

تَزْكِيَةُ النَّفْسِ

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

STEPS TO LOVE ALLAH
CONTINUOUS DHIKR OF ALLAH

Shaykh Ahmad Musa Jibril حفظه الله

Spiritual Purification Retreat / Ramadān 1446

Steps to Love Allāh Continuous Dhikr of Allāh

Ash-Shaykh Al-Imām Ahmad Mūsā Jibrīl (حفظه الله)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



The next aspect to cultivating love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى that was highlighted by Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى is the continuous remembrance of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. The Adhkār, Dhikr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, in all circumstances, through one's tongue, through his heart, through his actions, and in all states. For the Adhkār to be effective they need to be a regular, constant part of one's life. When Allāh سبحانه وتعالى encourages us to recite the Adhkār in many verses throughout the Qur'ān, He emphasizes along with it the importance of remembering Him كثيرا, which means much and often.

وَالَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

And the men who remember Allāh often...

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

And remember Allāh often...

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا

And remember your Lord much...

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى mentioned the Dhikr of the tongue and the heart and the actions. The Dhikr of the tongue is known, it involves the recitation of the Qur'ān and the various other forms of Adhkār that bring one closer to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. The Dhikr of the heart is not forgetting Allāh سبحانه وتعالى; it's ensuring that the heart remains attentive and not heedless during the

performance of both the verbal Adhkār as well as the physical ‘Ibādāt. The Dhikr of the action that Ibn Al-Qayyim mentioned, that encompasses the ‘Ibādāt of the limbs that bring one closer to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, like Dhikr — because that involves the tongue — like Salāh, Siyām, Hajj, Zakāh, Jihād. In the previous Khawātir, we mentioned some criteria for assessing your love to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. This is an additional one. Your love for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is directly related to how much Dhikr you do. Ibn Al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى said, *“The extent of your love for Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is proportional and equivalent to the amount of Dhikr you do.”* Your connection to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the love you hold for Him diminishes when you neglect the Adhkār in your daily life. Adhkār are like the soul of the ‘Ibādāt, they beautify the ‘Ibādāt. That’s why they’re attached to all the major ‘Ibādāt, like Salāh. In the context about Salāh, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said,

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

And remember Allāh often that you may succeed.

Salawāt have specified Adhkār in them and after them and even before them. There are reminders to recite the Adhkār after Hajj and during Hajj,

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

And when you have completed your rites, remember Allāh like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance.

And, of course, there are Adhkār right before you start Hajj. Jihād is attached to Adhkār.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have believed, when you encounter a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm and remember Allāh much that you may be successful.

In fact, other ‘Ibādāt, like fasting for example, their reward increases significantly when they’re accompanied by Adhkār. The Dunyā and Ākhirah benefits of Adhkār are vast and enormous. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى promises to be with you so long as you’re doing your Adhkār. That, right there by itself, is sufficient for one to do non-stop Adhkār. In the Hadīth Qudsi,

أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا ذَكَرَنِي

I am present when my servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me.

I’m with my servant when he remembers Me. Mu’ādh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه said, “Nothing a person does can save him from the punishment of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى like Adhkār.” Mujāhid commenting on the verse,

وَالْحَفِظَتِ وَالذَّكِّرِينَ اللَّهُ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّكْرَتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

And the men who remember Allāh often and the women who do so - for them Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.

He said the verse promises the men and the women who remember Allāh سبحانه with much Dhikr that they will attain great reward and forgiveness from Allāh تعالى. Mujāhid said, “*You will not attain that promise or that status until you habitually make Dhikr standing, sitting, and lying.*”

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

Those who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides...

That’s what Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى meant when he said in all states — standing, sitting, laying, driving, in the house, at the job — your Dunyā and Ākhirah prosperity and success stems from your continuous recitation of the Adhkār.

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

And remember Allāh much that you may be successful.

Tuflihūn is success. It comes from Adhkār, by the Will of Allāh. Those who allow the distractions of this Dunyā to prevent them from Dhikr, they’re regarded as losers. You can’t even let your most beloved child or wealth or anything distract you from Dhikr.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh. And whoever does that - then those are the losers.

Continuously reciting your Adhkār means that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will mention you.

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

Remember me and I will remember you.

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

And the remembrance of Allāh is greater.

That means Allāh's mention of you is greater than your mention of Him in return for you mentioning Him. If you mention Allāh سبحانه وتعالى to yourself, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will mention you to Himself. If you mention Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in an assembly, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will make mention of you in an assembly better than yours.

فَإِنْ ذَكَرْتَنِي فِي نَفْسِي وَإِنْ ذَكَرْتَنِي فِي مَلَأٍ ذَكَرْتُ فِي مَلَأٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُمْ

If he remembers Me to himself, I remember him to Myself, and if he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering better than that.

