

Abu Mūsā al-Ash'arī narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

1

A house in which God's name is frequently mentioned and one in which God's name is not mentioned may be compared to one who is alive and one who is dead.

2

In al-Bukhari's version: The one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord are like the one who is alive and the one who is dead.⁽¹⁾

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 6407; Muslim, 779.

From the Qur'an

- ﴿Is he who was dead and whom We have raised to life, and for whom We set up a light to see his way among men, to be compared to one who is in deep darkness out of which he cannot emerge? Thus do their deeds seem goodly to the unbelievers.﴾ (6: 122)
- ﴿Bethink yourself of your Lord humbly and with awe, and without raising your voice, in the morning and evening; and do not be negligent.﴾ (7: 205)
- ﴿God guides to Himself those who turn to Him; (27) those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of God. It is indeed in the remembrance of God that people's hearts find their comfort.﴾ (13: 27-28)
- ﴿Believers! Remember God always, (41) and glorify him morning and evening.﴾ (33: 41-42)

The Narrator

Remembrance and glorification of God keep hearts and souls alive. A person who always remembers God and praises Him is alive and happy at heart. A home in which God is frequently mentioned is happy, visited by angels. A home and a heart that do not remember God is dead and deserted. Nothing good comes from these.

Summary

Abu Mūsā 'Abdullāh ibn Qays ibn Salīm al-Ash'arī was a companion of the Prophet who embraced Islam in Makkah and migrated to Abyssinia, then to Madinah. He recited the Qur'an well and had a fine melodious voice. The Prophet appointed him as governor of some parts of Yemen. Later, 'Umar appointed him Governor of Basrah, then 'Uthmān made him Governor of Kufah. He was one of the two arbiters after the Battle of Šiffin, but subsequently he left the two sides and stayed away. He died in Year 52 AH 672 CE.

