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The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra' (A)

Author (s): Abbas Azizi

Translator (s): Arifa Hudda & Saleem Bhimji

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This text aims to get the readers to learn about the history, benefits and the correct way of reciting the Tasbih of Sayyida Fatimah Az-Zahra' (A), one of the highly recommended acts after Wajib prayers.

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The composing errors are not corrected.

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' (a) is something which our elders teach their children from a very young age. Even before we are taught how to recite the Qur'an, we are taught the tasbih of Lady Az-Zahra' (a). However, just like other acts of worship, we often don't know or don't realize the true merits and significance until later in life - if ever at all - and this is also the case with this beautiful tasbih.

When we first read a small booklet on the 'Reward of the Tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' (a) written in Farsi, we were amazed at the merits which this "simple" form of remembrance of Allah (SWT) has, and felt the need to translate it into English so that others would also be able to benefit from its life-giving contents.

With the permission and assistance of Allah (SWT), we were able to translate and publish the aforementioned booklet into English, for which we thank Allah (SWT) and we ask Him to accept this humble offering from us.

Indeed, if we are able to unveil the secrets of this tasbih and recite it in our daily lives, we can not even begin to imagine what spiritual blessings we will receive! However, as with other acts of worship, one of the key ingredients which must be present is that we must perform it with sincerity and a pure heart and that we perform it with complete understanding.

We dedicate this book to the Lady of Light - Fatimah Az-Zahra' (a) - the leader of the women of all the Worlds, and pray that we can follow her example and way of life. We also dedicate this book to our living Imam, Sahib al-'Asr wal Zaman, al-Qa'im al-Muntazar (may Allah hasten his return and make us among his soldiers) - the one whose advent we are all anxiously awaiting.

We ask you to pray for us, our families and for the ability to continue serving the cause of Islam. May we all recite this tasbih with the utmost Ma'rifat and be able to benefit from the many blessings which are hidden deep within it.

Arifa Hudda & Saleem Bhimji

5th of Jumadi al-Thani, 1426 AH i 1st of June, 2006 CE

Birth anniversary of Sayyida Zaynab (a) bint 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a).

Introduction To The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra'

The Tasbih¹ of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) is:

- A gift from Allah (SWT) to the Muslim Ummah;
- An expression of and a lesson in understanding the Oneness of Allah (SWT);
- A way to remember the heart-wrenching events of the very short life of the daughter of the Prophet (S);
- The ascension (Me'raj) for a true believer;
- An adornment for our Salat;
- Better than 1,000 Rak'at of accepted Salat;
- The way to manifest the act of 'Remembering Allah (SWT) much';
- A means by which one's scale of good deeds is made heavier;
- A way of attaining the pleasure of Allah (SWT);
- A way to ensure worthiness of entering into Paradise;
- A form of dhikr (remembrance) of Allah (SWT).

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said that: *"There is no form of praise (of Allah) better than the tasbih of Fatimah because if there was, then the Prophet would have taught that to Fatimah."*

Thus, we must try to have a close connection with this tasbih and recite it at all times - especially after every Salat and before going to bed.

We must try and beautify our Salat and our sleep with the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) and must ensure that we perform this great act of remembrance of Allah (SWT) using a tasbih whose beads are made from the dirt of the grave of Imam Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a). Using the dirt from his grave helps us to remember the struggles which took place in Kerbala and assists us in keeping the culture of martyrdom alive in our hearts.

Through the use of a tasbih made from the dirt of Kerbala, in addition to the remembrance of Allah (SWT), we will also be able to shed tears (over the events which transpired in Kerbala) and with this, we will be able to develop an even greater affinity with the leader of the martyrs, Imam Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a)!

It is our wish that by the recitation of the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a), our lives in this transient world and the next life are safeguarded and that we are able to further build our abode in the next world.

'Abbas 'Azizi
Qum, Iran

Note

1. Please note that in this work and in Islamic terminology in general, the word tasbih is used to refer to both the action of the remembrance (dhikr) of Allah (SWT) as has been prescribed by Allah (SWT) and taught to us by the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) and also for the collection of beads on a string which are used to enumerate the remembrances of Allah (SWT) - the intended meaning depends on the context of how this word is used. (Tr.)

Section 1: Importance Of The Tasbih

1. What Is The Meaning Of ‘Remembering Allah Much’?

The Noble Qur’an tells us:

وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ... .

“...Those men who remember Allah much and those women who also remember Allah much...” (Surat al-Ahzab, 33:35).

Remembering Allah (SWT) in every situation and in all circumstances helps to remove the veils of negligence and inattentiveness from one’s heart and also distances the Satanic whispers from oneself.

