

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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Remembering God

GOD, the Creator of heavens and the earth, is with us at every moment so long as we remember Him.

[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.

The glorious Quran has many verses about remembering and commemorating GOD. It is incumbent upon us to read these verses and contemplate on them. The believers remember GOD at all times while standing, sitting, or lying down.

[3:191] They remember GOD while standing, sitting, and on their sides, and they reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, You did not create all this in vain. Be You glorified. Save us from the retribution of Hell.

[4:103] Once you complete your Contact Prayer (Salat), you shall remember GOD while standing, sitting, or lying down. Once the war is over, you shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat); the Contact Prayers (Salat) are decreed for the believers at specific times.

The accursed Satan wants to distract us from remembering GOD. The devil

is our worst enemy; he caused the eviction of Adam and Eve from paradise (2:36). He is committed to take us off the straight path (7:16). He advocates evil and vice (24:21). The righteous believers fight Satan and whenever the devil approaches them with an idea, they remember GOD.

[7:201] Those who are righteous, whenever the devil approaches them with an idea, they remember, whereupon they become seers.

We must remember GOD every chance we get. The Quran commands us to say "GOD willing" when we say we want to do anything in the future. If we forget this, we must immediately remember GOD and say, "May my Lord guide me to do better next time." (18:23-4)

The Quran says that the most important function of our daily Contact Prayers is to remember GOD (29:45). While performing our five daily Contact Prayers we must praise and glorify GOD and refrain from mentioning anyone else's name (e.g., Muhammad, Ali, etc.). Mentioning the name of anyone else in our Contact Prayers causes us to think of those other than GOD

and that would nullify our prayers. Our Contact Prayers must be absolutely dedicated to GOD Alone.

[20:14] "I am GOD; there is no other god beside Me. You shall worship Me alone, and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) to remember Me.

When Joseph was in prison he said to one of the two prisoners, "Remember me at your lord." Instead of remembering GOD and depending on Him to be saved from the prison, he showed dependence on other than GOD. Such a serious slip kept Joseph a few more years in the prison. We learn from Joseph's story that in all circumstances we must remember GOD alone and ask Him for help and guidance. (12:42)

Almighty GOD commanded Moses and Aaron to carry out their mission supported by His signs and then He reminded them to not waver in remembering Him.

[20:42] "Go with your brother, supported by My signs, and do not waver in remembering Me.

We must reflect on our own creation. Almighty GOD created us from dust

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and subsequently from a tiny drop which turns into an embryo, then it becomes a fetus, and then He bring us out as infants, and then we reach maturity. We must remember GOD and praise and glorify Him for creating us. We must also reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth and how Almighty GOD showers the dead land with rain and brings it back to life and He creates all kinds of beautiful plants. (22:5, 41:39, 36:36)

Our god is whatever occupies our thoughts most of the time. Our god can be our children (7:190), our spouse (9:24), our property (18:35-42), our business (9:24), or our ego (25:43). If Muhammad, Jesus, Ali, Hossain, etc. occupy our minds most of the time, we are idol-worshippers. Hence the commandment, we must remember GOD frequently and glorify Him day and night.

[33:41] O you who believe, you shall remember GOD frequently. [33:42] You shall glorify Him day and night.

[7:205] You shall remember your Lord within yourself, publicly, privately, and quietly, day and night; do not be unaware.

GOD is the One who provides for us from the heaven and the earth. The food we eat or the water we drink is provided by GOD. How could we ignore all this and not remember GOD, our Provider and Sustainer.

[35:3] O people, remember GOD's blessings upon you. Is there any creator other than GOD who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no other god beside Him. How could you deviate?

[62:10] Once the prayer is completed, you may spread throughout the land to seek GOD's bounties, and continue to remember GOD frequently, that you may succeed.

Money and children are major distractions in life. A true believer will not allow distractions to take him or her

away from remembering GOD (63:9). Our souls are redeemed by remembering the name of our Lord and observing the contact prayers (87:14-15).

Remembering God has a profound effect on the hearts of believers.

[8:2] The true believers are those whose hearts tremble when GOD is mentioned, and when His revelations are recited to them, their faith is strengthened, and they trust in their Lord.

[22:35] They are the ones whose hearts tremble upon mentioning GOD, they steadfastly persevere during adversity, they observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and from our provisions to them, they give to charity.

