

Remembrance of God – Dhikr

From *Self Building* by Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini

God's-remembrance or invocation (dhikr) could be regarded as a starting point for the spiritual migration of a traveler towards the Lord of Universe. A traveler through dhikr gradually lifts himself above the horizons of material world stepping inside the celestial world of beauty and illumination, becomes complete and perfect, eventually attaining the highest exalted position of God's Nearness.

The dhikr of Allah is the soul behind all the worships as well is the greatest aim behind their explanation. The merit of each worship depends upon the degree of attention paid by the worshiper towards that particular act. The Qur'anic-verses and traditions have made plenty of recommendations about the importance of dhikr.

Dhikr in the Holy Qur'an

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

Oh you who believe! Remember God-Almighty with much remembrance. (33: 41)

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Those who remember God-Almighty, standing, sitting; reclining, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (and say): Our Lord! You did not create this in vain. Glory be to You! Save us from the punishment of fire. (3:191)

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

When you have performed the act of worship. remember God-Almighty standing, sitting. and reclining. (4:103)

Also see: 87:14-15, 76:25 and 3: 41

Dhikr in Hadith

Imam al-Sadiq (a) said:.

Whoever does a lot of dhikr, God-Almighty will reward him Paradise where he would live forever happily under the shadow of His grace.

He said to his companions:

As much as it is possible do remember God-Almighty at every hour during day and night

because He has ordered His servants to do a lot of dhikr. Whoever remembers God-Almighty is reciprocated by him. Know that there is not a single believer who does not remember God-Almighty but that God-Almighty too remembers him with goodness.

Imam al-Sadiq further said:

God-Almighty told Musa (a): Remember Me a lot throughout the day and night. During invocation be humble, during calamity be patient, and during My Remembrance be calm and relaxed. Worship Me alone and do not associate any partner with Me. Everybody shall have to return towards Me. Oh Musa! Regard me as your provision of the Hereafter and deposit the treasurers of your righteous deeds near Me.

At another place he said:

For everything there is a limit except God's Remembrance which is infinite and beyond limits.

There are religious mandatory obligations which are performed in accordance to prescribed limits. e.g.: The fasting during the month of Ramadhan is limited to thirty days, and similarly the Hajj Pilgrimage is limited to performance of certain prescribed Hajj rituals, but contrary to all of them God's-Remembrance does not have any limits and He has not limited himself to a prescribed or minimum amount of invocation. Then he recited the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

Oh you who believe! Remember God-Almighty with much remembrance and glorify him early morning, and late in the evening. (33: 41-42)

In the above verse God-Almighty has not fixed a limit for His Remembrance. Then he said: 'My father (Imam al-Baqir a.s.) used to offer a lot of invocation, while walking with him I found him remembering God, when we used to sit together for eating he was still busy with invocation, and even while talking to the people he was not negligent from invocation. I could see his tongue almost attached to his throat while chanting: there is no god except God-Almighty (la illahi Illallahu). After the morning prayer he used to assemble all of us together and ordered to offer invocation until sun rise.

Then he quoted from the Holy Prophet (S) who said: shouldn't I inform you about your best deeds which would bring for you more distinctions as compared to any other deed? Which is purest and most desirable before God-Almighty. Is much better for you as compared to silver, and gold even is superior than the Holy struggle for the sake of God-Almighty.'

The people asked: "Oh Prophet of God! Please tell us."

"Do a lot of God's Remembrance." Replied the Holy Prophet (S).

Then the Imam said: A man asked the Holy Prophet (S): "Who is the best among the believers?"

"The one who offers a lot of invocation." Replied the Holy Prophet (S). He further said:

"Who possesses an invoking tongue has indeed been blessed with the goodness of this world and the Hereafter."

The Holy Prophet (S) said to Abu Dhar:

Recite the Holy Qur'an and do a lot of dhikr, it will become a means for your remembrance in the Heavens and will produce illumination for you upon the earth.

The Holy Prophet (S) said to his companions:

Do utilize the gardens of the Paradise. Which are these gardens of the Paradise? asked the companions.

The assemblies of invocation; remember God-Almighty at morning and evening. Whosoever wants to know about his rank and position before God-Almighty must see how the position of God is in his own life. He elevates a servant exactly to the same position which was assigned to God-Almighty by the servant in his life.

Know that your best and the most pure deeds which will elevate your rank and position before the Lord and is better than anything else of this universe is God's-Remembrance because God-Almighty had said: "Whoever remembers me -I become his companion.

The above Qur'anic verses and traditions presented here show the importance of Dhikr of Allah very clearly.