

# PROVISIONS FOR THE JOURNEY TO ALLAH

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This chapter outlines the essentials that every believer should take as provisions in his journey to Allah:

1. DHIKR | 2. QUR'ĀN | 3. TAHLĪL
4. TASBĪH, TAHMĪD & TAKBĪR
5. LĀ HAWLA WA LĀ QUWWAH
6. DU'Ā' | 7. THE NAMES OF ALLAH
8. SALĀH UPON THE PROPHET ﷺ
9. ISTIGHFĀR | 10. JOURNEYING TO ALLAH

'Whoever is unaware of the virtues of deeds will always find them to be cumbersome.' (Abū 'Abdillāh al-Barāthī ﷺ)

## 1. THE EXCELLENCE OF DHIKR

The believer's ultimate purpose in this life is to worship the Almighty; to love Him, to obey Him and to submit to Him. Remembering Allah (dhikr) is one of the greatest means of achieving this. The Qur'ān and Sunnah highlight the following virtues of dhikr:

### 1 Dhikr is greater than everything:

"...And the remembrance of Allah is greater..." (29:45)

### 2 Doing frequent dhikr leads to success:

"Remember Allah much that you may be successful." (8:45)

### 3 Dhikr brings life to the heart:

"The parable of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not is like the parable of the living and the dead." (Bukhārī)

### 4 Dhikr is the source of peace and tranquillity:

"Truly it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts find peace." (13:28)

### 5 Those who are distracted from dhikr are losers:

"O you who believe, let not your wealth and your children divert you from remembrance of Allah. And whoever does that, then those are the losers." (63:9)

### 6 Dhikr is a protection against Shaytān:

“I command you to remember Allah. Verily, the parable of that is a man who goes forth while his enemies are fast upon him, and then he comes to a safe fortress, where he protects himself from them. In the same way, a servant will not protect himself against Shaytān except by the dhikr of Allah.” (Tirmidhī)

### 7 Dhikr is the best protection from punishment:

“For everything there is a polish, and the polish of the heart is the remembrance of Allah. There is nothing better a person can do to save himself from Allah’s punishment than to remember Him.” (Bayhaqī)

### 8 The reward of one who remembers Allah is that Allah remembers him:

“Remember Me, and I will remember you.” (2:152)

### 9 Dhikr is the best reason for a gathering:

“When a group of people assemble for the dhikr of Allah, the angels surround them, (Allah’s) mercy envelops them, tranquillity descends upon them and Allah mentions them to those who are near Him.” (Muslim)

### 10 Dhikr is the best of all deeds:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: “Shall I not inform you of the best of your deeds, and the purest of them

by your Master, and the highest of them in ranks, and what is better for you than spending gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks, and they strike your necks?" They replied: "Of course." He ﷺ said: "The remembrance of Allah." (Tirmidhī)

A man asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "Which warriors are the best?" He ﷺ replied: "Those who remember Allah the most." The man asked: "Which of those who fast are the best?" He ﷺ replied: "Those who remember Allah the most." Then the man mentioned Salāh, Zakāh and Hajj, and each time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied: "Those who remember Allah the most." Abū Bakr ﷺ said to 'Umar ﷺ: "Those who remember (Allah) have taken all the good," at which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remarked: "Yes, indeed!" (Ahmad)

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One of the companions ﷺ asked: "O Messenger of Allah, the laws of Islam have become many for me, so tell me something which I can cling on to." He ﷺ replied: "Always keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allah." (Tirmidhī)

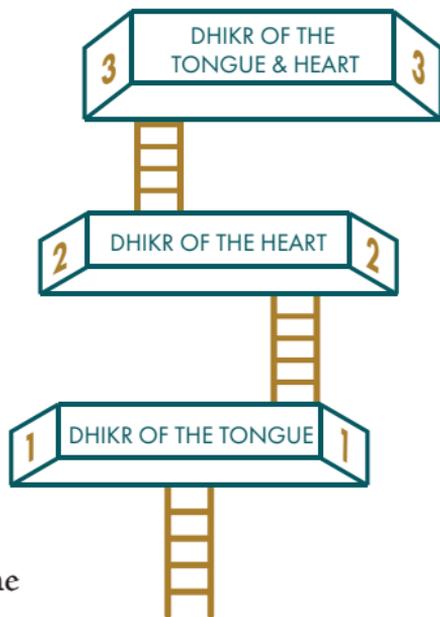
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See al-Wābil al-Sayyib (The Invocation of God)  
for over 70 benefits of dhikr.

## HOW TO REMEMBER ALLAH

In his masterpiece ‘al-Adhkār’, Imam al-Nawawī رحمته writes: “The purpose of dhikr is to remember Allah with the presence of the heart. It is extremely important that every person aims for this and strives to achieve it. Thus, one should contemplate on what one is saying and try to understand its meaning. Contemplation is the objective of dhikr, just as it is the objective of reciting Qur’ān. This is why, for example, the correct and preferred view is that one should elongate saying “لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ” in order to contemplate upon it.’

Dhikr is of two types: habitual vs. conscious, and only one of these types will bring about Allah’s recognition. Ibn al-Jawzī رحمته illustrates this: “The heedless one says سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ out of habit. As for the conscious one, he is constantly thinking about the wonders of creation, or the awesome nature of the Creator,



and this thinking drives him to say *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ*. Thus, this *tasbīh* is the fruit of these thoughts, and this is the *tasbīh* of the conscious... Likewise, they think about the ugliness of past sins, and this leads them to ponder, to have anxiety and to have regret. The fruit of this thought is that they say *أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ*. This is the true *tasbīh* and *istighfār*. As for the heedless, they merely utter these out of habit. And what a difference there is between the two types...' (Sayd al-Khātir)

However, complete contemplation from the heart may not be possible for everyone at all times. Hence, sometimes Shaytān casts doubts into an individual's heart and one may think: 'I am uttering *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ* a hundred times but I am not thinking about it. Is there even a point?' Ibn Hajar's  comprehensive response provides a deep insight regarding this matter:

1. Dhikr can be of the tongue, for which the one who utters it receives reward, and it is not necessary for this that he understands or recalls its meaning (as long as he does not intend other than its meaning).
2. In addition to uttering it, if he also remembers Allah with his heart, then this is more complete.
3. In this stage, one recollects the meaning of the dhikr and what it entails, such as magnifying Allah and exalting Him from defects; this is even more complete.