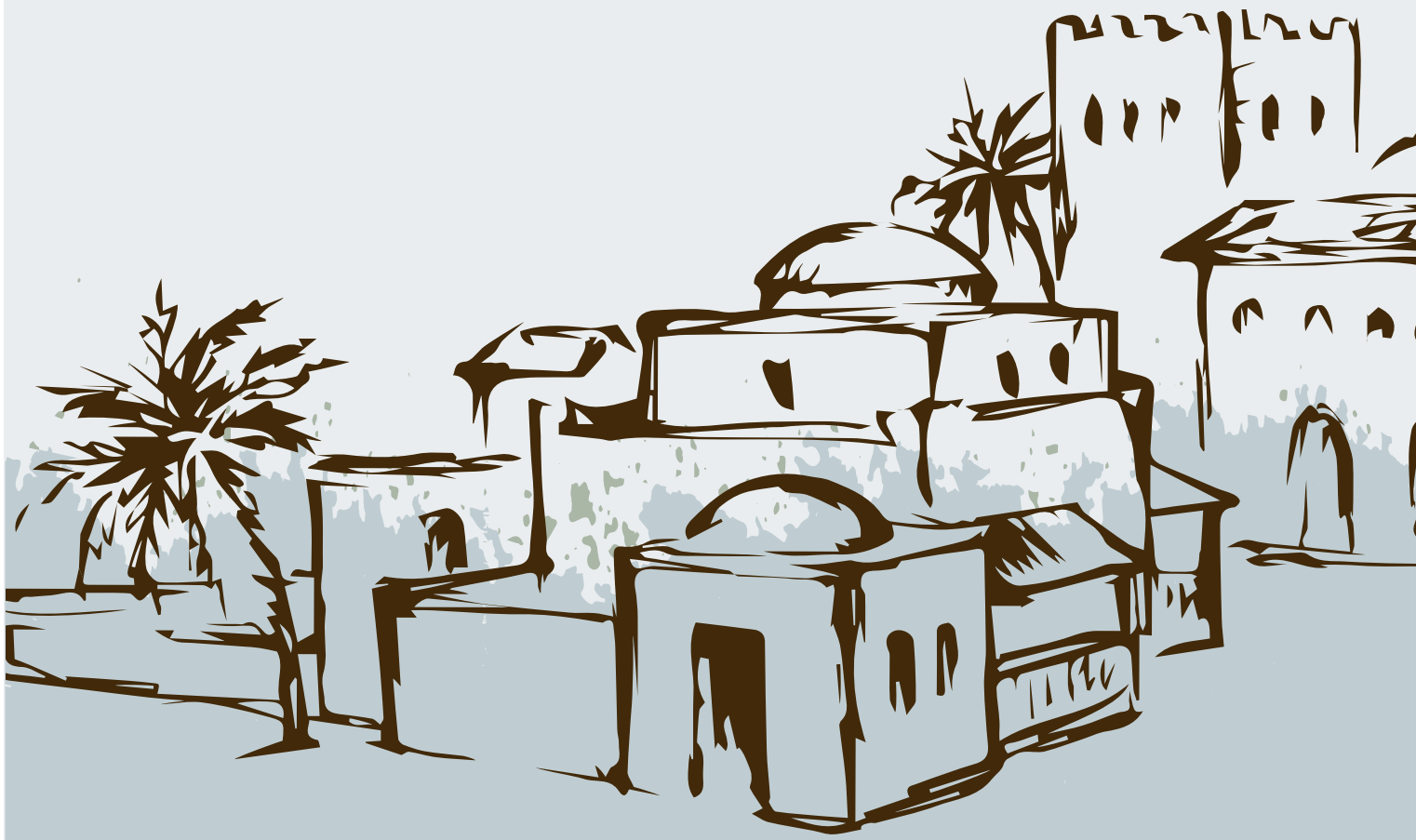


Message and Meaning



The Prophet (peace be upon him) mentions that frequent remembrance of God gives life to souls and places. A home in which God is frequently mentioned and glorified enjoys comfort, reassurance, delight and happiness. It is visited by angels who impart serenity to it. It is like a living person who is in comfort, friendly to others and whose company is enjoyed by people. A home in which God is not mentioned and glorified is desolate, having no life. People stay away from it, like they stay away from the dead. It is deserted by angels.

Dhikr, i.e. remembrance of God, means mental awareness of God's greatness and the vocalization of phrases of praise and glorification of God. In a more general meaning, it includes all good deeds such as prayer, supplication, God's glorification, recitation of the Qur'an, imparting religious knowledge, etc.





The other version related by al-Bukhari describes the person who remembers God as alive and the one who ignores this as dead. Indeed, God's remembrance makes souls alive and gives hearts reassurance. God says: 'Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of God. It is indeed in the remembrance of God that people's hearts find their comfort'. (13: 28) Indeed, God's remembrance is the nourishment of souls in the same way that food and drink are the nourishment of bodies. Therefore, a person who takes care of his physical nourishment and ignores soul nourishment is akin to animals that are useless or like the dead. Hence God says: 'Bethink yourself of your Lord humbly and with awe, and without raising your voice, in the morning and evening; and do not be negligent'. (7: 205)



Implementation

1

The use of similes and metaphors is one of the most effective ways to teach as they ensure the listeners' understanding. An idea is amplified and made clear when it is presented in a physical way so that it is understood by all.

2

It is not a condition for the validity of God's remembrance that one pays full attention and thinks of the meaning of what is being said. A Muslim may remember God when he is free or busy, saying whatever comes easy of God's glorifications. However, the best way of God's remembrance which earns the greatest reward is the one in which both mind and tongue take part.

3

Do not let your home be desolate, unfrequented by angels. Make it alive with God's remembrance and recitation of the Qur'an.

4

The one who remembers God often is alive and his home is full of goodness and blessings. The one who is careless of it is like a dead person in a grave.

5

God's remembrance gives life to hearts. No Muslim should allow his heart to be dead by abandoning it.

6

Nothing gives more enjoyment than God's remembrance. No deed is easier and no pleasure felt by heart and soul is greater.

7

It is important to keep up your remembrance of God, as it pleases the Lord and expels Satan. It also removes worry and brings happiness. It increases one's provisions and imparts dignity to one's appearance and earns God's love.

8

Dhikr, i.e. remembrance of God, is of different types. One type is general and may be said at any time and place, such as glorifying God, praising Him, declaring His oneness, supplication and recitation of the Qur'an. Another type is linked to situation and occasion, such as the glorifications and supplications said in the morning, evening and before going to sleep; and those said when leaving or entering one's home, or going to the toilet and leaving it, or putting one's clothes on or off, entering a mosque and leaving it, etc.

9

It is important to keep remembering God and glorifying Him. The one who does this is happy and content, while the one who neglects this is unhappy, hard-hearted. God says: 'How about one whose heart God has opened to Islam, and thus receives light from his Lord? Woe, then, betide those whose hearts harden at the mention of God. These are most obviously in error'. (39: 22)