As far as the meaning of ‘remembering Allah much’ is concerned, it has been narrated in the Islamic traditions and various commentaries of the Qur’an (in regards to the verse of the Qur’an quoted above) that this phrase has a wide scope of understanding and application to it and includes all forms of the ‘official’ adhkar¹ which the Muslims recite.

In a hadith from the Prophet of Islam (S) we read that: *“When a man wakes up (from sleep) and proceeds to wake his wife up from her sleep, and both of them perform Wudu and then recite Salat Layl (the night prayer), it is said that this man and woman remember Allah much.”*

Imam Ja’far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (‘a) has said that: *“Whoever recites the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ at night becomes included in the verse of the Qur’an which states:*

... يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

‘O’ you who have true faith! Remember Allah - a constant and frequent remembering...’ (Surat al-Ahzab, 33:41).

There are many things which can make one negligent while in the material world and truly, the arrows of the whispering devils come from every direction and the only way to fight against these distractions is by remembering Allah i much.

Some people asked the Noble Prophet (S): *“On the Day of Judgement, which of the servants will have the highest status?”* The Prophet (S) replied:

الذَّاكِرُونَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Those who remember Allah much.” (Surat al-Ahzab, 33:41).

In addition, Imam Ja’far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (‘a) has said, *“Whoever remembers Allah much, Allah will give him a place in His shadow of Mercy in Paradise.”*

From these narrations, we can deduce that remembering Allah (SWT) much has a wide range of meanings attached to it. However, the traditions show us that from these, the greatest form of remembrance of Allah (SWT) (which is the topic of this book) is that of the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (‘a) which is comprised of:

34 Times:

الله أكبر

[Allahu Akbar]

Allah is greater than what can be compared to Him.

33 Times:

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

[Alhamdulillah]

All the Praise belongs to Allah.

33 Times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

[Subhana Allah]

Glory belongs to Allah.

In yet another verse of the Qur'an, Allah (SWT) tells us:

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Except those who have true faith and perform righteous actions and remember Allah much...” (Surat al-Shu'ara, 26:227).

In regards to this verse, there is a tradition from Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) in which he has stated that: *“The meaning of ‘remembering Allah much’ is the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’, as this (tasbih) includes the glorification, praise and sanctification (of Allah).”*

2. Frequent Remembrance Of Allah (SWT)

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said:

تَسْبِيحُ فَاطِمَةَ الرَّهْءَاءِ مِنَ الذِّكْرِ الْكَثِيرِ الَّذِي قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

“The tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (peace be upon her) is from the application of remembering (Allah) much, just as Allah, the Noble and Grand, has stated that, ...and remember Allah - a frequent remembering.”

3. The Way Of The Ahlul Bayt ('A)

Imam 'Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Hadi ('a) has said, *“We the Ahlul Bayt perform ten actions before the time of sleeping: Wudu ... and we recite ‘Subhana Allah’ thirty-three times; ‘Alhamdulillah’ 33 times; and ‘Allahu Akbar’ thirty-four times.”*

4. Teaching The Tasbih To One's Children

The Noble Prophet of Islam (S) taught the best lesson to his daughter Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) - the tasbih! From the day which he taught it to her until now, millions of believers recite this tasbih after each of their daily prayers. Due to the respect of this tasbih, Allah (SWT) accepts and fulfills the legitimate desires of His servant, removes the difficulties in a person's life and grants the servant success.

In the book, Qurb al-Isnad, it has been narrated from Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) that: *“We command our children to recite the tasbih² of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ just as we command them to perform the Salat. You too (the Imam was speaking to his companion, Abu Harun) should command your children to the same since any servant who recites this (the tasbih) will be protected from all misfortunes.”*

5. Encouragement To Recite The Tasbih

The narrations from the A'immah³ ('a) in regards to the tasbihat are numerous and within them, these great personalities have instructed their followers (Shi'a) to recite the tasbih at all times.

We have a tradition from Imam Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al-Baqir ('a) which states: *"Allah has not been worshipped with anything greater than the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' which is recited after every Salat, because if there was anything else better than this, then indeed the Prophet would have granted that to his daughter, Fatimah Az-Zahra'."*

6. Advice From Imam Az-Zaman (May Allah Hasten His Return) In Regards To The Tasbihat

The great Marja', late Ayatullah al-'Uzma as-Sayyid Shahab ad-Din Mar'ashi al-Najafi Ji, who passed away in Qum over 10 years ago narrated the following incident:

"One time, during my ziyarat to al-'Askariain (the shrine of Imam 'Ali Ibn Muhammad an-Naqi ('a) and Imam Hasan Ibn 'Ali al-'Askari ('a) in Samarra) and thereafter on my way to visit the son of the 10th Imam - Sayyid Muhammad, I became lost. Due to my intense hunger and thirst, I gave up hope of living as through this ordeal, I had almost fallen unconscious. While in this state, I collapsed to the ground. All of a sudden, I opened my eyes and found my head in the lap of a magnanimous person. He gave me some water to drink, the like of which I had not ever drank in my entire life! After that, we started our journey and along the way, he shared some of his bread with me.