Just like true losers are the ones who neglect Adhkār, the true winners are the ones who are guided to engage in Adhkār. سبق المفردون, the Messenger ﷺ said, *“The Mufarridūn have preceded, they’ve won, they’re victorious.”* The Messenger ﷺ defined it, he said, *“They’re the males and females who remember Allāh سبحانه وتعالى much.”* Ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنهما said, *“Allāh does not impose any obligations on his servants without setting a limit for it, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى excuses those who have valid reasons for not doing it, except for Adhkār.”* There’s no specific limit for Adhkār, and Ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنهما said the only category exempted from doing Adhkār are those who are mentally insane.

A believer’s biggest regret should be missing out on Adhkār. Especially when they know how important and beneficial Adhkār are, and how easy and simple it is to incorporate Adhkār in your daily life. One must continue to strive until uttering Adhkār becomes a natural habit for both your heart and your tongue. You overcome mindlessness in this matter by gradually training yourself to keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى at all times. There are so many gaps in our lives where we can comfortably include Adhkār in them. It’s the simplest thing to do, but not everyone has been granted Tawfīq from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى to do it, and والله, that’s something to cry over. A man told the Messenger ﷺ,

إِنَّ شَرَائِعَ الْإِسْلَامِ قَدْ كَثُرَتْ عَلَيَّ فَأَنْبِئْنِي مِنْهَا بِشَيْءٍ أَتَشَبُّثُ بِهِ

There are so many ‘Ibādāt, so many legislated acts, it’s overwhelming. Give me something to stick to.

The Messenger ﷺ said

لَا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

Keep your tongue wet with the remembrance of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى).

In Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, Abu Dardā' رضي الله عنه said, *“Those whose tongues are moist with the remembrance of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى are the ones who will enter Jannah laughing.”* Adhkār are like a mighty gate between you and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. You open it by reciting your Adhkār, you close it by stopping your Adhkār. You're in control of that gate. Adhkār represent the true treasure, the true savings, and the capital of a believer, because they're the means that help you gain entry into Jannah and they're the means that elevate your status in Jannah. By reciting Adhkār, you construct your palace in Jannah, and you determine the size of your palace in Jannah through Adhkār. Adhkār polish, remedy, and rejuvenate your heart. They rejuvenate the heart from all the ailments. They're means for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى to provide you the best of what's in this Dunyā and the Ākhirah. One whose heart and tongue is in harmony while doing the Adhkār will grow in love and longing to meet Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

There are various types of Adhkār, as we all know. One can never get bored of them. There are booklets, books, and volumes from the past and the present that are written on the types of Adhkār and what's authentic and what's not authentic. The various types of Adhkār are like someone wandering in a garden. He enjoys all the beautiful plants and flowers that are there. He picks and chooses from those beautiful plants and flowers what he likes. The best Dhikr is the Qur'ān, and we spoke on that, we had an independent talk on that and several other ones in the past. You have Tasbīh and Tahmīd — saying سبحان الله, saying الحمد لله. [There's] Tahlīl, saying لا إله إلا الله, the best word a human can utter. [There's] Takbīr, saying الله أكبر, and Istighfār. In the astonishing Hadīth in Sunan Ibn Mājah, The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said when one says سبحان الله or لا إله إلا الله or الحمد لله, those Adhkār revolve around the 'Arsh of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى buzzing like bees, reminding of the one said them. The Hadīth says — not me, this is the Hadīth — and it's an obvious comment on the Hadīth — the Hadīth says, *“Who wouldn't want to have something like that which remind of him in the presence of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى?”*

Another essential form of Dhikr is Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ with Istighfār — Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ and Hamd, thanking Allāh (الحمد لله) — with those constantly on your tongue, you're set. Your worries will fade away, your provisions will increase, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will elevate your status in Dunyā and in Ākhirah. One of the ways that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى honored the Messenger ﷺ is by raising him high in fame.

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ

And raised high for you your repute.

And part of that is by making Salāh and Salām on the Messenger ﷺ, a form of Dhikr that you attain blessing and reward for. That's a mark of honor for the Messenger ﷺ. Allāh bestowed it on the Messenger ﷺ. Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ expresses your love for him and it's an order from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Many weep at the mention of the Messenger ﷺ. They need to put that into action, that love needs to be put into action. One way to show your admiration, respect, reverence, and love to Rasūl Allāh ﷺ is by frequently sending Salāh upon him, ﷺ. While saying Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ, you should feel the meanings of what you're saying and the honor that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى has bestowed upon him. Some Ulamā' said if it wasn't revelation from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, no one would ever imagine that a human on this earth would attain the high status that the Messenger ﷺ attained.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Indeed, Allāh confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allāh to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allāh to grant him] peace.

Allāh ﷻ informed the angels about the status of the Messenger ﷺ in the Highest Assembly. The angels themselves sent Salāh upon the Messenger ﷺ.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

O you who have believed, ask [Allāh to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allāh to grant him] peace.