4. An even loftier stage would be if all this takes place inside a good deed, be it a fardh prayer or striving in Allah's path, etc.
5. And if the above is combined with complete devotion and sincerity, then that is the utmost level of dhikr.' (Fath al-Bārī)

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'Dhikr of the heart and tongue leads one to know Allah, inspires love, encourages modesty, and leads to fear and self-examination. It keeps one from falling short in obedience to Him and prevents one from taking sins lightly.'

(Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته)

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Imām al-Nawawī رحمته further states: 'Anyone making dhikr should be in the most perfect state. If he is sitting somewhere, he should face the qiblah with humility and serenity, bowing one's head. If one remembers Allah in any other state it is still permissible, without any disapproval; but if there is no excuse for doing so, one would be forfeiting something most excellent.'

'Anyone who has a daily litany of dhikr (wird) in the night or day or after Salāh or any other time, and then misses it and later remembers it, ought to make it up when he is able to, so as not to neglect it. If one is consistent in practising it, he will not find himself missing it; but if he is lax in fulfilling it, it will become easy to neglect it at its proper time.' (al-Adhkār)

## 2. THE EXCELLENCE OF THE QUR'ĀN

Undoubtedly, the best form of dhikr is the recitation of the Noble Qur'ān. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Allah has His own people among mankind." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah, who are they?" He replied: "They are the people of the Qur'ān: the people of Allah and His chosen people." (Ibn Mājah)

In another hadīth, he ﷺ said: "The Qur'ān will be brought on the Day of Judgement and it will say (for its reciter): 'My Lord, adorn him.' So he will be made to wear a crown of nobility. Then it will say: 'My Lord, give him more.' So he will be clothed with a suit of nobility. Then it will say: 'My Lord, be pleased with him.' So Allah will be pleased with him and it will be said to him: 'Recite and rise up, and be increased in reward with every verse.'" (Tirmidhī)

'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه said: 'If your hearts were pure, they would never have enough of reciting Allah's words.' (Kitāb al-Zuhd of Imām Ahmad رضي الله عنه)

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'Do whatever you wish to get close to Allah, but know you will never get closer to Him with anything more beloved to Him than His own words (i.e. the Qur'ān).' (Khabbāb رضي الله عنه)

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## REFLECTING UPON THE QUR'ĀN

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ.

“This is a blessed Book which We revealed to you, that they may reflect upon its verses, and those with understanding may take heed.” (38:29)

Imām al-Nawawī رحمته stated: “The reciter is enjoined to be sincere in recitation, and to seek the pleasure of Allah thereby, not seeking to gain anything else. He should follow the proper etiquette of the Qur’ān and remember in his heart that he is having a private conversation with Allah and that he is reciting His Book. So he should recite it as though he could see Him, for even if he cannot see Him, Allah sees him.’

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته wrote: “There is nothing more beneficial for the heart than reading the Qur’ān with contemplation and reflection. It is the Qur’ān that inspires love and longing for Allah. It generates fear of Him and hope in Him. It makes one turn in repentance to Him and rely on Him. It causes one to fully submit to him, leave matters in His Hands and be pleased with His Decree. It inspires patience and gratitude and is a means of acquiring all of the characteristics which give life to and perfect the heart.

If people knew what recitation of the Qur'ān with contemplation contains, they would devote themselves to it at the expense of anything else. When one reads with reflection and comes across an āyāh that he is in need of to cure his heart, he repeats it. He may repeat it a hundred times, or even throughout the entire night, as is reported by the Prophet ﷺ and the early predecessors. Hence, reciting a single āyāh of the Qur'ān with contemplation and reflection is better than reciting the entire Qur'ān without any contemplation or reflection.' (al-Fawā'id)

### HOW MUCH SHOULD ONE READ?

Imām al-Nawawī رحمه الله stated: 'Know that the Qur'ān is of the most emphasised of all adhkār, so it is essential to be consistent in it, and not to miss it even for one day or night.'

The companions رحمه الله would complete the recitation of the Qur'ān in seven days. (Abū Dāwūd) If one is unable to do this, then one should aim to complete the recitation of the Qur'ān at least once a month, as per the narration in Sahīh al-Bukhārī.

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'Search for pleasure in Salāh, Qur'ān and dhikr. If you find it, then rejoice. And if you do not find it, then know that the door is closed.' (Hasan al-Basrī رحمه الله)

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### 3. THE EXCELLENCE OF TAHLĪL (لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ)

The greatest statement ever uttered, the foundation of faith and the cornerstone of existence itself: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. For it, the heavens and the earth were created. For it, thousands of messengers were sent. For it, the final hour will occur, the creation will be gathered and questioned, and then driven either into Hell or Paradise. When uttered sincerely, it leaves the realms of this earth and ascends up to the Magnificent Throne of Allah. It is the guarantor of one's ultimate success: its utterer will be saved from Hell and guaranteed Paradise.

#### What does لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ mean?

There is no god, deity or being which deserves to be worshipped and obeyed except Allah. It means to be a slave of only Allah, and not of any another slave, ideology, material object or one's own desires. With it, one professes Allah's Lordship over all creation as well as His exclusive right to be worshipped. He Alone has the Most Perfect Names and Attributes. He is the King Who has no partner, the One Who has no competitor, the Self-Sufficient Master Who has no offspring, and there is nothing like Him. He is Unique; the First Who was never preceded by non-existence and the Last Who will never come to an end.

To internalise لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ, one only turns to Allah alone for judgement in all matters. One obeys and reveres only Him, fears none but Him and loves none as much as Him. One depends only on Him, seeks protection only with Him and invokes Him Alone for help and forgiveness. One's bowing, prostration and unyielding obedience is solely reserved for Him.

<p>THE BEST DHIKR</p>	<p>“The best dhikr is لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.” (Nasā’i)          “The best of what I and the Prophets before me have said is: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ” (Muwatta’)          (See p. 69 &amp; 91 for more virtues.)</p>
<p>ASCENDS TO THE THRONE OF ALLAH</p>	<p>“When a servant of Allah utters the words لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ sincerely, the doors of Paradise open up for these words until they reach the Throne of Allah, so long as its utterer keeps away from the major sins.” (Tirmidhi)</p>
<p>A RENEWER OF FAITH</p>	<p>The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Renew your faith.” The companions asked: “How can we renew our faith?” He ﷺ replied: “Be frequent in saying لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.” (Ahmad)</p>
<p>MAKES HELL UNLAWFUL</p>	<p>“Allah has made Hell-fire unlawful for the one who, seeking His pleasure, says لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.”          (Bukhārī)</p>
<p>LAST WORDS → PARADISE</p>	<p>“He whose last words are لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ will enter Paradise.” (Abū Dāwūd)</p>

MEANS OF INTERCESSION

“The most fortunate person who will have my intercession on the Day of Judgement will be the one who said لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ sincerely from his heart.” (Bukhārī)

OUTWEIGHS THE SEVEN HEAVENS AND THE SEVEN EARTHS

“When death approached Allah's Prophet Nūh عليه السلام, he said to his son: ‘... I command you with لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. Surely if the seven heavens and the seven earths were placed on a pan of a scale, and لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ was placed on the other pan, it would outweigh them.’” (al-Adab al-Mufrad)

OUTWEIGHS ALL SINS

“Indeed Allah will choose a man from my ummah in front of all of creation on the Day of Judgement. He will lay out 99 scrolls for him; each scroll will be as far as the eye can see. Then He will ask: ‘Do you deny any of this? Have my assiduous scribes wronged you?’ He will reply: ‘No, O Lord!’ He will ask: ‘Do you have an excuse?’ He will reply: ‘No, O Lord!’ So He will say: ‘On the contrary! Certainly you have a good deed with us, and you shall not be wronged today.’ Then a card will be brought out and it will contain، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. Then He will say: ‘Bring your scales.’ He will say: ‘O Lord! What good is this card next to these scrolls?’ He will say: ‘You shall not be wronged.’ The scrolls will be put on one pan of the scale, and the card on the other. The scrolls will be light, and the card will be heavy, as nothing is heavier than the Name of Allah.” (Tirmidhi)

#### 4. THE EXCELLENCE OF TASBĪH, TAHMĪD & TAKBĪR

<p>THE MOST BELOVED STATEMENTS TO ALLAH</p>	<p>“The most beloved statements to Allah are four: <b>سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.</b>” (Muslim) They are also “the best words after the Qur’ān.” (Ahmad)</p>
<p>THE BEST COMPANION IN A BELIEVER’S LIFE</p>	<p>“There is none better in the sight of Allah than a believer whose life is lengthened in Islam and who frequently utters takbīr, tasbīh, tahlil and tahmīd.” (Ahmad)</p>
<p>THEY WIPE SINS AWAY</p>	<p>“There isn’t anyone upon the earth who says: <b>لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ</b> except that his sins shall be pardoned, even if they were like the foam of the sea.” (Tirmidhi)</p>
<p>HEAVY ON THE SCALES</p>	<p>“There are two statements that are light on the tongue, heavy on the Scale and are beloved to the Most Merciful: <b>سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَيَحْمَدُهُ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ</b>” (Bukhārī)</p>
<p>UNPARALLELLED REWARD</p>	<p>“Perform tasbīh 100 times, for it is equivalent to freeing 100 slaves among the children of Ismā’īl. Perform tahmīd 100 times, for it is equivalent to 100 saddled and bridled horses which you load in the path of Allah. Perform takbīr 100 times, for it is equivalent to 100 adorned and accepted camels.” (Ahmad)</p>

<p>A FORM OF CHARITY</p>	<p>“Every tasbīh is a charity, every takbīr is a charity, every tahmīd is a charity, and every tahlīl is a charity.” (Muslim)</p>
<p>PROTECTION FROM THE HELL-FIRE</p>	<p>“For your shield from the Hell-Fire, say: <i>سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ</i> as they will indeed come on the Day of Judgement as saviours and preceding good actions, and they are the lasting good deeds of the righteous.” (Hākim)</p>
<p>THE PLANTS OF PARADISE</p>	<p>“I met Ibrāhīm ﷺ on the Night of al-Isrā’ (night journey), and he said to me: ‘O Muhammad, convey my greetings to your ummah, and tell them that Paradise has pure soil and sweet water, and it is a flat treeless plain. Its plants are: <i>سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ</i>.” He ﷺ also said: “Whoever says <i>سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَيَحْمَدُهُ</i>, a palm-tree will be planted for him in Paradise.” (Tirmidhi)</p>
<p>THEY GATHER AROUND THE THRONE OF ALLAH</p>	<p>“Indeed what you remember of Allah’s Glory (by uttering) tasbīh, takbīr, tahlīl and tahmīd, gather around the Throne of Allah, buzzing like bees, mentioning to Allah the person who uttered them. Do you not wish to have someone who mentions you by Him?” (Ibn Mājah)</p>
<p>See p. 68, 70 &amp; 71 for more virtues.</p>	

## What does **سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (tasbīh)** mean?

**سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ** means to glorify Allah above any imperfection or deficiency i.e. Allah is free from all defects. Allah is the Most Glorified Who has no partner or rival, Who possesses every aspect of perfection, and Whose actions are pure and free from evil.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ	Negating all defects and flaws i.e. Allah is free from all shortcomings.
أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ	Affirming all of the attributes of perfection and majesty for Allah.

## What does **أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (tahmīd)** mean?

**أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** is an expression that encompasses both:  
 (1) gratitude (for what Allah has blessed us with)  
 (2) and praise (Allah is worthy of every possible praise on account of His very existence, as well as for His Mercy, Generosity and all of His other Noble Attributes and Names).

He is Praised by virtue of His Praise for Himself and by virtue of His servants' praise for Him. Their praise of Him emanates from their love and reverence of Him. Whilst uttering **أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ**, one should reflect on the blessings of Allah and His Perfect Names. (See p. 28.)

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“There is none who likes to be praised more than Allah does.” (Bukhārī)

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“When Allah grants a blessing to a slave, upon which the slave praises Him, the praise of the slave is better than the blessing itself.” (Ibn Mājah)

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### What does **اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ (takbīr)** mean?

**اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ** means ‘Allah is Greater than...’ By not specifying what He is Greater than, one is saying that He is Greater than everything. Allah is Greater than anything we can imagine and His Greatness encompasses all things: He is Great in His Essence, His Names, His Attributes and His Actions. Allah is Supreme and Transcendent above every limitation and deficiency that is inherent in created beings.

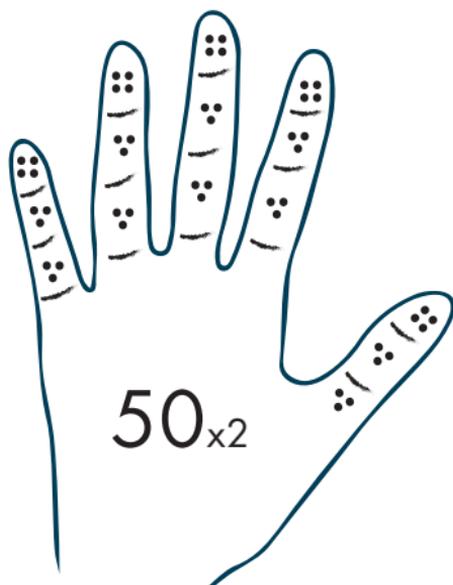
Our limited minds are unable to comprehend the Greatness of Allah. However one can attempt to appreciate His Greatness by pondering over His creation. When a person ponders on the greatness of Allah’s creation such as the heavens, the earth, His Kursī and His Majestic Throne, and then realises his own inability to comprehend them due to their greatness, he arrives at the most important realisation: how Great must their Creator be!

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“The seven heavens in comparison to the Kursī is nothing but like a ring thrown in a desert, and the excellence of the Throne of Allāh over the Kursī is like the excellence of that desert over that ring.” (Bayhaqi)

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## COUNTING TASBĪH



‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه said: “I saw the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم counting the tasbīh.” Ibn Qudāmah (the narrator) said: “With his right hand.” (Abū Dāwūd)

The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “Count on your fingers, for they will be asked, and will be made to speak.” (Tirmidhī)

Although it is Sunnah to use the hand for counting, one may use other means such as prayer beads or a tasbīh counter.

## 5. THE EXCELLENCE OF لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ is a very concise yet comprehensive statement. With it, one proclaims the oneness of Allah and expresses one's reverence, awe and need of Him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Shall I not teach you a statement which lies beneath the Throne and is from the treasures of Paradise? Say لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ upon which Allah says: 'My slave has submitted and surrendered himself.'" (Hākim) He ﷺ also said: "It is a gate from the gates of Paradise." (Tirmidhī)

What does لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ mean?

A slave cannot move from one situation to another (hawl), nor does he have the strength (quwwah) to do this except by the will and help of Allah.

There is no power to be obedient except by Allah, nor is there any strength to stop sinning except by Allah.

There is no power in averting evil, or strength in attaining good except through Allah.

"The scholars said that the reason behind this statement being one of the treasures of Paradise is because it embodies complete submission, entrusting one's affairs and obedience of Allah. One acknowledges that there is no Creator other than Him and none can turn back His Command, and that the slave is powerless in his own affairs." (al-Nawawī ﷺ)

## 6. THE EXCELLENCE OF DU'Ā'

"And your Lord said: 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you.'" (40:60)

Du'ā' is an expression of a servant's humility, dire state of poverty and utmost need of his Lord. It is an affirmation of one's complete submission to Allah and an expression of one's 'ubudiyah (servitude) to Him.

Du'ā' is a whispering conversation with Allah, our Creator, our Lord and our Sustainer. We ask Him because only He can give. He has ultimate Power over everything, whilst we are weak. His Knowledge encompasses everything, whilst we know little. He is the Lord and we are His slaves. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Du'ā' is worship." He ﷺ also said: "There is nothing more honourable to Allah than du'ā'," and "Allah is angry with those who do not supplicate to Him." (Tirmidhī)

Du'ā' should be ingrained into our daily lives. We should ask Allah for everything and not limit our supplications to difficult times. Nothing is too big for the One being asked and nothing is too small for those asking Him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When one of you asks for something from Allah, then let him be plentiful (in what he asks for), for indeed he is asking his Lord." (Ibn Hibbān)

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'I do not worry about my du'ā' being answered. Rather, I worry about making du'ā' because I know that if I am inspired by Allah to make du'ā', the answer will follow.'  
 ('Umar ibn al-Khattāb ﷺ)

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## HOW TO MAKE DU'Ā'

- 1 **Start the du'ā' by praising Allah and sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ:** "When one of you supplicates, he should start by exalting and praising his Lord, then send salāh on the Prophet ﷺ. Thereafter he should ask for whatever he wants." (Abū Dāwūd)
- 2 **Supplicate with the du'ās from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.** However, it is permissible to say other words according to your specific needs.
- 3 **Supplicate through His Beautiful Names.** Ask Allah with His Greatest Names (see p. 28) and ask him for specific needs according to His Names e.g. 'Yā Tawwāb (O Acceptor of repentance), accept my repentance.' Remember to take off the 'al' when invoking Allah with one of His Names, e.g. you would say 'Yā Razzāq' and not 'Yā al-Razzāq'.
- 4 **Humble yourself in front of the Almighty, hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment.** This is the spirit, essence and purpose of du'ā', as Allah says: 'Supplicate to your Lord humbly and secretly...and supplicate to Him in fear and hope.' (7:55-6)

**5 Have yaqīn (firm conviction) that Allah will accept your du‘ā’** and let your supplication emanate from your heart. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Supplicate to Allah whilst you are certain of a response, because Allah does not accept a supplication from a forgetful distracted heart.” (Tirmidhī)

**6 Be persistent in making du‘ā’:** “Verily your Lord is Generous and Shy. If His servant raises his hands to Him, He becomes shy to return them empty.” (Tirmidhī) Whoever consistently knocks on the door will eventually have it opened for him.