He then asked me, 'O' Sayyid! Where do you want to go?' I replied, 'To the Haram of Sayyid Muhammad.' He said, 'This here is the Haram of Sayyid Muhammad.' I looked up and realized that I was under the blessed dome of Sayyid Muhammad even though where I got lost was quite a distance away from the sanctuary of this son of the Imam!

During the time that I was with this great personality, he advised me to perform many recommended acts such as the recitation of the Noble Qur'an and the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a), but it did not even occur to me who this man was until he disappeared from my sight. At that time, I realized that it was the Imam of our time!"

7. The Greatness Of The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('A)

As noted, Allah (SWT) has not been praised with anything greater than the remembrance contained in the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) since if there was anything greater than this, then surely the Noble Prophet (S) would have given that as a gift to his daughter.

This is a form of remembrance of Allah (SWT) which, in the eyes of Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) is greater than 1,000 rak'at of Salat!

In addition, every servant of Allah (SWT) who holds firm and performs this remembrance is guaranteed that he shall never experience any loss or harm.

Therefore, just as parents order their children to perform the Salat, they must also abises them to perform the ta'qibat (prayers and supplications after the Salat). Even though this specific form of supplication - the tasbih - is a

mere 100 recitations, however in the scale of the Divine, it has a reward of 1,000!

This form of remembrance pushes the Satan away from a person and earns a believer the pleasure of the Creator of the Universe.

It also removes any (spiritual) heaviness which a person may have in his ears and as we are told, not a single servant of Allah i recites this remembrance after the Salat before he moves his feet from its previous position, except that Allah (SWT) forgives his sins and finds that person worthy of entering Paradise. This reward especially holds true if it is performed after Salatul Fajr and if a person completes the tasbih with saying 'La Ilaha Illa Allah' and then asks forgiveness for his sins.

With saying the tasbihat, a servant of Allah (SWT) will be placed into the ranks and raised up (on the Day of Judgement) with those who 'remember Allah (SWT) much'. Such a person will also be worthy of being among those whom Allah (SWT) Himself remembers, just as He has stated and promised:

...فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُمْ...

...Remember Me and I shall remember you... (Surat al-Baqara, 2:152).

8. The Sign Of A True Believer

In the book, Makarimul Akhlaq, it has been stated that the recitation of the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) is one of the five signs of a true believer.

Notes

1. Plural of the word Dhikr or remembrance. (Tr.)
2. Plural of tasbih. (Tr.)
3. Plural of Imam - in reference to the 12 leaders from the Ahlul Bayt. (Tr.)

Section 3: Outcome Of The Tasbih

1. Deliverance From Misfortunes

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ لَصَادِقُ يَا أَبَا هَارُونَ! إِنَّا نَأْمُرُ صِبْيَانَنَا بِتَسْبِيحِ فَاطِمَةَ سَلَامٌ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهَا كَمَا نَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَأَلْزَمَهُ فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَلْزِمُهُ عَبْدٌ فَشَقِيَ.

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon them both) said: “O’ Aba Harun! We command our youngsters to recite the tasbih of Fatimah, may the peace of Allah be upon her, just as we command them to perform the Salat. Therefore, be cautious in (performing) it, since indeed whichever servant is not attentive to it will become misfortunate.”

2. Forgiveness Of One’s Sins

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ لَصَادِقُ مَنْ سَبَّحَ تَسْبِيحَ فَاطِمَةَ لَزَهْرَاءِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَتَّيَّنَ رِجْلَيْهِ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ لَقَرِيضَةَ عَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ وَ لَبِيدًا بِالتَّكْبِيرِ.

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon them both) has said: “Anyone who, after his obligatory Salat and before he moves his feet, recites the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (peace be upon her), will have all of his sins forgiven and he should start this tasbih with ‘Allahu Akbar.’”

3. Person Becomes Worthy Of Paradise

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ لَصَادِقُ مَنْ سَبَّحَ تَسْبِيحَ فَاطِمَةَ لَزَهْرَاءِ فِي دُبُرِ لَمَكْتُوبَةٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَبْسُطَ رِجْلَيْهِ، أَوْجَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ.

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon them both) has said: “One who recites the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (peace be upon her) after the obligatory Salat, before one changes the position one is in (for the tashahhud and salam), Allah will make that person worthy of Paradise.”

4. A Gift From The Angels

Whenever one goes to bed (to prepare for sleep), one noble Angel and one Satan quickly come towards that person. The Angel says to the person, ‘Finish off your day in a good way and start off your night in a good manner too.’ However, the Satan says to him, ‘Finish off your day in sin and start off your night sinning as well!’

Thus, if a person obeys the Angel and ends his day in the remembrance of Allah (SWT) and before going to sleep, starts the night with the remembrance of Allah (SWT) by reciting the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (‘a), then that Angel will get rid of the Satan, and will protect the person until he wakes up from his sleep.

When one wakes up (in the morning), the Satan again rushes to his side and says the same thing he did the previous night, and the Angel too repeats what he said the night before. Thus, if once again, the servant remembers Allah (SWT) the way he did before he went to sleep the previous night, then again, the Angel will get rid of the Satan and Allah (SWT) will write for that person, the reward of worship for the entire night.

5. Protection From Tragedies

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said, "Two brothers went to the Prophet of Allah (S) and said, 'We want to go to Sham (Syria) for trading. Can you please advise us what we can say or do to remain safe from the dangers (which we may entail on such a long journey)?'"

The Prophet replied, 'When you go into the trading post and have recited your Salatul 'Isha and are ready to go to sleep, then recite the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' followed by Ayatul Kursi. In this way, you will remain safe from all evils until the next morning.'

On the way to Sham, some thieves began to follow them and when they entered the trading post, the thieves sent one of their slaves to see what the two people were up to - were they sleeping or awake?

When the slave came near them, he noticed they had just gotten into bed and as each of them recited the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' and Ayatul Kursi, the slave saw that two walls began to encircle the two brothers!

The slave walked around the brothers, but could see not other than the two walls surrounding them.

He returned back to the thieves and told them what he saw to which they replied, 'May Allah disgrace you! You are lying to us! Indeed, you are simply incapable (of carrying out such a simple job) and are scared!'

They themselves got up and went to look - but they too only saw two walls and nothing else!

They began to scale the walls; however, they could not hear a sound from inside the walls nor could they see anyone! Thus, they returned back to their camp.

When morning came, the thieves went to the two brothers and asked them, 'Where were you last night?' They said, 'We were right here sleeping and did not move from our places.'

The thieves told them, 'We swear by Allah that we came here but did not see anything except for two walls. Please tell us what is the story behind this?'

The two brothers said, 'We had gone to the Prophet of Allah (S) and asked him to advise us before we begin our journey. He told us to recite the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' and Ayatul Kursi (before going to sleep) and we did just as we were told.'

The thieves replied, 'Go and continue (your journey). We swear by Allah that we will not come after you. We swear that by reciting these words (the tasbihat and Ayatul Kursi) no thief will ever be able to attack you!'"

6. Being Cured By The Tasbih

A man went to Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) to complain to him about his state. Even though the Imam ('a) was speaking to him, he could not hear what the Imam ('a) was saying. The man then began to complain to the Imam ('a) of very bad ear aches to which the Imam ('a) asked him, "Why are you negligent of the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra'?"

The man questioned, "May I be sacrificed for you! What is the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra'?" The Imam ('a) replied, "Recite 'Allahu Akbar' 34 times; 'Alhamdulillah' 33 times and 'Subhana Allah' 33 times as this makes a complete 100 (remembrances).

The man stated that, “After a short period of time that I recited this tasbihat continuously, the pain in my ears went away.”¹

7. Separation From Satan

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي تَالِبٍ مَنْ سَبَّحَ تَسْبِيحَ فَاطِمَةَ ثُمَّ سَتَعَفَّرَ، عُفِرَ لَهُ وَ هِيَ مِائَةٌ
بِاللِّسَانِ وَ أَلْفٌ فِي لَمِيمَانِ وَ يَطْرُدُ لَشَيْطَانَ وَ يَرْضَى لِرَحْمَنِ.

Imam Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali al-Baqir (peace be upon them both) has said, “One who recites the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (peace be upon her) and after that asks for forgiveness (for his sins) will be forgiven (by Allah). This tasbih on the tongue is (the recitation of the dhikr) 100 times, but as for the weight in the scale (of deeds), it is counted as 1,000 (good deeds); and (in addition, this tasbih) will distance Satan from one’s self and makes ‘The Beneficent’ (Allah) pleased (with that person).”

Note

1. Tasbihat of Fatima Zahra, Page 27.

Section 4: Etiquette Of The Tasbih

1. Reciting The Dhikr In The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('A) Without A Gap

It has been narrated from Muhammad Ibn Ja'far as-Sadiq (the son of Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a)) that:

إِنَّهُ كَانَ يُسَبِّحُ فَاطِمَةَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا فَيَصِلُهُ وَلَا يَقْطَعُهُ.

“Surely, he (Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a)) used to perform the tasbih of Fatimah, may Allah send His prayers upon her, in a continuous manner and would not stop or pause in the middle of it.”¹

2. Method Of Reciting The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('A)

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said: “Begin the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' with a Takbir (saying of 'Allahu Akbar') and say this 34 times; then praise Allah 33 times by saying 'Alhamdulillah' and close it off with the glorification of Allah by saying 'Subhana Allah' 33 times.”

3. Crying During The Tasbih

Shaykh Qasim 'Ali Ibn Hilal Jazairi used to take over one hour to recite the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) since every time he said one of the dhikr which is contained in the tasbih, he would be engulfed in tears and grief.

Note

1. Jami' Ayat wa Ahadith Salat, Volume 2, Page 54.

Section 5: Type Of Tasbih

1. The Tasbih That Fatimah ('A) Used

It has been narrated in the famous book, Makarimul Akhlaq, that Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) used to have a tasbih which was made of wool thread and had 100 knots tied in it and she used to perform the dhikr of Allah (SWT) with it. When Hamzah - the uncle of the Prophet (S) - was martyred in the battle of Uhud, the dirt from his grave was used to make the first beads that were used in the tasbih.

When Imam Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a) was martyred, people took the dirt from around the grave of the Imam ('a) to make the tasbih beads, since it had been narrated that there are great merits and blessings in the dirt around the grave of Imam al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a).

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said, *“The (first) tasbih was made of blue thread and had 34 beads on it and that was the tasbih of our mother Fatimah Az-Zahra'. Then when Hamzah was killed, the tasbih was formed using the dirt of his grave, and with that after every Salat, the tasbih was recited (by all).”*

2. Tasbih Made With The Turbah (Dirt) Of The Grave Of Imam Husayn ('A)

إِنَّ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ كَانَتْ مَسْبُحَتُهَا مِنْ خُيُوطِ صُوفٍ مَفْتَلٍ عَلَيْهِ عَدَدَ التَّكْبِيرَاتِ فَكَانَتْ تُدِيرُهَا بِيَدِهَا تُكَبِّرُ وَ تُسَبِّحُ إِلَى أَنْ قُتِلَ حَمْزَةُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فَاسْتَعْمَلَتْ تُرْبَتَهُ وَ عَمَلَتْ التَّسَابِيحَ فَاسْتَعْمَلَهَا النَّاسُ.

“The tasbih of Fatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, was a piece of woollen string upon which, in the number of times that the takbir was to be said were the same number of knots and she used to spin this around her hand and mention the greatness of and glorification of Allah, until the time when Hamza became a martyr. After this, she made beads for the tasbih out of the dirt of his grave and from that day on, the making of a tasbih in this fashion (from the dirt of the Earth) became common among the people.”

3. The Worth Of Using A Tasbih Made From Dirt Around The Grave Of Imam Husayn ('A)

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) was asked a question in relation to making the tasbih with the dirt of two particular places and which one was better - the dirt around the grave of Hamza or (from the grave of) Imam Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a)? The Imam ('a) replied, *“As for the tasbih whose beads are made from the dirt of Imam Husayn's grave, before one does tasbih with it, the beads itself perform the tasbih!”*

4. Signs Of A Shi'a

It has been narrated from the book, Rawdhatul Wai'dhin, that Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far al-Kadhim ('a) has been quoted as saying: *“Our Shi'a are not needless from four things:*

1. The mohr/turbah (clay tablet) upon which they recite their Salat (perform the sajdah on);

2. The ring which they wear on their (right) hand;
3. The toothbrush (miswak) which they use to brush their teeth with (before the Salat);
4. A tasbih of 33 beads made from the dirt around the grave of Imam Husayn Ibn 'Ali ('a). Every time they do the dhikr with it, Allah writes forty thawab (rewards) for each bead used. If one recites the tasbih in a state of negligence (without full concentration or attentiveness to the tasbih and the meaning of the dhikr) then Allah writes twenty rewards for that person."

5. The Tasbih Speaks The Truth

أَلْسُجُودٌ عَلَى طِينِ قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ يُنَوِّرُ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ السَّابِعَةِ وَ مَنْ كَانَتْ مَعَهُ سَبْحَةٌ مِنْ طِينِ قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ كُتِبَ مُسَبِّحاً وَ إِنْ لَمْ يُسَبِّحْ بِهَا.

"Prostrating on the dirt from the grave of Husayn (peace be upon him) radiates Celestial Light up to the seventh Earth. The person who has a tasbih which is made from the dirt of the grave of Husayn (peace be upon him) in his possession will be counted as being one who glorifies Allah, even if he is not doing the act of tasbih with the beads!"

6. The Way Of Life Of Imam 'Ali Ibn Al-Husayn As-Sajjad ('A)

It has been narrated that when Imam 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn Zaynul 'Abidin ('a) was taken to the presence of Yazid, he (Yazid) decided to kill him. However, before this, Yazid began to speak to Imam as-Sajjad ('a) hoping that perhaps the Imam ('a) would say something which could give Yazid a reason to kill him. However, Imam as-Sajjad ('a) merely replied to whatever Yazid asked from him and said nothing more!

In the hand of the Imam was a small tasbih which the Imam was turning with his fingers, while speaking to Yazid. At one point in his conversation, Yazid, may he be distanced from Allah's mercy, rebuked, 'I am speaking to you and you are replying to me while you are turning a tasbih with your fingers - how is it that you see such an act (of talking to me and performing the remembrance of Allah) as being appropriate?'

The Imam ('a) replied to him, 'My father informed me that he heard my grandfather ('a) say that when he would recite Salatul Fajr, before he would move from his spot, he would not say a single thing (after the Salat was complete) until he took the tasbih in his hand and read the following supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَصْبَحْتُ وَأُسَبِّحُكَ وَ أُحْمَدُكَ وَ أَهْلِلُكَ وَ أَكْبِرُكَ وَ أُجَدِّدُكَ بِعَدَدِ مَا أُدِيرُ بِهِ سُبْحَتِي.

'O' Allah! Surely I have entered into the morning in a state of Glorifying You, Praising You, Singing Your Greatness, Extolling You, and Acclaiming You in the number of beads which I have in my tasbih.'

He would then take the tasbih in his hands and turn it and would then speak whatever he wanted to say (in the day) without saying any form of dhikr or tasbih. He went on to say that this has already been counted for him (the

remembrance of Allah) and would result in his protection and safety until he goes to bed.

At night, he would sit on his bed and repeat the above supplication and would then place his tasbih under his pillow. From that time until he woke up from his sleep, his entire period of sleep was counted as one engaged in dhikr and tasbih.

Therefore, I am merely following in the steps of my grandfather and thus, what I am doing (in your presence) is nothing but what he used to do.'

Many times, Yazid, may Allah not shower His Mercy upon him, told the Imam ('a) that he (the Imam ('a)) had been victorious over him and finally in the end, he decided not to kill the Imam ('a). Instead, he ordered that the Imam ('a) be freed.

7. A Guide For The Angels

There is a narration which states that: *“Whenever the Hurul ‘Ain (the heavenly individuals which await the believers) see Angels who are going towards the Earth for some work, they see that they use the tasbih which has been made with the dirt of the grave of Imam Husayn to find their way around the Earth.”*

Section 6: Times To Recite The Tasbih

A. Tasbih After Every Salat

1. Greater Than 1,000 Rak'at Of Salat

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said:

تَسْبِيحُ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ فِي دُبُرِ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ أَلْفِ رَكْعَةٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ.

“The tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ after every Salat (as a part of the ta’qib - supplications after the prayers) is dearer to me than the performance of 1,000 rak’at of Salat everyday.”

2. Deserving Of Forgiveness

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said:

مَنْ سَبَّحَ اللَّهَ فِي دُبُرِ الْفَرِيضَةِ تَسْبِيحَ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ مِائَةً مَرَّةً وَ اتَّبَعَهَا بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ.

“Allah will forgive that person who praises Him after the obligatory Salat through the recitation of the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ (peace be upon her) which is 100 dhikr and ends it off with ‘La Ilaha Illa Allah’.”

3. Salat Being Returned Back To Its Owner

‘Allamah Muqarram states the following: *“In regards to the benefits of this tasbih, know that Allah (SWT) has the right to return the Salat to a person who performed it without it being accepted if he performed the complete Salat with all of the conditions and parts, but does not recite the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ ('a) In this regard, the A’immah ('a) have even stated that the Salat which is devoid of this tasbih is returned back to the owner! Therefore, worship which is accompanied by the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra’ ('a) is like a body which is adorned with beautiful clothing.”*

B. Tasbih At The Time Of Going To Sleep

1. Better Than A Servant

إِنَّ فَاطِمَةَ أَتَتْ النَّبِيَّ تَسْأَلُهُ خَادِمًا فَقَالَ: أَلَا أُحْبِرُكَ مَا هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنْهُ؟ تُسَبِّحِينَ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثًا وَ ثَلَاثِينَ وَ تُكَبِّرِينَ اللَّهَ أَرْبَعًا وَ ثَلَاثِينَ.

Fatimah (peace be upon her) went to the Prophet (prayers of Allah be upon him and his family) and asked him for a servant. The Prophet said to her, *“Shall I not inform you of something which is better for you than a servant? Recite: ‘Subhana Allah’ 33 times; ‘Alhamdulillah’ 33 times and ‘Allahu Akbar’ 34 times.”*

2. Tasbih At The Time Of Going To Sleep

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said:

مَنْ بَاتَ عَلَى تَسْبِيحِ فَاطِمَةَ كَانَ مِنَ الذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَ الذَّاكِرَاتِ

“One who starts the night with the tasbih of Fatimah (peace be upon her), (recites it before going to sleep) will be counted among those men and women who remember Allah much.”

3. Reciting The Tasbih Before One Goes To Sleep

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said:

تَسْبِيحُ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ إِذَا أَخَذْتَ مَضْجَعَكَ فَكَبِّرِ اللَّهَ أَرْبَعًا وَ ثَلَاثِينَ وَ اِحْمَدُهُ ثَلَاثًا وَ ثَلَاثِينَ
وَ سَبِّحْهُ ثَلَاثًا وَ ثَلَاثِينَ وَ تَقْرَأْ آيَةَ الْكُرْسِيِّ وَ الْمُعَوِّذَتَيْنِ وَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ الصَّافَّاتِ وَ
عَشْرًا مِنْ آخِرِهَا.

“When you prepare to go to bed, then perform the tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' (peace be upon her) by praising Allah (reciting 'Allahu Akbar') 34 times; glorifying Him (saying 'Alhamdulillah') 33 times, and sanctifying Him (saying 'Subhana Allah') 33 times followed by Ayatul Kursi once, the Ma'udhtain (Surat al-Falaq and Surat an-Nas) once each, followed by the first ten verses and the last ten verses of Surat as-Saffat.”

Section 7: Meaning Of The Dhikr

1. The Lofty Meaning Of The Tasbih Of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('A)

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said that, “*The tasbih of Fatimah Az-Zahra' ('a) includes (in its' meanings):*”

- *Pure is the Possessor of Glory who is the Proud and Exalted;*
- *Pure is the Possessor of Nobility who has a lofty station and grand status;*
- *Pure is the Possessor of the Dominion who has Honour and Precedence;*
- *Pure is the Possessor of Virtue and Beauty;*
- *Pure is the One who has decorated Himself with the celestial light (an-Nur), immensity and dignity;*
- *Pure is the One who is able to see the imprints of the ant on a clean, transparent stone, and who can see the flying of the birds on the top of the trees and upon the delicate flowers.”*

2. The Meaning of ‘Allah is the Greatest’ - Allahu Akbar [الله أكبر]

- Allah is superior and greater than what we can think or suppose of Him;
- Allah is greater than everything in existence;
- Allah is superior to all creations which can be sensed, which our intelligence can discern, and all that which is within the world and the universe.

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) has said, “*At the time when you say the takbir [saying of Allahu Akbar] to start your Salat, everything else in existence should seem small and trivial in your sight except for Him.”*”

By saying the phrase, ‘Allahu Akbar’, the greatness of Allah is increased within ourselves and we are able to reach the loftiest of stations.

If at anytime during the course of our Salat, we are able to taste and experience the sweetness and purity of our intimate whispers (munajat) to Allah (SWT), then we should know that our takbir has been accepted and that it has indeed confirmed (the status of) Allah, the Most High.

The words, ‘Allahu Akbar’, are the same words which a new born Muslim child hears for the first time in the adhan and iqamah; and are also the last words which a person will hear when one dies in the talqin [the words recited to the deceased in which the articles of faith are read to him].

The words, ‘Allahu Akbar’, are the first and only dhikr in the Salat which are obligatory and a part of the rukn (foundation) of the Salat.

3. The Meaning of ‘All Praise Belongs to Allah’ - Alhamdulillah [أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ]

This line means that all Praise and Glory are reserved for Allah (SWT) alone - the One who nurtures the entire universe.

By saying this line, the feeling of thanking Him is brought to life within our soul. Speaking this dhikr removes any sort of negligence or inattention we may have within us and causes us to remember the blessings which we

have been given and we are able to take notice and remind ourselves of the Lordship of Allah (SWT).

In the Qur'an, there are almost one hundred names mentioned for Allah (SWT), however the name 'Allah' is the most comprehensive of all of these.