Allāh ﷻ then instructed the people of the earth to send Salāh and Salām upon the Messenger ﷺ so that the praise for the Messenger ﷺ may be unified from both the upper and lower realms. This Dhikr, which is Salāh upon the Messenger ﷺ, helps cultivate a sense of reverence in the Muslim's heart towards the Messenger ﷺ. The respect then encourages an individual to translate their love into actions, like following the Messenger ﷺ's teachings and striving to imitate him in everything

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allāh, then follow me, [so] Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins.

Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ is the 'Ibādah that's rewarded in multifold.

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَى صَلَاةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَشْرَ صَلَوَاتٍ وَحُطَّتْ عَنْهُ عَشْرُ خَطِيئَاتٍ وَرُفِعَتْ لَهُ عَشْرُ
دَرَجَاتٍ

Among the rewards for *one* Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ is that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will grant you ten Salawāt in return, ten sins will be remitted, and you will be raised ten degrees. There are many current stories to mention about the effect and benefits and blessings that one attains from Adhkār and from Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ. I'm going to mention one, and by Allāh, someone told me that story today. I had previously told this individual to be consistent in their Adhkār and I emphasized Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ and Istighfār and saying Alhamdulillah, and they mentioned to me that they've been doing those specific Adhkār thousands of times a day. Today — that's why I mentioned it, there are plenty of stories, but this one I'm going to mention because I was informed of it today — that individual called me and said, *"I have something important to share with you."* That person took a walk to buy some groceries, and on their way they saw something in a store window that they really wanted but couldn't buy. For some reason, they couldn't purchase it. They were making Salāh on the Messenger ﷺ as they were walking, when they stopped, and when they continued after passing the store. As it frequently happens, they forgot about the item, but later that night, that person's niece or nephew surprised them with exactly what they had seen. It was a gift from that individual's niece or nephew. It was strange because that individual never told anyone about what they wanted — they didn't mention it to anyone — and it's also unusual that that person's niece or nephew would give them a gift, it's unusual for them to gift them, and it ended up in their hands before they went to sleep. The benefits and blessings of Adhkār are enormous.

And keep in mind what falls under this topic also, is that the Adhkār, the morning and evening Adhkār, never miss those. والله I don't know how someone can step out of their house before doing the morning and evening Adhkār. That's an entire topic on its own. The morning and evening Adhkār are more powerful

than the barrier between us and Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj, especially when one recites them with a focused heart. The morning and evening Adhkār are a cloak of protection from the evils of humans and the evils of the Jinn. The one who does his Adhkār is in the stronghold and fortress of his Adhkār. Whenever one becomes distracted, the door to that fortress, that stronghold opens.

And also, don't neglect the Adhkār after the Salawāt or when waking up and sleeping and when entering and leaving. The more you mention Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ in Adhkār, the more Allāh تَعَالَى loves you because you're expressing your love to Him through the Adhkār. If Allāh تَعَالَى loves you, then the angels will also love you, and if the angels love you, they'll protect you by the Will of Allāh تَعَالَى and they'll surround you. In Sahīh Muslim,

لَا يَقْعُدُ قَوْمٌ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا حَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

In the longer Hadīth also in Sahīh Muslim, there are noble squads of angels.

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى مَلَائِكَةً سَيَّارَةً

Allāh has mobile (squads) of angels

There are angels whose task is to follow the people who do Adhkār. Their task is to sit with them and to surround them with their wings until the space between them and the sky of the world is fully covered. When the angels leave and they go upwards to Allāh تَعَالَى, سُبْحَانَهُ, Allāh تَعَالَى asks them — even though Allāh تَعَالَى knows — He asks them, “Where have you come from?” And they'll say, “We came from servants on this Earth who were doing their Adhkār.” They

were saying سبحان الله, they were saying الله أكبر, they were saying لا اله الا الله, and they were begging you. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى says, *“What were they begging me for? What did they want?”* The angels say, *“They wanted the Jannah.”* At the end of the long Hadīth, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى says *“I will grant them Jannah and I will grant them protection from Jahhanam.”* The angels informed Allāh سبحانه وتعالى — of course, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى already knew — that they were making Dhikr, and then they made Du'ā to which Allāh سبحانه وتعالى accepted and answered. This means Du'ā after Adhkār increases the likeliness of the Du'ā being accepted.

The summary of this talk is that when someone truly loves another, they'll bring them up all the time. It shows a deep connection and love that fills the heart. If Allāh سبحانه وتعالى holds a special place in your heart, you'll find yourself mentioning Allāh سبحانه وتعالى often. The way to express this, when it comes to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, is through Adhkār. When your love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is profound, He becomes a vital part of your thoughts and feelings. That influences your subconscious, and that naturally results in you mentioning Allāh سبحانه وتعالى through Adhkār regularly. This constant recitation of Adhkār reflects how important Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is in your life. It helps you to stay close to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, it's a sincere expression of your love, and it opens the gates of goodness for your Dunyā and Ākhirah. I'm going to conclude with that beautiful statement that Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى mentioned, *“The level of your love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is equal to how much you remember Him in Adhkār.”*

وصلی الله علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آله وصحبه وسلم