

تَزْكِيَةُ النَّفْسِ

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

STEPS TO LOVE ALLAH
DHIKR OF ALLAH

Shaykh Ahmad Musa Jibril حفظه الله

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Steps to Love Allāh Dhikr of Allāh

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

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



The subject of Adhkār is extensive, and profound, and could easily span this entire series, but we can mention a few simple, quick, reminders on the topic.

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى said,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

O you who have believed, remember Allāh with much remembrance

وَسَبِّحْهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

And exalt Him morning and afternoon.

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى commands the believers to remember him often with much, unseasoned remembrance, and that verse applies to all the Adhkār. ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا, it includes everything, الحمد لله, سبحان الله, الله أكبر, لا إله إلا الله, and the many other forms of Adhkār that bring one closer to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Some referred to the Adhkār as the sweetest thing in this Dunyā, some called it the Jannah of this Dunyā. The basic, minimum one should begin with and the least of it — this is for the starters — is the morning and evening Adhkār, the prescribed Adhkār after the Salawāt, the Adhkār when one faces an emergency or a hardship, and the Adhkār that are mentioned for special occasions and settings, for example like entering or exiting the house or when entering and exiting the bathroom.

One should have a daily setting to sit in solitude with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and one should cherish that time spent alone with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى while reciting the Adhkār and while being mindful that he's uttering with his mouth that which was spoken by the blessed, pure mouth of the Messenger ﷺ. While one is reciting the

Adhkār, one's heart should be present so much that he should feel the angels ascending with his reward and the scrolls to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, the Lord of the Mighty Throne. The moments you spend in Adhkār are blessed moments that will fill your Dunyā and Ākhirah with brightness and they will keep you connected and attached to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Your morning and evening Adhkār in particular are a shadow of tranquility and peace for the heart for the entire day. You go through a lot in life, as we all do. The Adhkār renew what has been destroyed within yourself. They're means of refreshing the heart and soul and they gather the scattered strands of your tired soul if they're habitually recited. One of the morning and evening Adhkār for example is

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ أَصْلِحْ لِيْ شَأْنِيْ كُلَّهُ وَلَا تَكِلْنِيْ إِلَى نَفْسِيْ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

O Ever-Living One, O Eternal One! By Your Mercy, I call on You to set right all my affairs. Do not place me in charge of my soul even for the blinking of an eye (i.e. a moment).

With that Dhikr right there, one of the many that one should recite every morning and evening, you're entrusting Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with every millisecond and with every detail of your affairs. You're saying, "Yā Allāh, set right my affairs." You're saying, "Yā Allāh I have no power, no might, and no strength and I need you every moment of my life." You're saying, "Yā Allāh, don't leave me to myself, not even for the blinking of an eye." You should consider the mornings and evenings that pass without Adhkār like a lost day, that they're days lacking in blessings.

The Adhkār are very simple and easy, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is near, as He stated جل في علاه, yet many are disconnected from them. There's such a huge variety of Adhkār. There are Adhkār for the various occurrences and situations that occur in life. You can't escape a setting or circumstance that has Adhkār attached to it except that another one comes your way. You're leaving your house, there's Adhkār for that, you're entering, there's Adhkār for that. Who