In the word, al-Hamd, in addition to the meaning of praise and glory belonging solely to Allah (SWT), there is also a hidden meaning of true and sincere worship.

4. The Meaning of 'Sanctified is Allah' - Subhana Allah

[سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ]

Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) was once asked about the meaning of this phrase to which he replied: *"It means that He is Pure and transcends all things which can be thought about Him."*

5. Words Of The Prophet (S)

The Noble Prophet (S) was asked by Talha Ibn 'Abdullah about the meaning of 'Subhana Allah' and the Prophet (S) replied: *"It means to testify that Allah transcends all things which are unworthy of being thought (about Him)."*

6. Reward Of The Tasbih

The Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) has stated that, *"All of the Angels send prayers and salutations upon a person who says 'Subhana Allah' one time and the reward for this glorification of Allah is not known to anyone except Allah."*

In the book, 'Uddatul Da'i, it has been mentioned that Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq ('a) said: *"The army of Prophet Sulayman was made up of birds whose number covered the distance of 624 square kilometres; wild beasts whose number covered the total area of 156 square kilometres; and human beings whose number covered a total of 31.2 square kilometres. The Jinn had woven a carpet of gold and pure silk for Sulayman which measured 12.48 square kilometres and placed a mimbar (pulpit) upon the carpet for Sulayman to sit on.*

Around the mimbar - which was made of gold and silver - there were many other chairs of gold and silver where various other prophets were sitting on.

There were birds which were flying above Sulayman with their wings stretched out, touching one another, so that the rays of the sun would not shine on the head of Sulayman. In addition, Allah also gave Sulayman the power to control the wind which enabled his carpet to go wherever he wished for it to go. It was upon this carpet that he travelled for two straight months, just as Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عُدُوها شَهْرًا وَرَوَاحُها شَهْرًا

"And (We made) the wind (subservient) to Sulayman, which made a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening." (Surah Saba, 34:12).

One day, the wind was carrying the grand and noble carpet of Sulayman; and on the ground, there was a peasant who was standing in his fields, who

looked up and said, “Glory be to Allah [Subhana Allah]! What a great kingdom Allah has given to the son of Dawud!”

The wind carried the words of the farmer to the ears of Sulayman and immediately, Sulayman ordered the rug to land on the ground. The prophet of Allah Sulayman went to the farmer and said to him:

“One glorification which a servant does (in praise of Allah) and that Allah accepts is better than all that which has been given to the family of Dawud!”

In another narration, it has been mentioned that saying one ‘Subhana Allah’ is better than giving a mountain of silver as charity in the way of Allah (SWT).

In summary, this ‘Subhana Allah’ has many benefits and merits attached to it which are mentioned in the ahadith¹.

7. Greetings Of The Angels

In reply to a question which was asked to him about the meaning of ‘Subhana Allah’, the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) replied that it meant: “Allah is Great and of high status, the Possessor of nobility and greatness who is free from all defects and from all those things which the polytheists may say about Him. Anytime a servant of Allah says this phrase, all of the Angels immediately send prayers and salutations upon that person.”²

8. Benefits Of The Tasbih Of Subhana Allah [سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ]

In the book, al-Amali of Shaykh Saduq, it has been narrated from Imam Ja’far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (‘a) that he said, “Allah will remove seventy types of difficulties from a person who says ‘Subhana Allah’ thirty times every day - the most minimum of these difficulties is poverty. The second benefit is that the person will be saved from grief, sorrow and a fatal death, just as we see that the reason for the safety of Prophet Yunus when he was in the belly of the whale was because of him reciting:

سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“Glory be to you (Allah), surely I was from amongst those who were unjust (to themselves).” (Surat al-Anbiya, 21:87).

Due to this, Allah (SWT) saved him, just as He has said:

...فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمِّ

“Thus did We answer his prayer and We saved him from grief...” (Surat al-Anbiya, 21:88).

The Imam (‘a) then said:

فَلَوْ لَأَنَّكَ كَانَتْ مِنْ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ لَلَيْتَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ.

“Thus had he (Yunus) not been one of those who glorified (Allah), then surely he would have remained in the stomach of the fish until the Day of Resurrection (so it is through his glorification that he was saved from grief and sorrow).”

9. A Tree In Paradise

In another narration it has been mentioned that if a person says 'Subhana Allah' then a tree is planted for him in Paradise and when he says 'Wal Hamdulillah' then another tree is planted for him in Paradise.

May Allah (SWT) give us all the tawfiq to recite this great tasbih with the understanding that it deserves.

Notes

1. Thamarat ul-Hayat, Volume 2, Page 720 and 721.
2. Mizan al-Hikmah, Volume 5, Page 2363.

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