

468126 - Is there any basis in Islamic teachings for the “seven keys” to relieve distress?

the question

The imam of our mosque gave us a piece of paper on which are written seven keys to relieve accumulating distress: 1. Saying “*Allah Allah Rabbiy la ushriku bihi shay’an* (Allah, Allah is my Lord; I do not associate anything with Him)” 11 times after Fajr prayer. 2. Saying “*La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min az-zalimin* (There is no god worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong)” 11 times after Zuhr prayer. 3. Saying 11 times after ‘Asr prayer “*Hasbuna Allah wa ni’am al-wakil* (Allah is Sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs)”, and so on, until one says one time after as-salawat al-Ibrahimiyyah: “*Allahumma inni a’udhu bika min al-hammi wa’l-hazan, wa a’udhu bika min al-’ajzi wa’l-kasal, wa a’udhu bika min al-jubni wa’l-bukhl, wa a’udhu bika min ghalabat id-dayni wa qahr ir-rijal* (O Allah, indeed I seek refuge with You from worry and grief, and I seek refuge with You from helplessness and laziness, and I seek refuge with You from miserliness and cowardice, and I seek refuge with You from heavy debt and being overwhelmed by men).”

I looked in the Prophet’s Sunnah, and I could not find anything except saying “*Allah Allah Rabbiy la ushriku bihi shay’an* (Allah, Allah is my Lord; I do not associate anything with Him)” at times of distress, without specifying the number of times it is to be said. Is it valid to say it, or does this come under the heading of innovation (bid‘ah)?

Detailed answer

These adhkar and du‘a’s are prescribed in Islamic teachings. It is prescribed for the Muslim to say them at times of distress and worry, and at all times.

Regarding the dhikr “*Allah Allah Rabbiy la ushriku bihi shay’an* (Allah, Allah is my Lord; I do not associate anything with Him)”, we have stated previously that it is prescribed, in the answer to question no. [383804](#).

The same applies to the dhikr saying “*La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min al-zalimin* (There is no god worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You; I have indeed done wrong)”; please see the answer to question no. [318430](#) .

We have explained the meaning and virtue of the words “*Hasbuna Allah wa ni‘am al-wakil* (Allah is Sufficient for we, and He is the best disposer of affairs)” in the answer to question no. [175548](#) .

And we have discussed seeking refuge with Allah from worry, grief, heavy debt and being overwhelmed by men, as it was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari (2893) from Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: I often used to hear the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “*Allahumma inni a‘udhu bika min al-hammi wa’l-hazani wa’l-‘ajzi wa’l-kasali wa’l-bukhli wa’l-jubni wa dala‘ id-dayni wa ghalabat ir-rijal* (O Allah, indeed I seek refuge with You from worry, grief, helplessness, laziness, miserliness, cowardice, heavy debt and being overwhelmed by men).

Imam Muslim (2722) narrated that Zayd ibn Arqam said: “I do not tell you anything except what the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say. He used to say: “*Allahumma, inni a‘udhu bika min al-‘ajzi wa’l-kasali wa’l-jubni wa’l-bukhli wa’-harami wa ‘adhab al-qabr; Allahumma ati nafsi taqwaha wa zakkiha anta khayru man zakkaha, anta waliyyuha wa mawlaha. Allahumma inni a‘udhu bika min ‘ilmin la yanfa‘ wa min qalbin la yakhsha‘ wa min nafsin la tashba‘ wa min da‘watin la yustajabu laha* (O Allah, indeed I seek refuge with You from helplessness, laziness, cowardice, miserliness, old age and the punishment of the grave. O Allah, grant my soul fear of You and purify it, for You are the best to purify it, You are its guardian and Lord. O Allah, indeed I seek refuge with You from knowledge that is not beneficial, a heart that does not fear You, a soul that is never content and a supplication that is not answered).

These adhkar and du‘a’s in and of themselves are prescribed and recommended.

But specifying a particular number of times they are to be recited, or a particular time at which to recite them, in order to achieve relief of distress is something for which there is no evidence,

so it is not prescribed to recommend reciting a dhikr a particular number of times or in a particular manner, and claim that it will attain a particular virtue, without textual evidence.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

To say that something is recommended (mustahabb) is a shar‘i ruling, so it cannot be proven except with shar‘i evidence. Whoever says that Allah likes a particular deed without shar‘i evidence is prescribing something in the religion for which Allah has not given permission, just as if he were to say that something is obligatory or prohibited without evidence. Hence the scholars differed as to what is recommended and what is not, just as they differed with regard to other rulings. Rather it is a basic principle of Islam that evidence should be produced for what is mustahabb too."(*Majmu‘ al-Fatawa* 18/65).

It says in *Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Da‘imah li’l-Buhuth al-‘Ilmiyyah wa’l-Ifta’*:

The basic principle with regard to adhkar and acts of worship is that they are restricted to what is proven in sound religious texts, and Allah is not to be worshipped except in the ways that He has prescribed. The same applies to whether an act of worship could be done at any time or is to be done at a specific time, how it is to be done and the number of times it is to be repeated. So with regard to whatever Allah has prescribed of adhkar, du‘a’s and other acts of worship that may be done at any time, without limiting it to a particular time, number of repetitions, place or manner, it is not permissible for us to commit ourselves to a particular manner, time or number of repetitions. Rather we worship Allah by doing these acts of worship without such restrictions, as mentioned above.

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(*Fatawa Islamiyyah* 4/178).

The point is that it is prescribed to say these adhkar, but without restricting it to the particular number of repetitions and manner mentioned in the question.

And Allah knows best.