident and travelling, and then the prayer of *Duha*, about which people differ. There are sound hadith about it being preferable to persist and urging that we practise it. There are also [sound hadith] urging prayer just after the declining of the sun [from the meridian].

As for remembrance with the tongue, it is laid down to be done at every moment, and it is emphasised at some moments.

Examples of times when it is emphasised to remember Allah are: immediately after the obligatory prayers, and that one remember Allah after each prayer of them one hundred times with a mixture of *Subhāna'llāh* – Glory be to Allah, *al-ḥamdu lillāh* – praise belongs to Allah, *Allahu akbar* – Allah is greater, and *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah.

It is also desirable to remember Him after the two prayers after which there are no optional prayers [allowed], which are the *Fajr* and 'Aṣr, and so it is laid down to remember Allah after the prayer of *Fajr* until the sun rises, and after 'Aṣr until the sun sets. For this reason, Allah, exalted is He, commands His remembrance in these two times in many places in the Qur'ān, such as in His saying:

وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“and glorify Him in the morning and the evening,”⁴⁰ and His saying:

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“Remember the Name of your Lord in the morning and the evening,”⁴¹ and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعِشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ

“glorify Him in the evening and after dawn,”⁴² and His saying:

فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعِشِيًا

“and gestured to them to glorify Allah in the morning and the evening,”⁴³ and His saying:

فَسَبَّحَانَ اللَّهَ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ

⁴⁰ Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 42

⁴¹ Sūrat al-Insān: 25

⁴² Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 41

⁴³ Sūrah Maryam: 11

“So glory be to Allah when you start the night and when you greet the day,”⁴⁴ and His saying:

وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَذَنبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ

“Ask forgiveness for your wrong action and glorify your Lord with praise in the evening and the early morning,”⁴⁵ and His saying:

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

“Remember your Lord in yourself humbly and fearfully, without loudness of voice, morning and evening. Do not be one of the unaware,”⁴⁶ and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا

“and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting,”⁴⁷ and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ

“and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before it sets.”⁴⁸

The best remembrance done at these two times are the prayers of *Fajr* and of *‘Aṣr* which are the best prayers, about each of which it has been said that they are the midmost prayer, and that they are the two loved ones [lit: cool] which whoever safeguards them will enter the Garden. Next to them in the times of remembrance is the night; for this reason the glorification of the night and its *ṣalāh* are mentioned after the mention of these two times in the Qur’ān.

[When mentioned] without any qualification remembrance includes *ṣalāh*, recitation of the Qur’ān and learning and teaching it, useful knowledge, just as it includes glorification, praise, magnification and *lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god but Allah. Among our companions there are those who regard recitation of Qur’ān as being weightier than glorification and the like after *Fajr* and *‘Aṣr*. Al-Awzā‘ī was asked about that and he said, “Their guidance was remembrance of Allah, but if one recites then it is good.” The apparent meaning of this is that remembrance at this time is better than recitation, and Ishāq spoke similarly about glorification right after the obligatory prayers one hundred times, “It is better than recitation at that time.” The acts of remembrance and supplications which are transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ for morning and evening are very many.

44 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 17

45 Sūrat al-Ghāfir: 55

46 Sūrat al-A‘rāf: 205

47 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 130

48 Sūrah Qāf: 39

It is also recommended to fill the time between the two night prayers [*Maghrib* and '*Ishā*'] with prayer and remembrance, and we have seen previously the hadith of Anas that about that was revealed His saying, exalted is He:

تَجَافَى جُنُوبَهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ

"Their sides eschew their beds."⁴⁹

It is recommended to delay the prayer of '*Ishā*' until one third of the night as sound hadith show – and this is the *madhhab* of Imam Ahmad and others – so that one does this prayer in the best time for it which is the end of its time, and the person who waits for this prayer in congregation in this first third of the night occupies himself in prayer or remembrance waiting for the prayer in the mosque. Then later when he prays '*Ishā*' and he prays after it those established Sunnah prayers which follow it or he performs the *witr* after that if he wishes to do the *witr* before sleeping.

Then when he goes to his bed after that to sleep, then it is recommended for him only to sleep in purity [having done *wuḍū*] and in remembrance, and to glorify, praise and say *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater to the number of one hundred, as the Prophet ﷺ taught Fāṭimah and 'Alī to do when they went to bed,⁵⁰ and that he should do as much as he is able of the acts of remembrance transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ to be done at sleep, and there are many types including recitation of Qur'ān and remembrance of Allah, and then one should sleep in that state.