**7 Don’t be hasty:** “The du‘ā’ of every one of you is accepted as long as he does not grow impatient and says: ‘I supplicated but it was not accepted.’” (Muslim)

**8 Stop sinning and consuming harām:** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ narrated a story about a man asking Allah, saying: ‘O Lord! O Lord!’ but “his food was unlawful, his drink was unlawful, his clothing was unlawful, and he was nourished with unlawful; so how will his supplication be accepted?!” (Muslim)

**9 Supplicate in times of ease:** “Remember Allah during times of ease and He will remember you during times of hardship.” (Ahmad)

**10 Supplicate in the following times and situations in which the Prophet ﷺ said that du‘ā’ is accepted:**

## OPPORTUNE MOMENTS IN WHICH DU'Ā' IS ACCEPTED

At the end of the fardh prayers (Tirmidhī)	Between adhān & iqāmah (See p. 101.)
The last third part of the night (Bukhārī)	In sajdah (Muslim)
Whilst fasting and opening the fast (Tirmidhī)	The last portion of Jumu'ah (See p. 103.)
When one asks Allah with His Greatest Name (See p. 28.)	Whilst visiting the sick, and du'ā' made by the sick (See p. 145.)
When drinking zamzam water (See p. 128.)	When it rains (Abū Dāwūd)
The du'ā' of a Muslim for his absent brother (Muslim)	The du'ā' of the oppressed (Bukhārī)
The parents' supplication for their child (Tirmidhī)	The du'ā' of the traveller (Tirmidhī)

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Allah responds to a person's supplication by either:

1. immediately responding;
  2. saving his reward in the hereafter;
  3. preventing an evil from befalling him. (Ahmad)
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## 7. ASK ALLAH BY HIS BEAUTIFUL NAMES

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله states: “The key to the da‘wah of the Messengers and the essence of their Message, is knowing Allah through His Names, His Attributes, and His Actions. This is the foundation on which the rest of the Message, from beginning to end, is based upon.’ Allah says in the Noble Qur‘ān:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا.

“To Allah belongs the Most Beautiful Names, so call on Him by them.” (7:180)

Calling on Him includes praising and worshipping Him with His Beautiful Names, and supplicating to Him with them. We see a beautiful example of this in the hadīth of Anas رضي الله عنه, where he states that he was sitting with the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and a man was standing in prayer. The man invoked Allah, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ الْمَنَّانُ، بَدِيعِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ، يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ.

“O Allah, I ask You as all praise only belongs to You. There is no god but You, The Giver of all good, The Originator of the heavens and the earth. O Lord of Majesty and Honour, O the Ever Living, O the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said: “He has certainly invoked Allah by His Greatest Name. When He is supplicated by it, He responds, and when asked, He gives.” He ﷺ also said: “Supplicate frequently with: ‘يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ’ (O Lord of Majesty and Honour).” (Tirmidhī) On another occasion, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard a man saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ الْأَحَدُ الصَّمَدُ  
الَّذِي لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ.

“O Allah, I ask You as I bear witness that You are Allah, there is no god but You, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who has not given birth and was not born, and to Whom no one is equal.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “You have supplicated to Allah with His Greatest Name. When He is supplicated by it, He responds, and when asked, He gives.” (Tirmidhī)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Indeed Allah has 99 Names. Whoever preserves them will enter Paradise.” (Muslim) Imām al-Nawawī رحمه الله mentions that there is a consensus amongst the scholars that the above hadith does not mean that Allah only has 99 Names. Rather, the aforementioned reward is attained by one who preserves 99 of His many Names.