There are so many rewards for Commemorating GOD:

Divine Forgiveness: Almighty GOD has prepared for the commemorating men and women forgiveness and a great recompense. *[33:35] The submitting men, the submitting women, the believing men, the believing women, the obedient men, the obedient women, the truthful men, the truthful women, the steadfast men, the steadfast women, the reverent men, the reverent women, the charitable men, the charitable women, the fasting men, the fasting women, the chaste men, the chaste women, and the men who commemorate GOD frequently, and the commemorating women; GOD has prepared for them forgiveness and a great recompense.*

Joy in our Heart: Remembering GOD causes peace, tranquility, and contentment. A devoted believer when he or she hears God's name rejoices. A believer, a Submitter to GOD alone, loves GOD more than anything or any one else (2:165). This true love causes his or her heart to rejoice by remembering the Creator of all things.

[13:28] They are the ones whose hearts rejoice in remembering GOD. Absolutely, by remembering GOD, the hearts rejoice.

Prohibiting Evil and Vice: Performing the Contact Prayers (*Salat*) is a means of remembering GOD, it also serves as a major deterrent against evil and vice. *[29:45] You shall recite what is revealed to you of the scripture, and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), for the Contact Prayers prohibit evil and vice. But the remembrance of GOD (through Salat) is the most important objective. GOD knows everything you do.*

Insight: When tempted by Satan, remembering GOD would open our eyes and strengthen our soul against falling in sin. *[7:201] Those who are righteous, whenever the devil approaches them with an idea, they remember, whereupon they become seers.*

And finally and most importantly, **Paradise:** When the believers commit sinful acts and wrong their souls, they remember GOD and ask to be forgiven. Remembering GOD at the moment of falling in sin is a major deterrent for engaging in the sinful act again. *[3:135] If they fall in sin or wrong their souls, they remember GOD and ask forgiveness for their sins—and who forgives the sins except GOD—and they do not persist in sins, knowingly. [3:136] Their recompense is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens with flowing streams; they abide therein forever. What a blessed reward for the workers!*

There are consequences for not remembering GOD and failing to observe His commandments:

Hard and miserable life: *[20:124] "As for the one who disregards My message, he will have a miserable life, and we resurrect him, on the Day of Resurrection, blind."*

Devil's continuous influence: *[43:36] Anyone who disregards the message of the Most Gracious, we appoint a devil to be his constant companion.*

Deviation from the straight path, turning wicked: *[9:67] The hypocrite*

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men and the hypocrite women belong with each other—they advocate evil and prohibit righteousness, and they are stingy. They forgot GOD, so He forgot them. The hypocrites are truly wicked.

[59:19] Do not be like those who forgot GOD, so He made them forget themselves. These are the wicked.

[39:22] If GOD renders one's heart content with Submission, he will be following a light from his Lord. Therefore, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against GOD's message; they have gone far astray.

Blindness on the Day of Judgment:
*[20:124] "As for the one who disregards My message, he will have a miserable life, and we resurrect him, on the Day of Resurrection, blind."
[20:125] He will say, "My Lord, why did you summon me blind, when I used to be a seer?"*

[20:126] He will say, "Because you forgot our revelations when they came to you, you are now forgotten."

Hell is the ultimate consequence:
Those who refrain from remembering GOD are destined for Hell.
[18:100] We will present Hell, on that day, to the disbelievers.

[18:101] They are the ones whose eyes were too veiled to see My message. Nor could they hear.

[32:14] Taste the consequences of your forgetting this day; now we forget you. You have incurred eternal retribution in return for your own works.

O people let us praise and glorify GOD, our One and Only Lord! Let us commemorate GOD day and night to get ever closer to Him in order to achieve salvation. The more we praise, glorify, and commemorate GOD, the closer we get to our Creator.

[73:8] You shall commemorate the name of your Lord, to come ever closer and closer to Him.

Ahmad

Listening to the Friday Prayer when one cannot attend

This period since the COVID-19 virus became a worldwide pandemic has been a challenging one for some Submitters (Muslims). Often it was difficult or impossible for people to congregate for Jumu'ah or Quran studies. For some of us it has been a great blessing to be able to keep in touch with our communities using the phone or other technology. However, personally I feel that listening to the Friday Prayer is not the same as attending it with others. In my understanding of the Arabic word transliterated by Dr. Rashad Khalifa, God's messenger, as Jumu'ah, it means a physical coming together of the community.

Since early in the pandemic my husband and I moved from the city. I now normally am in the mountains of New Mexico and have no community within a reasonable distance that I can drive to for Jumu'ah. So I listen to the sermon over the phone and I do the four rakats of the Noon Contact Prayer. Having the technology that keeps me in touch with my community, both to listen to at the Jumu'ah and also Quranic studies, is a great blessing. However, for me it does not substitute for actually being physically with the community, which I do as often as I can drive to Tucson.