doesn't leave and enter their houses? When entering and leaving the lavatory, there's Adhkār for that. Who doesn't leave and enter the lavatory? But how many mention the Adhkār prescribed for that? Morning and evenings have their Adhkār, they have their unique, prescribed Adhkār, and every living being experiences those times of the day. How many mention those morning and evening Adhkār? It takes minutes to recite the Adhkār and all it requires is the movement of the lips. One can recite the Adhkār while he's waiting to heat his car or while he's waiting for his wife, children, and family to come in the car or while walking out of his door. Very simple, very convenient, and very beneficial to one's Dunyā and Ākhirah, yet it's not common for people to consistently recite them. They keep your connection with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, yet not many recite them, even though every person has the ability to recite them. Ask in gatherings that you're in, say, *"How many people recited the morning Adhkār today?"* Ask how many said أستغفر الله العظيم one hundred times today. Most tongues are dry from the remembrance of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, yet they're moist with backbiting or foul speech والعياذ بالله. The gates are open to every single individual to do these simple Adhkār that take minutes out of your time, yet there are those who are truly deprived. Dhikr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is a Ni'mah from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and it's Tawfīq from Allāh, that's why not many are attached to them. One needs to seek Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Tawfīq to enable him to recite the Adhkār regularly and persistently. If you're already doing the Adhkār, express gratitude to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and thank Him in order to maintain that blessing and so He can increase it for you, just as you would that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى for any materialistic, worldly Ni'mah. Adhkār are a Ni'mah to thank Allāh سبحانه وتعالى for. It's truly a blessing that can only come by the Tawfīq of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

Morning and evening Adhkār are like a therapeutic session that you spend with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. There are moments that hit one in life that no human can withstand except by relying on Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. There are occasions that can be challenging, and the most effective way to endure them is by strengthening your bond with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and among the best means for it is through Dhikr. You express yourself to the One Who owns everything. You recite the Adhkār hoping for mercy from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. You're asking for all types of goodness.

You're asking for forgiveness, protection, security, safety, support, and everything else good. In fact, the formal morning and evening Adhkār are a treasure that encompass asking Allāh سبحانه وتعالى for everything good and seeking refuge for everything bad. They leave nothing out. Those Adhkār are like a heavenly fence, a shield of protection, or a blessing that surrounds you throughout your day. They're a protection from the stumbling blocks of evil and the fates of misfortune and bad endings. Those who express themselves to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, the Most Generous, they'll only benefit and gain. Those who become addicted to the morning and evening Adhkār will find brightness and joy in their hearts, and it will lead them to increase their Adhkār and 'Ibādah throughout the day, and that's why I said this is just the starting. In Sunan At-Tirmidhi, the Messenger ﷺ mentioned in a Hadīth,

وَأَمْرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ كَمَثَلِ رَجُلٍ خَرَجَ الْعَدُوُّ فِي أَثَرِهِ سِرَاعًا حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَى عَلَى حِصْنٍ حَصِينٍ فَأَحْرَزَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْهُمْ كَذَلِكَ الْعَبْدُ لَا يُحْرِزُ نَفْسَهُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِلَّا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

And He commands you to remember Allāh. For indeed the parable of that, is a man whose enemy quickly tracks him until he reaches an impermeable fortress in which he protects himself from them. This is how the worshiper is; he does not protect himself from Ash-Shaytān except by the remembrance of Allāh.

If you want an impermeable fortress safe from the Shaytān, from the enemies, and from harm, then be persistent in your Adhkār. The Hadīth mentioned the parable of a man whose enemies quickly chase him. سِرَاعًا — سِرَاعًا means the enemies are in hot pursuit of that individual. Then he reaches an impermeable fortress and now he's safe, he's protected. The enemy pursuing him can no longer reach him now. The Hadīth says and likewise is a servant who protects himself from the Shaytān and from evil through the Adhkār. You'd be considered mentally ill if you left the house without your clothes on. You would never leave your essential medicine and go on a trip. What's more important than that is to never leave your house without reciting the morning and evening Adhkār. They're the

backbone of your day. The heart can be compared to a bird and the Adhkār can be likened to the bird seeds. The bird seeds provide the necessary energy for the bird to fly after he consumes them. The heart is similar in that it will not soar in worship, nor taste the sweetness of Īmān, nor will it have peace of mind without the proper dosage of Adhkār. A heart with no Adhkār is like a bird with no seeds.