# أَسْمَاءُ اللَّهِ الْحَسَنَى

الصَّمَدُ

The Self-Sufficient Master

الأَحَدُ

The Single

الرَّحِيمُ

The Very Merciful

الرَّحْمَنُ

The All-Merciful

الرَّبُّ

The Lord

الْآخِرُ

The Last

الْأَوَّلُ

The First

## THE GREATEST NAMES OF ALLAH

WITH WHICH, WHEN INVOKED,  
HE RESPONDS

الْبَاطِنُ

The Most Close

الظَّاهِرُ

The Most High

ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

The Lord of Majesty & Honour

الْمَنَّانُ

The Bestower

الْقَيُّومُ

The All-Sustainer

الْحَيُّ

The Ever-Living

الشَّهِيدُ

The Witness

## NAMES WHICH LEAD TO THE FEAR OF ALLAH

AND CONSTANT  
AWARENESS OF HIM

المُهَيِّمِ

The Vigilant

الرَّقِيبُ

The Ever Watchful

البصيرُ

The All-Seeing

السميعُ

The All-Hearing

الخبيرُ

The All-Aware

العليمُ

The All-Knowing

الْوَهَّابُ

The Ever-Giving

الرَّزَّاقُ

The Supreme Provider

الْفَتَّاحُ

The Supreme Opener

الْمُعْطِي

The Giver

الْجَوَادُ

The Most Generous

الْمُحْسِنُ

The Doer of Good

الْوَاسِعُ

The All-Comprehending

الشَّكُورُ

The Most Appreciative

الشَّاكِرُ

The Grateful

الْحَكِيمُ

The All-Wise

الْعَنِيُّ

The Independent

النُّورُ

The Light

الْهَادِي

The Guide

الشَّافِي

The Curer

الْحَفِيظُ

The Guardian

الْحَافِظُ

The Protector

التَّصِيرُ

The Helper

الْوَلِيُّ

The Protective Friend

الْمَوْلَى

The Master

الْمُقِيتُ

The Powerful, The Nourisher

NAMES WHICH INSPIRE

**TRUST IN ALLAH**

الْحَسِيبُ

The Sufficient, The Reckoner

الْمَجِيبُ

The Responder

الْقَرِيبُ

The Ever-Near

الْوَكِيلُ

The Disposer of Affairs

الْكَفِيلُ

The Guarantor

الْكَافِي

The All-Sufficient

الْجَبَّارُ

The Compeller  
The Restorer

الْعَزِيزُ

The  
Mighty

الْمَلِكُ

The  
Sovereign

الْمَلِكُ

The  
King

الْمَالِكُ

The  
Owner

الْمُقْتَدِرُ

The  
All-Able

الْقَدِيرُ

The All-  
Powerful

الْقَادِرُ

The  
Powerful

الْقَهَّارُ

The  
All-Dominant

الْقَاهِرُ

The  
Irresistible

الْمُتَكَبِّرُ

The Supremely  
Proud

الْكَبِيرُ

The Most  
Great

الْعَظِيمُ

The  
Tremendous

الْمَتِينُ

The  
Powerful

الْقَوِيُّ

The  
Strong

الْوَاحِدُ

The One Who  
has no Equal

NAMES WHICH INSPIRE THE  
**GREATNESS OF ALLAH**

AND PROMPT US TO EXALT HIM

الْوَاحِدُ

The  
One

السَّلَامُ

The Source  
of Peace

الْقُدُّوسُ

The  
Pure

الْمُتَعَالَى

The  
Exalted

الْأَعْلَى

The  
Highest

الْعَلِيُّ

The  
High

الْحَقُّ

The  
Truth

الدَّيَّانُ

The Supreme  
Judge

الْعَدْلُ

The  
Just

الْحَكْمُ

The  
Judge

الْمُؤْمِنُ

The Giver  
of Security

السُّبُّوحُ

The Supremely  
Glorified

الْمُحِيطُ

The All-  
Encompassing

الْمَجِيدُ

The Most  
Glorious

الْوَارِثُ

The  
Inheritor

الْمَبِينُ

The  
Evident

التَّوَّابُ

The Acceptor  
of Repentance

الرَّؤُوفُ

The Most  
Compassionate

العَفْوُ

The Ever-  
Pardoning

العَفَّارُ

The Most  
Forgiving

العَفُورُ

The  
Forgiving

الْحَلِيمُ

The  
Forbearing

NAMES WHICH INSPIRE US TO

**LOVE ALLAH**

AND SHOW DUE RESPECT TO HIM

اللَّطِيفُ

The Most  
Kind/Subtle

الأَكْرَمُ

The Most  
Bountiful

الْكَرِيمُ

The  
Generous

السَّيِّئُ

The Concealer  
of Sins

الْحَيُّ

The  
Modest

الْبَرُّ

The  
Kind

المُصَوِّرُ

The  
Fashioner

الْبَارِئُ

The  
Inventor

الْمَخْلَقُ

The Supreme  
Creator

الْمَخْلِقُ

The  
Creator

الْبَدِيعُ

The  
Originator

الْوَدُودُ

The Most  
Loving

الطَّيِّبُ

The  
Pure

الْجَمِيلُ

The  
Beautiful

الْحَمِيدُ

The  
Praised

الرَّفِيقُ

The Most  
Gentle

**The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Indeed Allah has 99 Names; whoever preserves them will enter Paradise." (Muslim)**

Preserving them includes:

(1) Memorising them (2) Understanding their meanings (3) Praising Allah and calling upon Him through them (4) Acting upon what they necessitate.

'Whoever attains the recognition of Allah through His Names, Attributes and Actions, will undoubtedly love Him.' (Ibn al-Qayyim ﷺ)

## 8. SENDING SALĀH UPON THE PROPHET ﷺ

“Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings to the Prophet. O you who believe, invoke Allah to bless him, and send your salām (prayer for his being in peace) to him in abundance.” (33:56)

“Whoever sends salāh upon me once, Allah will send salāh upon him tenfold, erase ten sins from him, and will raise him ten degrees in status.” (Nasā’i)

“Allah has angels who travel around the earth conveying to me the salām of my ummah.” (Nasā’i)

“The closest of people to me on the Day of Judgement will be those who send the most salāh upon me.” (Tirmidhi)

What does صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mean?

صلى | Mercy and praise among the loftiest assembly of angels.

سلم | Protection from all harm and evil.

Salāh also means ‘honour him’ i.e. honour him in the world by elevating his mention, granting victory to his dīn and preserving his sharī’ah; and honour him in the hereafter by rewarding him abundantly, accepting his succession on behalf of his ummah and granting him the loftiest station of glory (maqām mahmūd). (Ibn Hajar quoting Halīmī in Fath al-Bārī)

Sending abundant salāh upon the Messenger ﷺ is a manifestation of our love, reverence and obedience to him. Sent as a mercy for mankind, he ﷺ constantly remembered us and worried about us.

On one occasion he ﷺ lifted his hands and weeping, he ﷺ invoked: “O Allah! My ummah, my ummah!” Allah sent Jibrīl ؑ down with the glad tidings of: “Muhammad, surely we will please you in regards to your ummah and we will not cause you grief.” (Muslim)

In every salāh, he ﷺ asked Allah to forgive us. (Ibn Hibbān) He ﷺ missed us and yearned to see us. He ﷺ once said: “I wish to see my brothers!” The companions asked him: “O Messenger of Allah, are we not your brothers?” He ﷺ replied: “You are my companions, but my brothers are those who have not yet come in the world. I will welcome them at the Hawdh (fountain).” (Nasā’i) On the Day of Judgement, the other messengers will say: ‘Myself, myself’, whereas the Messenger of Allah ﷺ - after praising Allah with a unique litany of praise - will be given the opportunity to ask and he ﷺ will say: ‘My ummah, my ummah.’ Unlike the other messengers who had their exclusive du‘ā’ accepted for them in this world, the Messenger ﷺ reserved his du‘ā’ for us: he will intercede for us on the Day of Judgement. (Bukhārī)

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Among the strongest in love for me in my ummah will be those who will come after me. Every one of them will wish to catch a glimpse of me even at the cost of his family and wealth.” (Muslim)

