

240915 - Is it obligatory to remember Allah in one's heart with every breath, and at every moment?

the question

There is a silsila of sufiya based in Pakistan. They recite the verse o those who believe remember Allah and make zikr e kaseer ' (surah noor). And the ayat ' And remember (O prophet) your lord in your nafs , with humility and fear , and without raising your voice ; remember Him in the evening and morning and do not become those who are negligent ' (8:205) . They say this ayat makes it farz to remember allah 24 hours daily with not a second wasted and this zikr is to be done in heart. For this purpose hasan basri r.h made a way to do meditation and practice saying " Allah hu " with particular control on your breath. And they say it is said in quran and hadees that every body part of the companions made constant zikr. We ask is it obligatory to make our hearts recite name of allah 24 hours daily. What is zikr e kaseer? Is this method ok and did hasan basri r.h made this way of zikr? What do the ayats mean.?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah

Firstly:

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance.

And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon (the early morning (Fajr) and Asr prayers)”

[al-Ahzaab 33:41, 42].

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Here Allah, may He be exalted, instructs the believers to remember Him with much remembrance, such as tahleel (saying “Laa ilaaha ill-Allah (There is no god but Allah)”), tahmeed (saying “[al-hamdu Lillah \(praise be to Allah\)](#)”), tasbeeh (saying “[Subhaan Allah \(glory be to Allah\)](#)”), takbeer (saying “Allahu akbar (Allah is Most Great)”), and other words that bring one closer to Allah.

The minimum of that is regularly reciting the dhikr for morning and afternoon, following the five obligatory prayers, and on various occasions when there are reasons to recite dhikr.

One should persist in doing that at all times and in all situations, by virtue of which the doer may advance without much effort, for that will motivate him to love and know Allah, and it will help him to do good and will restrain his tongue from evil speech.

“And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon” that is, at the beginning and end of the day, because these are virtuous times and it is easy to do this at those times.

Tafseer as-Sa’di (p. 65)

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and remember Allah much, that you may be successful”

[al-Jumu’ah 62:10].

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is, when you are buying and selling, giving and taking, remember Allah much, and do not let this world distract you from that which will benefit you in the Hereafter. End quote.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (8/1 23)

And Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

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“Verily, the Muslims (those who submit to Allah in Islam) men and women, the believers men and women (who believe in Islamic Monotheism), the men and the women who are obedient (to Allah), the men and women who are truthful (in their speech and deeds), the men and the women who are patient (in performing all the duties which Allah has ordered and in abstaining from all that Allah has forbidden), the men and the women who are humble (before their Lord Allah), the men and the women who give Sadaqat (i.e. Zakat, and alms, etc.), the men and the women who observe Saum (fast) (the obligatory fasting during the month of Ramadan, and the optional Nawafil fasting), the men and the women who guard their chastity (from illegal sexual acts) and the men and the women who remember Allah much with their hearts and tongues (while sitting, standing, lying, etc. for more than 300 times extra over the remembrance of Allah during the five compulsory congregational prayers) or praying extra additional Nawafil prayers of night in the last part of night, etc.) Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise)”

[al-Ahzaab 33:35].

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It should be understood that this verse is something of which the author of this book (i.e., his book al-Adhkaar) is interested in understanding the meaning.

There was a difference of opinion concerning that. Imam Abu’l-Hasan al-Waahidi said: Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: What is meant is that they should remember Allah following the prayers, morning and afternoon, and when they go to bed, and whenever they wake up from sleep, and whenever a person leaves home and comes back he should remember Allah, may He be exalted.

Mujaahid said: A person will never be one of the men and women who remember Allah, may He be exalted, much until he remembers Allah, may He be exalted, standing, sitting and lying down.

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'Ata' said: Whoever offers the five daily prayers properly is included in the words of Allah, may He be exalted: "the men and the women who remember Allah much".

Abu 'Amr ibn as-Salaah (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about the amount by which a person may become one of the men and women who remember Allah much.

He said: If he regularly recites the proven narrated adhkaar, morning and evening, and at various times and in various situations, night and day. Al-Adhkaar (p. 41)

There is nothing in these verses - or elsewhere - to indicate that it is obligatory to remember Allah, may He be exalted, at every moment and every second, because this is something that hardly any human being can do, and Allah has never obliged His slaves to do that. It is not Islam that teaches or enjoins that.