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

*Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allāh.
Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allāh hearts are assured.*

The greater the amount of Adhkār, the greater the heart elevates in everything — in tranquility, in Īmān, in feeling the protection of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, in having peace of mind, in having Tawakkul, in accepting hardships, in accepting the Qadā' and Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and more. All that is strengthened through your connection with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى when you recite the Adhkār. Lighter objects in this Dunyā tend to soar higher, but with the heart, it's the opposite. The heavier the heart is with Adhkār, the higher it will soar. If you find solace and happiness in the cherished moments when you do your Adhkār, then be certain that it is indeed a great indication that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى loves you and that you love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. My father, may Allāh سبحانه وتعالى grant him a long life full of deeds, loves plants and he has a lot of them, and I try my best to water them every day. If it happens that I miss a day, with some of the plants, their leaves begin to droop. The heart is much like a plant. It requires regular watering to thrive. Neglecting to water the plant will result in it withering and it will eventually perish. Your heart is the same. Water your heart with the Adhkār. Establish a consistent, daily routine of Adhkār, and you will find yourself naturally inclined to increasing it over time. In Sunan Ibn Mājah in the Hadīth Al-Qudsi,

أَنَا مَعَ عَبْدِي إِذَا هُوَ ذَكَرَنِي وَتَحَرَّكَتْ بِي شَفَاتُهُ

I'm with my slave when he remembers Me and his lips move with My mention.

If you want Allāh تعالى سبحانه to be with you, remember Him with Adhkār, it's as simple as that. And if you have Allāh تعالى سبحانه with you, what else do you need? When you fill your time with Adhkār, it means Allāh تعالى سبحانه is with you. When He's with you, it means He will suffice you from everything — from calamities, fatigue, enemies, fear, and frustration of the future. You will find from Allāh's sufficiency that which will make you feel happy and content in life.

In Sunan Ibn Mājah, the Messenger ﷺ said,

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَأُمَّتِي فِي بُكُورِهَا

Mornings are blessings for the believers. The translation of the Hadīth is a Du'ā of the Messenger ﷺ. He said, “O Allāh bless for my Ummah their early mornings.” Mornings are blessings for the believers. Add to that blessing, add to that Barakah the Barakah of the Adhkār. Barakah means Barakah in everything in your life. It means Barakah in your 'Ibādah, in your business, in your work, in your children, and in everything else. Happiness will descend into the heart so it will become cheerful with Adhkār. It will become peaceful and it will have certainty in Allāh تعالى سبحانه. When reflecting on the Adhkār, you'll notice there are the morning and evening Adhkār, there are Adhkār for entering and exiting the house, there are Adhkār for when you sleep and when you wake up, and many other daily Adhkār. When one reflects on them, one realizes one of the wisdoms behind them is that it has a great impact on keeping one connected and attached to Allāh تعالى سبحانه. They help in avoiding being heedless with Allāh تعالى سبحانه. Ibn Al-Jawzi said the heart is a fortress. Ibn Al-Qayyim in Al-Wābil As-Sayyib said

something very similar, but Ibn Al-Jawzi said the heart is a fortress and the Shaytān continues to roam around that fortress. He's roaming around seeking to catch you off guard. How does he catch you off guard? By being mindless of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and His remembrance. He said the guard must not slack off from guarding not even for a moment, just like the enemy never slacks off. How does the guard slack off? By being mindless of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, by being mindless of the remembrance, of the Dhikr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Those who are feeling burdened by the challenges of life and seek solace in Allāh through the morning and evening Adhkār will, without a doubt, find comfort, relief, and a path of ease from their difficulties and troubles — without a doubt.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

And when you have completed the prayer, remember Allāh standing, sitting, or [lying] on your sides.

While you're standing, while you're, and sitting while you're lying down. Ibn 'Abbās said, *"Remember your Lord in both the night and the day, in the land and in the sea, in traveling and at home, in times of wealth and in times of poverty, in health and in illness, in public and in private."* Remember Allāh سبحانه وتعالى often and don't have the characteristic of the hypocrites, who Allāh سبحانه وتعالى condemned as only remembering Allāh سبحانه وتعالى a little.

وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

And they do not remember Allāh but little

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم