

SIFAH LECTURE SERIES

The Living Heart: Why the Remembrance of Allah Changes Everything

A practical lecture — knowledge you can act on

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July 2026 · ~30 min read · The Remembrance of Allah



SIFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

The Living Heart: Why the Remembrance of Allah Changes Everything

The one worship that costs almost nothing and weighs more than mountains — and why your heart cannot live without it.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Worship That Fits in the Cracks of Your Day

My dear brother, my dear sister, let me ask you something honestly before we begin. In the last twenty-four hours, how many times did your tongue move on its own to remember Allah? Not in prayer, not because someone reminded you, but in the quiet gaps of your own ordinary day. The walk to the car. The wait at the traffic light. The minute you lay your head on the pillow. If you are like most of us, the honest answer is uncomfortable, because those gaps did not stay empty. They filled themselves. They filled with a screen, with a scroll, with a hundred little worries and a thousand little nothings. And here is the strange tragedy of it: the very moments we throw away were the very moments Allah left open for us to become rich beyond imagining.

Among all the gifts your Lord has placed within your reach, there is one act of worship that asks almost nothing of you and gives back almost everything. It does not need your wealth. It does not need your strength. It does not need a special place, a prayer mat, or even that you rise from where you are sitting. The billionaire and the beggar have equal access to it. The young child and the dying elder can both perform it. The healthy man striding through the market and the sick woman lying on her bed can both fill their moments with it. And yet, as light as it is upon the tongue, it is **heavier upon the scale than mountains of gold**, and dearer to Allah than nearly anything else His servant can offer Him.

This, my beloved, is the remembrance of Allah. This is *dhikr*. And in this lecture I want to sit with you and answer a question that should keep us all awake at night: why has our Lord tied so vast a reward to so small an effort, and why do our hearts, again and again, turn away from the single thing that could heal them? Because make no mistake, this is not a lecture about a minor sunnah or an optional extra. This is a lecture about the difference between a heart that is alive and a heart that is quietly dying in the chest of its owner while he still walks and talks and laughs.

He Remembers You When You Remember Him

Allah did not leave us to guess at the worth of His remembrance. He did something so staggering that the early Muslims trembled at it. He made it a direct exchange, a two-way transaction unlike any other in the entire Book. He said that if you would only remember Him, then He, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the One before whom galaxies are dust, will remember you.

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ

*So remember Me; **I will remember you.** And be grateful to Me, and do not deny Me.*

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:152)

Stop and feel the weight of this. You, a servant with a moving tongue and a present heart, remember Allah — and in return Allah remembers you. Some of the pious predecessors said that it would have been honour enough for the believer that Allah simply commanded him to remember Him. But Allah did not stop there. He added the promise: I will remember the one who remembers Me. And there is no station in all of existence higher than that. When you say *SubhanAllah* while washing dishes in your kitchen, Allah mentions you in a gathering far nobler than any assembly on the face of the earth. When you whisper His name in the darkness before sleep, the Lord of all the worlds turns toward you. Tell me, in all the transactions of this world, where else do you spend so little and receive so much?

And the Prophet ﷺ made the meaning of this verse burn even brighter in a sacred hadith, where Allah Himself describes the deal from His side.

أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي، وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا ذَكَرَنِي، فَإِنْ
ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَلَأٍ
ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي مَلَأٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُمْ

*I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me within himself, I remember him within Myself; and **if he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering better than it.***

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 7405 and Sahih Muslim: 2675 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Read that last line again slowly. You mention Him in your small gathering of friends, of family, of coworkers, and Allah mentions you in a gathering better than yours. Which gathering is better than any on earth? The gathering of the angels, in the highest heaven, in the presence of the Most Merciful. My dear brother, you are not too small for this. Your quiet dhikr in your ordinary room is heard in the loftiest assembly of creation. There is no exchange like it anywhere.

NO CEILING

The One Worship With No Limit

Now here is something beautiful that most of us never notice. Allah placed limits and measures on nearly every act of worship, out of mercy for our bodies and our lives. For the prayer, He set fixed times. For fasting, fixed days. For Hajj, a fixed season, and only for those who can bear the journey. For everything, a boundary. But for His remembrance, He tore down the ceiling entirely and simply said: do it much.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا * وَسَبِّحُوهُ
بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

*O you who believe, **remember Allah with much remembrance**, and glorify Him morning and evening.*

Surah Al-Ahzab (33:41-42)

The scholars observed something tender here. You can overeat and harm your body. You can oversleep and waste your day. You can even exhaust yourself with too much voluntary prayer until you burn out and abandon it. But no human being in the history of the world was ever harmed by remembering Allah too much. It is the one act for which you are told, with no restraint and no upper limit, to do more, and more, and more. Think about what that tells you about how much your Lord loves to be remembered by you.

And to those men and women who answer this call, who fill their days with His name, Allah made a promise He made to very few, gathering forgiveness and a great reward into a single verse.

وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ كَثِيرًا وَالَّذِينَ كَرِهَتْ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً
وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

*And the men who remember Allah much and the women who do so, **Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.***

Surah Al-Ahzab (33:35)

The imam As-Sa'di, may Allah have mercy on him, made a point here that I want you to hold onto for the rest of your life. He said Allah singled out *abundant* remembrance because the one who remembers Allah much is protected from forgetting Him, and forgetting Allah is the root of every single sin. Think about that. You do not fall into disobedience while your heart is full of your Lord. You fall when the remembrance has drained out of you and left the heart empty, unguarded, exposed. The people of knowledge said dhikr is a fortress, and the one who steps outside of it steps into the open field where the enemy is waiting for him with his arrows drawn.

A SINGLE ROPE

When the Religion Felt Like Too Much

Let me tell you about a man who felt exactly the way you might feel right now. He came to the Prophet ﷺ overwhelmed. Islam has so many duties, he thought. The prayers, the fasting, the charity, the pilgrimage, the manners, the rights of others. It felt like a mountain he could never climb. So he came and he asked for one thing, just one thing, that he could hold onto and never let go. And look at the mercy of the answer he received.

لَا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

Let your tongue remain ever moist with the remembrance of Allah.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 3375 · **Authenticity:** Hasan

Do you see what the Prophet ﷺ handed him? A single rope he could hold at every moment of every day. Keep your tongue wet with the name of your Lord. This is a worship you can perform while you walk to work, while you cook, while you wait in a queue, while you cannot sleep at three in the morning. It does not interrupt your life. It fills the empty spaces inside it. The man who keeps his tongue moist with dhikr carries his worship with him into every corner of his day, so that no hour passes entirely without Allah in it. My dear brother, if the religion has ever felt like too much for you, this hadith is your gift. Start here. Keep the tongue moist. Everything else grows from that.

And Allah taught us the manner of it too, so that we would not turn it into a performance for the ears of people. He asked for a remembrance of the heart, humble, quiet, in awe, kept up at both ends of the day.

وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ
الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

*And remember your Lord within yourself, humbly and in awe, without raising the voice, in the morning and the evening, and **do not be among the heedless.***

Surah Al-A'raf (7:205)

See how Allah ended it: do not be among the heedless, the *ghafilin*. Because heedlessness is the exact opposite of remembrance. It is the soil in which every sin takes root. And notice He tied this remembrance to the two ends of the day, the morning and the evening, the very hours the Sunnah later filled with its beautiful adhkar. There is a design here, and we are meant to live inside it.

LIFE AND DEATH

The Heart That Is Alive, and the Heart That Is Not

We think of life and death as things that happen to the body. The Prophet ﷺ revealed something far deeper. There is a life of the heart and a death of the heart, and the line that separates the two is one thing: the remembrance of Allah. A heart that remembers its Lord is alive. It is lit from within. It is soft, it is sensitive, it responds to the Qur'an, it weeps, it feels. A heart that has forgotten Him is a dead thing still beating in the chest, going through the motions of a life it no longer truly feels.

مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ وَالَّذِي لَا يَذْكُرُ رَبَّهُ مَثَلُ الْحَيِّ
وَالْمَيِّتِ

*The likeness of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord is **the likeness of the living and the dead.***

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6407 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

My dear brother, my dear sister, this hadith explains a misery that millions of people feel and cannot name. There are people who have everything the world can hand them, wealth, career, comfort, beautiful homes, and yet they describe a deadness inside, a hollowness that no purchase and no vacation and no episode can fill. They have fed the body a feast and starved the heart to the point of death. They keep asking, why do I feel so empty when I have so much? And the answer is that the heart has begun to die for want of the only thing that gives it life.