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## 40 BENEFITS OF SENDING SALĀH UPON THE PROPHET ﷺ

1. Following the command of Allah.
2. Conformity with Allah sending blessing upon him.
3. Conformity with the angels sending blessings.
4. Receive 10 blessings from Allah.
5. Ten levels are raised for the servant.
6. Ten good deeds are written for the servant.
7. Ten sins are erased from the servant.
8. Du'ā' is accepted if preceded with salāh on the Prophet ﷺ.
9. Intercession of the Prophet ﷺ.
10. A means for forgiveness of sins.
11. Allah will suffice the servant.
12. Closeness to the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Judgement.
13. Reward of charity.
14. A means of the fulfilment of your needs.
15. Allah and His angels send blessings upon the servant.
16. A means of cleansing and purification.
17. Glad tidings of Paradise before death.
18. Protection from the terrors of the Day of Judgement.
19. The Prophet ﷺ responds to him.
20. A means for the servant to remember what he has forgotten.

21. A means of blessings on the gathering and lack of regret on the Day of Judgement.
22. A means to repel poverty.
23. It repels the description of being a miser.
24. Protection from the Prophet's ﷺ curse.
25. Leads to the path towards Paradise.
26. A protection from the stench of a gathering where Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are not mentioned.
27. It completes speech, after Allah's praise.
28. Abundance of light on the Sirāt.
29. Protection from hardness of the heart.
30. Allah bestows favourable praise upon the servant.
31. A source of blessings for the servant himself.
32. A means of receiving Allah's mercy.
33. A means to continuously love the Prophet ﷺ.
34. A means of the Prophet ﷺ continuously loving the servant.
35. A means of guidance and a 'living' heart.
36. The servant's name is presented to the Prophet ﷺ.
37. The servant's feet will be firm on the Sirāt.
38. The servant fulfils a small portion of the Prophet's ﷺ right.
39. Comprises gratitude to Allah.
40. It is a du'ā'.

(Adapted from Jalā' al-Afhām by Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله)

## A GIFT

'Abdurrahmān ibn Abī Laylā ؓ said: "Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah ؓ met me and said: 'Shall I not give you a gift I received from the Prophet ﷺ?' I replied: 'Yes of course, gift it to me.' So he said: 'We asked Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying: "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ, how should we send salāh upon you, the members of the family, for Allah has taught us how to send salām upon you?" He ؓ replied: "Say:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى  
آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ. اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ ،  
كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ.

O Allah, send Your Mercy upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, as You sent Your Mercy upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed You are the Most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You blessed Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm, for You are the Most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious." (Bukhārī)

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The miser is the one in whose presence I am mentioned, but he does not send salāh upon me." (Tirmidhī)

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## 9. THE EXCELLENCE OF SEEKING FORGIVENESS

“Say: ‘My slaves, those who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all sins: He is truly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.’” (39:53)

“Allah, Exalted is He, said: ‘Son of Ādam, as long as you call upon me and hope in Me, I will forgive you despite what you do, and I do not care. Son of Ādam, even if your sins were to reach to the clouds of the sky, then you seek forgiveness from Me, I will forgive you. Son of Ādam, even if you were to come to Me with nearly an earth full of sins, and then you meet me, not having associated anything with me, then I will surely bring you as much as the earth in forgiveness.’” (Hadīth Qudsī, Tirmidhī)

Ibn Rajab  outlined three essential means of attaining forgiveness in this hadīth:

- ❶ Calling Allah with hope, knowing that only He forgives.
- ❷ Asking Him for forgiveness, despite the magnitude of one’s sins.
- ❸ Tawhīd; this is the greatest means of forgiveness. If even a speck of tawhīd was placed on a mountain of sins, it would turn them into good deeds.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “A believer will be brought close to his Lord on the Day of Judgement and He will place him within His Veil. Then, He will make him confess his sins by saying: ‘Do you recognise this?’ He will reply: ‘My Lord, I do.’ Then He will say: ‘Indeed I concealed them for you in the world, and I am indeed forgiving you for them today.’ Then the record of his good deeds will be given to him.” (Bukhārī)

## HOW TO REPENT AND SEEK FORGIVENESS

### 1 Realise the grave consequences of sinning

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Verily, when the slave commits a sin, a black dot appears on his heart. When he desists, seeks forgiveness and repents, his heart is polished clean. But if he sins again, it increases until it covers his heart. And that is the ‘rān’ (rust) which Allah mentioned: ‘No indeed! Rather what they have been doing has rusted their hearts (83:14).’” (Tirmidhī)

### 2 Don't belittle a sin

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Beware of sins which are deemed as insignificant because indeed they gather on a person until they destroy him.” (Ahmad)

‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ said: “The believer regards his sin equivalent to a mountain, beneath which he is seated, and fears that it will collapse on him, whilst the

sinner regards his sin to be equivalent to a fly which lands on his nose and he swats it away.' Bilāl ibn Sa'īd رضي الله عنه said: 'Don't look at any sin as being insignificant. Rather, look at the greatness of the One you disobeyed.'

### 3 Stop sinning & resolve to never return to the sin

Al-Fudhayl رضي الله عنه said: 'Asking for forgiveness without abandoning sin is the repentance of liars.'

### 4 Regret your sins and cry over them

The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Regret is repentance." (Ibn Mājah) Ibn Rajab رضي الله عنه said: 'People! Your hearts are essentially pure, but they have been stained with splashes of sins. So splash on them in turn the tears of your eyes and you will find your hearts purified.'

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said: "The pleasure one feels at sinning is more harmful than the sin itself. A believer never enjoys the fruit of his sins, but rather feels a remorseful ache within him. If this ceases to occur, and the joy of sinning overpowers any feeling of remorse, then that is a sign of a dead heart. To rectify this situation, one must do the following three things:

1. Fear dying in such a state before having the chance to repent.

2. Regret over what one missed out on by disobeying Allah.

3. Work very hard to atone for the sin and to avoid it in the future.'

### 5 Perform wudhū and pray two rak'ahs

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a servant commits a sin, and he performs wudhū well, and then stands and prays two rak'ahs, and asks forgiveness from Allah, Allah forgives him." (Abū Dāwūd)

### 6 Follow the bad with good & atone for your sins

Allah says: "Indeed good deeds erase bad deeds." (11:114) If one has wronged another person, one should atone for the sin e.g. ask their forgiveness or supplicate for them. (See p. 116.)

### 7 Seek forgiveness during the best time

"Our Lord - Glorified and Exalted is He - descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains and says: 'Who will call upon Me, that I may answer Him? Who will ask of Me, that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?'" (Bukhārī)

### 8 Seek forgiveness in the best manner

(See Sayyid al-Istighfār on p. 56.)

### 9 Make repentance your constant companion

"Whoever wants to be pleased with his scroll of deeds should increase in seeking forgiveness." (Tabarānī)

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: "The state of tawbah is at the beginning, the middle and the end of the slave's

journey to his Creator. The servant who seeks the pleasure of Allah never abandons tawbah. He remains in the state of tawbah until his death.'

Allah says: "Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." (2:222)

### 10 Seek forgiveness for others

"Whoever seeks forgiveness for every male and female believer, Allah will record a good deed for him for every male and female believer." (Tabarānī)

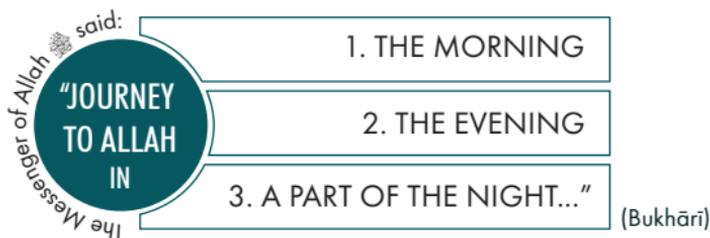
## PURIFY YOURSELF

'In this world, the sinner can be purified in one of three rivers:

1. A river of sincere repentance;
2. A river of good deeds that drowns the sins;
3. A river of calamities that wipe away his sins.

If these do not suffice in purifying him, then he will be purified in the river of Hell-fire in the hereafter. Therefore, when Allah intends good for His slave, He enters him into one of these three rivers, so he comes purified and cleansed on the Day of Judgement, not requiring the fourth purification. So swim in the river of repentance and doing good deeds, and have patience in the river of calamities. And do not neglect these before a day comes when you will be drowned in the river of Hell-fire, whose fuel is men and stones.' (Ibn al-Qayyim 🕌)

## 10. JOURNEYING TO ALLAH



These three periods are times of journeying to Allah through performing acts of obedience. These times are mentioned in many verses, including:

وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ، وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا .

“Remember the Name of your Lord in the morning and the evening. And during some parts of the night, prostrate before Him, and glorify Him throughout the long night.”

(76:25-26)

In the morning and the evening, one finds both obligatory and optional actions to do. The obligatory actions are praying Fajr and ‘Asr, and these are the best two prayers from the fardh prayers. These two prayers are performed during ‘the two cool periods’ and whoever preserves these two prayers shall enter Paradise. (Bukhārī)

As for the optional deeds, then it is to remember Allah after Fajr prayer until sunrise and after ‘Asr until sunset. There are numerous verses and ahādīth which state the virtues of doing this. (See p. 47-51.)

The third period is the duljah: journeying in the last part of the night. This alludes to performing deeds at the end of the

night which is the time for asking forgiveness. About this time, Allah says: “And those who seek forgiveness before dawn,” (3:17) and elsewhere: “And in the hours before dawn they would seek forgiveness.” (51:18)

This refers to the last part of the time of the Descent in which Allah fulfils the needs of those asking and grants forgiveness to those who beg Him for it. The middle of the night is reserved for the lovers who wish to spend time in seclusion with their Beloved (Allah) and the end of the night is reserved for the sinners to seek forgiveness for their sins. Whoever is unable to join the striving of the lovers in the depth of the night should at least join the sinners pleading forgiveness at the end of the night. Tāwūs ؑ said: ‘I cannot imagine that someone would sleep during the last part of the night!’

In Paradise, the first two periods (the morning and the evening) will be reserved for the elite of Paradise to see Allah. It is hoped that the one who preserves the two prayers (Fajr and ‘Asr) will be amongst these, moreso if one continuously observes the adhkār and other forms of worship until sunrise and sunset. If the servant adds to that, a journey in the last part of the night, then he has journeyed in all three times. And if he is true and sincere in the pursuit of this, it is hoped that he will achieve the greatest objective:

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ، فِي مَقْعَدٍ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ.

“Verily the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and rivers, on seats of truth in the presence of an All-Powerful Sovereign.” (54:55)

(Adapted from ‘al-Mahajjah fi Sayr al-Duljah’  
[The Journey to Allah] by Ibn Rajab ؑ)

## THE SECRETS OF DEEDS

<b>Salāh</b>	Placing one's heart before Allah with utmost humility as though one sees Him. Filled with His love and majesty, the heart's attention is focused only on Him.
<b>Qur'ān</b>	Reflecting and pondering deeply on the meanings of the words of Allah (tadabbur).
<b>Dhikr</b>	Glorifying Allah by reflecting on His Perfect Names, Attributes and Actions and pondering over His blessings and His creation.
<b>Du'ā'</b>	Displaying one's utter need of Allah with utmost humility, desperately turning to Him and depending on Him.

The recitation of the Qur'ān is more virtuous than dhikr as it is the word of Allah. Dhikr is more virtuous than du'ā', because dhikr is praising and glorifying Allah; whilst du'ā' consists of the servant asking Allah for something he needs. And Salāh is the best of all deeds as it is a combination of Qur'ān, dhikr and du'ā'.

Yet, each of these is considered in its own right and some situations may give what has less merit priority over what has more. Therefore, despite the overall superiority of the Qur'ān, remembering Allah with prescribed adhkār at their specific times is more virtuous. This is because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ encouraged and prescribed certain supplications for certain times and certain occasions.