Then if one wakes up at night and turns about on one's bed one should remember Allah each time one turns. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from 'Ubādah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever wakes up at night and says:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ،
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

'There is no god but Allah alone without associate. His is the kingdom and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things. Glory be to Allah, praise belongs to Allah, there is no god but Allah and Allah is greater, and there is no power and no strength but by Allah,' and then says:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

'Lord forgive me,' – or he said, "and then he supplicates, he will be answered. Then if he has a high resolve, performs *wuḍū*' and prays, his prayer will be accepted."⁵¹

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever goes to his bed in a state of purity remembering Allah until slumber

49 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 16

50 Al-Bukhārī (3113), Muslim (2727) and others

51 Al-Bukhārī (1154)

overcomes him, if he turns over at some hour of the night and asks Allah for anything of the good of the world or the next life, He will give it to him."⁵²

Abū Dāwūd narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Mu'adh,⁵³ and an-Nasā'ī narrated it in a hadith of 'Amr ibn 'Abasah.⁵⁴

Imam Aḥmad has in the version of 'Amr ibn 'Abasah of this hadith, "...and the first of what he says when he wakes up is:

سُبْحَانَكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ ، اغْفِرْ لِي

'Glory be to You! there is no god but You, forgive me,' then he will emerge out of his wrong actions as the snake emerges out of its skin [which it sheds]."⁵⁵

It is firmly established that when he ﷺ woke up from his sleep, he used to say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانِي بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

"Praise belongs to Allah Who made me live after he made me die, and to Him is the raising to life."⁵⁶

Then when he stands up and does *wuḍū'* and *tahajjud*, he does all of that according to what is transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ and concludes his *tahajjud* by seeking forgiveness in the pre-dawn, as Allah praises those who seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn. Then when it is the dawn, he prays two *rak'ahs* of *fajr*, and then prays the *Fajr* prayer, and is busy after the *Fajr* prayer with the remembrance which is transmitted until sunrise according to what we have already mentioned. Whoever's condition is according to what we have mentioned, then his tongue does not cease to be moist with the remembrance of Allah, and he chooses remembrance as a constant companion in his waking moments until he sleeps in that condition, and then begins again with it when he wakes up, and that is one of the sure indications of sincere love, as one of them said:

The last thing is You at every slumber
and the first thing is You at the moment when I stir.

The first thing that a person does throughout the day and the night of those things which are of benefit in his *dīn* and in his world, then in all of that generally it is laid down that he should remember the name of Allah over it. Thus it is laid down that he should remember the name of Allah over his eating and drinking, his dressing, and his sexual intercourse with his wife, his entering his house and his going out of it, his entering the toilet and leaving it, his mounting his riding beast and he should mention the name of Allah over that which he slaughters both in his rites and elsewhere; he should praise

52 At-Tirmidhī (3526)

53 Abū Dāwūd (5042)

54 An-Nasā'ī in *'Amal al-yaum wa'l-laylah* (807-9)

55 Not found in the published version of *Musnad Aḥmad*

56 Al-Bukhārī (6312) and Muslim (2711)

Allah, exalted is He, when he sneezes, and when he sees people who are tried in their *dīn* or in their worldly life, when he meets brothers, and when they ask each other about how they are, and in the renewal of blessings that people love and in the repulsion of misfortunes that people dislike. More perfect than that is that he should praise Allah in happiness and hardship, distress and in comfortable circumstances, and that he should praise Allah in every state.

He should supplicate Allah, exalted is He, when he enters the market, when he hears the cock crowing at night, when he hears thunder, when it rains, when heavy gales blow, when he sees the new moon and when he sees the first fruits.

He should also remember Allah and supplicate him when something distressful happens, and when worldly hardships happen, when he goes out on a journey, and when he alights at stations on his journey and when he returns from a journey.

He ought to seek refuge with Allah when he becomes angry, and when he sees something he dislikes in his sleep, and when he hears the voices of dogs and donkeys at night.

He should supplicate Allah to choose what is good for him [with the *istikhārah*] when he is deciding on that in which the choice (or good) is not obvious.

It is a duty to turn in *tawbah* to Allah and to seek forgiveness from all wrong actions, whether minor or major, as He says, exalted is He:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ

“those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions.”⁵⁷ Whoever safeguards all of that, then his tongue will continuously be moist with the remembrance of Allah in all of his states.

SECTION ON CONCISE COMPREHENSIVE DHIKRS

We have mentioned in the beginning of the book that the Prophet ﷺ was sent with concise and comprehensive words. So he ﷺ was pleased by and admired concise and comprehensive [words of] remembrance and would choose them in preference to other types of remembrance, as is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Ibn ‘Abbās from Juwayriyyah bint al-Ḥārith that the Prophet ﷺ left her early when he went to pray the morning prayer and she was in her place of prayer. Then he returned after the first part of the morning and she was still seated. He said, “Have you remained continuously in the condition in which I left you?” She answered, “Yes.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “After [leaving] you, I said four phrases three times which if they were weighed against what you said this day, they would outweigh them:

57 *Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān*: 135