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote an entire treatise on the benefits of remembrance, and he gave us an image I want you to never forget. He said dhikr is to the heart what water is to the fish. Then he asked the question that answers everything: what becomes of a fish when it is taken out of the water? It thrashes. It gasps. It dies on the shore, surrounded by a whole world of air it cannot breathe. That, he said, is the heart removed from the remembrance of Allah. It is a fish on dry land, surrounded by a world that looks like it should be able to save it, and cannot. And where is the water? Allah told us plainly.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.

Surah Ar-Ra'd (13:28)

Read those final words as if they were written for our age, because they were: by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest. Not by wealth, for the wealthy are often the most anxious people alive. Not by fame, for the famous are often the most hollow. Not by distraction, for distraction only postpones the ache until the phone is put down and the silence returns. The heart was made by Allah, and a thing finds its rest only in the one who made it. Ibn al-Qayyim said there is in the heart a hardness that nothing softens except the remembrance of Allah, and an emptiness that nothing fills except turning to Him, and a fear that nothing settles except drawing near to Him. Every single one of us carries that hardness, that emptiness, that fear. And Allah has shown us one cure for all three.

ABOVE GOLD AND BATTLE

Greater Than Charity, Greater Than the Battlefield

So that we would never underestimate this light and easy act, the Prophet ﷺ did something remarkable. He took the two deeds that human beings admire more than any others, the giving away of wealth and the risking of one's life in battle, and he placed the remembrance of Allah above them both. Imagine sitting in that gathering as he offered his Companions a worship loftier than the very things men are most praised for.

أَلَا أُنبِئُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ أَعْمَالِكُمْ، وَأَزْكَاهَا عِنْدَ مَلِكِكُمْ،
وَأَرْفَعَهَا فِي دَرَجَاتِكُمْ، وَخَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ مِنْ إِنْفَاقِ الذَّهَبِ
وَالْوَرِقِ، وَخَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ تَلْقَوْا عَدُوَّكُمْ فَتَضْرِبُوا
أَعْنَاقَهُمْ وَيَضْرِبُوا أَعْنَاقَكُمْ؟ قَالُوا: بَلَى. قَالَ: ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ
تَعَالَى

*Shall I not inform you of the best of your deeds, the purest of them in the sight of your Sovereign, the highest of them in your ranks, better for you than spending gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks and their striking yours? They said: Of course. He said: **The remembrance of Allah, the Most High.***

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 3377 and Sunan Ibn Majah: 3790 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

Look at what the Prophet ﷺ did here, and let it change how you see your own day. He took sacrificing your wealth and risking your life, the two peaks of human heroism, and he told you there is something greater than both, something you walk past a hundred times a day without bending down to pick it up. The remembrance of Allah outweighs the charity of the rich and outweighs the sword of the warrior. And here is the mercy that should bring tears to your eyes: it is available to the poorest believer who has not a single coin to give, and to the weakest soul who could never lift a weapon. Allah hid the highest reward inside the easiest act, on purpose, so that no one, no matter how poor, no matter how weak, no matter how broken, would ever be shut out of the greatest good. The door to His pleasure stands open to anyone with a tongue to move and a heart to turn.

And the words are so light. The Prophet ﷺ took two short phrases and weighed them against the entire creation of Allah.

كَلِمَتَانِ خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ، ثَقِيلَتَانِ فِي الْمِيزَانِ،
حَبِيبَتَانِ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
الْعَظِيمِ

*Two words **light upon the tongue, heavy upon the scale**, beloved to the Most Merciful:
SubhanAllahi wa bihamdih, SubhanAllahil-'Azim. Glory be to Allah and praise be to Him; glory
be to Allah, the Magnificent.*

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6406 and Sahih Muslim: 2694 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Light upon the tongue, heavy upon the scale, beloved to the Most Merciful. My dear brother, imagine the Day when your deeds are weighed, when you are standing there desperate for one more grain of good to tip the balance, and you remember all the empty hours you had, the queues, the commutes, the sleepless nights, and how you filled them with nothing when you could have filled them with these words that cost you nothing and weigh more than a mountain. The Prophet ﷺ even told us that one short phrase, said a hundred times, can wipe away the sins of a lifetime, even if those sins were as numberless as the foam on the surface of the sea.