This issue came up for me recently while reading 7:152 about the Children of Israel when they worshipped the golden calf:

Surely, those who idolized the calf have incurred wrath from their Lord, and humiliation in this life. We thus requite the innovators.

Suddenly I had to ask myself if I had been innovating a false practice. Fortunately, I was able to consult immediately with the other Submitters on the Quran study,

which I was joining via Skype. They reminded me that I have not been acting as if listening to the Jumu'ah constituted two rakats of the Friday Prayer, because I have been praying the four rakats for Noon Prayer. And so I was simply keeping in touch with the community and being blessed by that connection.

After that discussion it became clear to me God commands me to do Jumu'ah. Thus, I should do my best to come together with other Submitters for the Friday prayer. God's commands should always be taken seriously so I always need to strive to fulfill this obligation. But sometimes it is not possible to be with others. At those times, I am thankful to God for providing me the technology that allows me to hear the wisdom and insight of the brother giving the sermon at my home mosque in Tucson. However, since I am not physically part of that Jumu'ah, I am sure I must pray the normal four rakats of the Noon Salat.

I can hardly express what a relief that realization was. Praise God for all of my dear brothers and sisters and I thank God again for the technology He has blessed us with to stay in touch in these crazy times. Inshallah He will continue to bless us once He allows the pandemic to be resolved. MashaAllah, He has truly blessed me and us all!

Your sister Lisa

Important Commandments to All Believers

[62:9] O you who believe, when the Congregational Prayer (Salat Al-Jumu'ah) is announced on Friday, you shall hasten to the commemoration of GOD, and drop all business. This is better for you, if you only knew.

[62:10] Once the prayer is completed, you may spread through the land to seek GOD's bounties, and continue to remember GOD frequently, that you may succeed.

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Disputes: Broken Intelligence

Imagine watching two people arguing, each one trying to get their point across at the same time. All you would hear is noise, broken words, interrupted sentences, and diverging logic. It's likely no one is making sense to the other person. Each one may be trying to communicate intelligent thoughts, but it's just not working. It is like a crash of words, where the intelligence and peace is lost in the dispute. We have broken intelligence, in other words, I believe, disputing.

The Quran tells us that humans are prone to getting into disputes and cautions us against it.

[22:67] For each congregation, we have decreed a set of rites that they must uphold. Therefore, they should not dispute with you. You shall continue to invite everyone to your Lord. Most assuredly, you are on the right path.

Satan can use disputes as a tool to drive a wedge amongst believers.

[17:53] Tell My servants to treat each other in the best possible manner, for the devil will always try to drive a wedge among them. Surely, the devil is man's most ardent enemy.

So, what can we do? We can start by listening. If we want to be heard, it's

only fair to also listen. I feel thoughts come from the soul. Each word we say starts as a thought in the soul, and then manifests into this world linguistically. So, when our soul is trying to communicate a coherent thought, we should listen. It is impossible to replace another soul's thoughts with your own in the heat of the moment. Their utterances are coming from deep within, even if they're confused. But we can listen to our brothers and sisters with patience and kindness.

We can also examine ourselves and our beliefs. Maybe the other person has a good reminder for us that can help us.

[87:9] Therefore, you shall remind; perhaps the reminder will benefit.

[59:18] O you who believe, you shall reverence GOD, and let every soul examine what it has sent ahead for tomorrow. You shall reverence GOD; GOD is fully Cognizant of everything you do.

We can return to the Quran. God provides us the Quran with answers to matters that affect our soul. The Quran is a place where there is no contradictions, no non-sense, only intelligence, healing and mercy!

[17:82] We send down in the Quran healing and mercy for the believers. At the same time, it only increases the

wickedness of the transgressors.

[10:57] O people, enlightenment has come to you herein from your Lord, and healing for anything that troubles your hearts, and guidance, and mercy for the believers.

When we recite a Quranic verse, sense enters the picture, and our hearts are calmed. All we have to do is remember GOD, and we see: *[7:201] Those who are righteous, whenever the devil approaches them with an idea, they remember, whereupon they become seers.*

This is what the Quran does, it reminds us of GOD, of righteousness, and of the correct utterances:

[26:209] Therefore, this is a reminder, for we are never unjust.

May GOD keep us all guided, holding fast to Him, trusting in His words, and maintaining righteousness so as to set the best examples for the world, God willing.

[14:24] Do you not see that GOD has cited the example of the good word as a good tree whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches are high in the sky?

[14:27] GOD strengthens those who believe with the proven word, in this life and in the Hereafter. And GOD sends the transgressors astray. Everything is in accordance with GOD's will.

Abeer