If you search all the books of the scholars, whether the books of the fuqaha', mufasssireen (commentators of the Qur'an) and muhadditheen (hadith scholars), you will not find in those books that this is attributed to the religion of Allah.

Muslim narrated in his Saheeh (2702) from al-Agharr al-Muzani (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "There is some kind of shadow upon my heart, so I ask Allah for forgiveness one hundred times a day."

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his Sharh:

The linguists said that what is meant here is that which covers the heart. Al-Qaadi said: It was said that what is meant is when he grew tired or neglected or forgot the remembrance of Allah that he did constantly. If he tired of it or neglected it, he regarded that as a sin, and sought forgiveness for it. End quote.

Thirdly:

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With regard to what these people say about every body part of the Companions remembering Allah, and so on, all of that comes under the heading of exaggeration and falsehood, for which there is no basis in any history or report. Their biographies and stories are available to people, so where would the reader find these notions, except in the claims of these people and other extremists of their ilk?

Yes, they were the best of people, and the best generation among whom a Prophet was sent, but they were also people like others, who ate, drank, bought, sold, mixed with their wives and children... They even disagreed and disputed!

Muslim narrated in his Saheeh (2750) that Hanzalah al-Usaydi (may Allah be pleased with him), who was one of the scribes of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

Abu Bakr met me and said: How are you, O Hanzalah?

I said: Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.

He said: Subhaan Allah! What are you saying?

I said: When we are with the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) he reminds us of the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but when we depart from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), we attend to our wives and children and businesses, and we forget a great deal.

Abu Bakr said: By Allah, we experience something similar.

Abu Bakr and I went and entered upon the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

I said: Hanzalah has become a hypocrite, O Messenger of Allah.

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The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Why is that?”

I said: O Messenger of Allah, when we are with you, you remind us of the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but when we depart from you, we attend to our wives and children and businesses, and we forget a great deal.

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

“By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you continued as you are when you are with me, and continued to remember (Paradise and Hell), the angels would shake hands with you in your homes and on the streets. But, O Hanzalah, there is a time for this and a time for that” (he said it) three times..

Al-Qurtubi said:

The words of Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), “By Allah, we experience something similar” offer a refutation of the extreme Sufis who claim to be constantly in such a state, and that because of it they would not go and check on their families or property.

The refutation is to be found in the fact that Abu Bakr was the best of all people after the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) until the Day of Resurrection, yet despite that, he did not claim to be different from other humans or to be in a state of constant remembrance of Allah and never tire of it, which is something that applies only to the angels.

Some people claim to be constantly in a state of dhikr (remembrance of Allah), but, we have mentioned above, is virtually impossible.

To sum up, Allah has ordained that human wellbeing is connected to changes in their condition and their means of drawing close to Allah is connected to their striving and efforts.

The reason for that is that this world is in between the world of the angels and the world of the

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devils, so He enables the angels to do good in the sense that they do what they are commanded to do, and they glorify Him night and day, and never tire of doing so. And he enables the devils to do evil and tempt people and never slacken. But He has caused this human world to vary, so that He may enable a person to be in one situation then cause it to change to another, and cause him to live then die, and cause him to find and lose. This was referred to by the one who will intercede (namely the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), who said: "But, O Hanzalah, there is a time for this and a time for that." And according to the hadith of Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) he said: "The wise man should have certain times: a time when he converses with his Lord, a time when he takes stock of himself, a time when he reflects upon the creation of Allah, and a time when he attends to his need for food and drink."

This is the way of perfections, and all others are nonsense and based on illusion.

End quote from al-Mufhim lima Ashkala min Talkhees Kitaab Muslim by al-Qurtubi (7/67-68)

Something similar may be said about the false story that they narrated in which they claimed that al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) had a special way of remembering Allah with every breath; there is no proof of that and no basis for it as far as we know.

Al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) is one of those concerning whom fabrications were made up by the ignorant Sufis and ascetics. They attribute to him things that have not been soundly narrated from him; in fact no source is known for them.

See the answer to question no. [201911](#)

And Allah knows best.