مَنْ قَالَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ فِي يَوْمٍ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ حُطَّتْ
خَطَايَاهُ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ مِثْلَ زَبَدِ الْبَحْرِ

Whoever says, SubhanAllahi wa bihamdih, one hundred times in a day, his sins are wiped away even if they were like the foam of the sea.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6405 and Sahih Muslim: 2691 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

A hundred times. It takes perhaps two minutes. And Allah attached to another single sentence of pure monotheism, said a hundred times, a reward the wealthy could not purchase with their fortunes.

مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ
وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، فِي يَوْمٍ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ،
كَانَتْ لَهُ عَدَلٌ عَشْرَ رِقَابٍ، وَكُتِبَتْ لَهُ مِائَةُ حَسَنَةٍ،
وَمُحِيتَ عَنْهُ مِائَةُ سَيِّئَةٍ، وَكَانَتْ لَهُ حِرْزًا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ
يَوْمَهُ ذَلِكَ حَتَّى يَمْسِيَ

*Whoever says one hundred times in a day: There is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner; to Him belongs the dominion and to Him belongs all praise, and He is over all things competent; **it is for him equal to freeing ten slaves, a hundred good deeds are written for him, a hundred sins are erased from him, and it is a protection for him from Satan for that day until evening.***

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 3293 and Sahih Muslim: 2691 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Freeing ten slaves. A hundred good deeds. A hundred sins erased. A shield from Shaytan for the whole day. All of it for a few seconds of a moving tongue, scattered through the gaps of an ordinary day. This, my beloved, is the generosity of the One who tied His greatest gifts to His easiest commands.

THE UNSEEN

The Angels Who Search the Roads for You

There is a hadith that lifts the veil for a moment and lets us see what surrounds a gathering where Allah is mentioned. The Prophet ﷺ told us that Allah has angels who roam the earth, not to record the wars of nations, not to log the rise and fall of empires, but to seek out the circles where His servants sit

remembering Him. Picture it. Angels moving along the roads with one mission: to find the people of dhikr.

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةً يَطُوفُونَ فِي الطُّرُقِ يَلْتَمِسُونَ أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ،
فَإِذَا وَجَدُوا قَوْمًا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ تَنَادَوْا: هَلُمُّوا إِلَيَّ
حَاجَتُكُمْ، فَيَحْفُونَهُمْ بِأَجْنِحَتِهِمْ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا

Indeed, Allah has angels who roam the roads seeking out the people of remembrance. When they find a people remembering Allah, they call to one another: Come to what you were seeking. And they envelop them with their wings up to the lowest heaven.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6408 and Sahih Muslim: 2689 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

And the Prophet ﷺ went on to describe the scene above. Allah, who knows everything, asks the angels about His servants, not because He needs to know, but to honour them: what are My servants saying? The angels answer that they are glorifying You and praising You and declaring Your greatness. Allah asks: have they seen Me? They say no. He asks: how would they be if they had seen Me? They answer: they would worship You even more. Then Allah says: I have forgiven them. And the angels mention one man who was only passing by, who had come for some errand and sat down without truly being one of them. And Allah says: they are a people whose companion is not made wretched. My dear brother, do you understand what this means? Even the man who simply sat near the people of dhikr, who was not really one of them, was forgiven because of the company he happened to keep.

This is the unseen reality of remembrance. When you sit to mention your Lord, you are wrapped in the wings of angels. You are mentioned by name in the highest heaven. You are forgiven. And the person sitting beside you is forgiven along with you. We chase after invitations to gatherings that bring us nothing but noise and emptiness, and all the while the angels themselves are searching

the roads to find is the humble circle where Allah is remembered. Do not undervalue where you sit tonight.

THE BEST OF US

The Most Forgiven Man Remembered Him the Most

If there was ever a human being who could have been excused from constant remembrance, who had earned the right to rest, it was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His past and his future were forgiven. His station with his Lord was the highest of all creation. He, if anyone, could have said he had done enough. And yet he was the most devoted person to ever live in the remembrance of Allah. His tongue was never still of his Lord's name, in every state, at every hour. His wife Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, captured his lifelong habit in a single sentence.

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ أَحْيَانِهِ

The Prophet ﷺ **used to remember Allah in all of his states.**

Source: Sahih Muslim: 373 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

In all of his states. Standing and sitting. Walking and resting. In ease and in the deepest hardship. The name of Allah was always on his tongue. And even though Allah had forgiven him what came before and what would come after, he sought forgiveness more than any of us, drowning as we are in real and repeated sin. Listen to his own words, and let them shame our heedlessness.

وَاللّٰهُ إِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ فِي الْيَوْمِ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ
سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً

By Allah, I seek the forgiveness of Allah and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times in a day.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6307 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

Let that land on you with its full weight. The one whom Allah had already forgiven turned back to Him in remembrance and repentance more than seventy times every single day. What, then, about us? We carry the burden of sins we commit and repeat, sins we barely even notice anymore, and yet we let day after day pass with our tongues dry as bone and our hearts asleep. If the most forgiven human being who ever lived needed the constant remembrance of his Lord, then our need for it is greater beyond all measure. This is not a worship for the elite. It is oxygen for the drowning, and we are all drowning.

OUR AGE

Never Has an Age Needed This More

It would be a betrayal of this lecture to speak of dhikr as if it belonged only to quiet retreats and prayer beads, far away from the lives we actually live. The truth is the exact opposite. There has never been a generation that needed the remembrance of Allah more than ours, and there has never been a generation more carefully engineered to be pulled away from it. Let me be honest with you about the world we are living in, because you already feel it.

Consider how much of your day is now spent in a restless, twitching emptiness. The eyes drawn to a screen the instant there is a gap. In the queue at the checkout. At the red light. In bed before sleep. In the bathroom. At the dinner table between mouthfuls. Our grandparents filled these very spaces with the names of Allah. We fill them with an endless scroll that leaves the heart more anxious than it was before we picked up the phone. Every one of those moments is a field lying fallow, ready to be planted with dhikr, and we are salting it instead. Imagine, just imagine, if you met each pause not by reaching for the phone but by reaching for your Lord. *SubhanAllahi wa bihamdih* on the tongue in the exact seconds

you now throw away. By the end of a single day you would have gathered a weight of good heavier than gold, and you would have lost nothing of your work or your rest. The remembrance of Allah does not ask you to find new time. It asks you to redeem the time you are already wasting.

They call ours the age of anxiety, and the markets are flooded with remedies that quiet the symptoms for an hour and hand the patient back to his unrest. I am not telling you to ignore medicine or the counsel of the wise, for those too are from Allah, and the believer takes his means. But I am telling you what your Lord prescribed for the deepest restlessness of the soul, the dread that has no name, the tightness in the chest that no diagnosis fully explains: by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest. The soul's deepest restlessness is a thirst for its Maker, and you cannot quench a thirst for Allah with anything other than Allah. You can pour every distraction on earth into that void and it will still ache, because it was carved out to be filled by Him alone.

And we must name the thief openly, because Allah named it. He warned the believers that the very things we love the most, our wealth and our children, can become the chains that drag us away from His remembrance. And in our time, the glowing rectangle in our hand has joined them as the loudest and most relentless of these distractions.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

*O you who believe, let not your wealth or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah.
And **whoever does that, those are the losers.***

Surah Al-Munafiqun (63:9)

Allah called those who let the dunya divert them from His remembrance the losers, the ones who walked away from the greatest deal in existence having traded the eternal for the fleeting. And notice, the danger of our devices is not only the sin they sometimes carry to us. The deeper danger is the sheer theft of attention, the way they fill every silence so completely that the heart is never left alone long enough to remember its Lord. My dear brother, you must take back your silence. Keep zones in your day that

belong to Allah and to no one else. The minutes after each prayer. The morning and the evening. The threshold of sleep. Guard them from the reach of the screen, so that the remembrance of Allah finally has some empty ground in which to grow.

AN HONEST LOOK

Weigh Your Heart By Its Remembrance

Before we move to what you will actually do, let me ask you to turn your gaze inward, gently but honestly, and weigh the state of your own heart by how much it remembers its Lord. When did your tongue last move with the name of Allah without anyone prompting you, in the quiet of your own day? Is your heart among the living, soft and lit and responsive, or has it grown hard and dim from long forgetting, until the Qur'an no longer moves it and the reminder no longer reaches it? How much of your day truly belongs to your Lord, and how much have you surrendered to the endless noise that leaves you empty and does not even know your name?

And here is the question that gathers up all the others: on the Day your deeds are weighed and you are begging for one more grain of good, what weight of remembrance will you bring, having been given a tongue that could have stayed moist with His name through every idle hour you instead threw into the fire of distraction? I do not ask these questions to crush you. Allah forbid. I ask them the way a doctor asks about the pain, because the cure is in your own mouth and the door is standing wide open. These questions are the lantern of the believer who wants to carry a living heart back to his Lord. And the living heart, my beloved, is simply the one that remembers Him.

A REMINDER CARRIED HOME

Do Not Leave This the Same Person

So let me gather it for you before we close. The remembrance of Allah is the worship that costs the least and weighs the most. When you remember Allah, He remembers you, in a gathering better than any on earth. Dhikr is to the heart what water is to the fish, and a heart without it is a fish gasping on the shore. It is the one rest for the restless soul, and the one fortress against sin. The Prophet ﷺ placed it above gold and above the battlefield. The angels themselves search the roads to find the humble circles where it lives. And the most forgiven human being who ever walked the earth remembered his Lord in every state and repented seventy times a day.

Now here is the real danger, and I want you to feel it. The danger is that you were moved for the length of this reading, that your eyes softened and your heart stirred, and then you walked back out into a day with no Allah in it. That would be the greatest loss of all, because you would have tasted the cure and set it down. So let us turn admiration into a habit, something small and steady that your tongue can actually keep, starting today. Below is your plan. Do not read it and nod. Choose one thing, and begin.

And let me leave you with the words the Prophet ﷺ named as the most beloved speech to Allah, four phrases that gather all of glorification and praise and witness and greatness into a handful of syllables any tongue on earth can carry.

أَحَبُّ الْكَلَامِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَرْبَعٌ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ،
وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

The most beloved speech to Allah is four phrases: *SubhanAllah, alhamdulillah, la ilaha illa Allah, and Allahu akbar.*

Source: Sahih Muslim: 2137 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

And remember always the principle that turns a moment of inspiration into a lifetime of light: the most beloved deeds to Allah are the ones you keep, even when they are few. A small remembrance held every single day is dearer to Him than a flood that comes once and dries up. So begin small, begin today, and never, ever stop.

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ

The most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant of them, even if they are few.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6464 and Sahih Muslim: 783 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun Alayh (agreed upon)

☰ Your Action Plan: Keep the Tongue Moist

Don't just read — choose what you will act on this week.

1 Anchor your two fortresses

Set a small, fixed portion of the authentic morning adhkar after Fajr and the evening adhkar after Asr or Maghrib. Even a short, steady portion, kept as reliably as your meals, guards both ends of your day.

DAILY

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

2 Attach dhikr to every prayer

After each obligatory salah, do not rush away. Say the tasbih, tahmid, and takbir the Prophet ﷺ taught. These are moments already carved out for Allah that we usually throw away.

DAILY

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

3 Wage war on your dead time

Train your tongue to reach for Allah's name in the gaps the way it now reaches for the phone: in the car, in the queue, in bed. Aim for SubhanAllahi wa bihamdih one hundred times before you sleep.

DAILY

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

4 Guard a screen-free silence

Keep one zone each day, such as the threshold of sleep, completely free of your phone, so the remembrance of Allah finally has empty ground to grow in.

EVERY NIGHT

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

🚩 The 7-Day Living Heart Challenge

For the next seven days, every time you catch yourself reaching for your phone in an idle moment, stop and instead say SubhanAllahi wa bihamdih ten times before you unlock it. Just seven days of catching the gaps and filling them with His name. Notice what happens to your heart by the end of the week: the softening, the calm, the sense that Allah is near. Then keep going, because these seven days are only the beginning of a tongue that stays moist with His remembrance for the rest of your life.

Make it stick – and make it last

- ✓ **Write it down.** Put your chosen action on a sticky note on your mirror, desk, or fridge – somewhere you cannot miss it.
- ✓ **Print this plan** and tick each action off as you do it.
- ✓ **Set a daily reminder** on your phone or calendar so it never slips your mind.
- ✓ **Keep a one-line journal** each night – did I do it today? how did it go? – and watch your streak grow.

Don't aim for one good day or week – aim to keep it for life. A habit only counts once it outlives the challenge.