

Recite! Recite! Recite!

Dear Moslem, Allah commands and invites you to recite and recite and recite. You are told that Allah loves your recitation, and the more you do, the more Allah will reward you. But does this really reflect the heart and mind and will of the Almighty God? Does this not make a mockery of God, both in his holiness and in his love and care for his creation, and also make a mockery of you who are made in the image of God?!

The recitation that is commanded of you is of course the 5 daily prayers. Here you are required to recite various structured prayers (Rakats).

Your Hadith tell you the supposed value of reciting these prayers:

"He who observed the two cool prayers would enter Paradise." ([Sahih Muslim 635a](#))

"Whoever leaves the Asr prayer, all his deeds will be annulled." ([Sahih al-Bukhari 553](#))

"The five prayers, and one Friday prayer to the next, are expiations for whatever [sins] fall between them." ([Sahih Muslim 233b](#))

Dear Moslem, you are told how bad it will be for you if you neglect to recite the 5 daily prayers at their due time, and how good it will be for you if you do recite them. Your recitation will pay for your sins and bring you into paradise, but if you don't recite the prayers the value of your good deeds will be annulled! The pressure is on you to recite and recite and recite, every day, the 5 daily prayers.

But wait, dear Moslem, that's not all the reciting to be done! There's lot more than can be done that's not obligatory, but which you are directed to do, and which supposedly will bring all sorts of benefits and rewards. There are 12 further prayer sections (Rakats) that you can recite on your own before and

after the obligatory communal prayers. These further 12 prayer sections are meant to create a 'protective shield' around the 5 obligatory prayers, and will bring great rewards, so you are told. Mohammad promised a house in Paradise for anyone who consistently prayed / recited the 12 specific prayer sections daily (in addition to the 5 obligatory communal prayer times).

But wait, dear Moslem, there is even more reciting in front of you; lot's more!

Abu Huraira reported that Fatima came to Allah's Apostle and asked for a servant and told him of the hardship of household work. He said:

You would not be able to get a servant from us. May I not direct you to what is better than the servant for you? Recite Subhaana Allah thirty-three times, al- Hamdu li-Allah thirty-three times and Allah-o-Akbar thirty-four times as you go to bed. ([Sahih Muslim book 48](#))

Dear Moslem, so when you come to Allah seeking help in dealing with difficult burdens, Allah will lay even more burden on you, directing you to recite again and again (100 times) certain set words! Really?! Is this in any helpful way addressing your need and your burden?

Al-Bara' b. 'Azib reported that Allah's, Messenger said:

When you go to bed, perform ablution as is done for prayer; then lie down on the right side and recite:" O Allah, I turn my face towards Thee and entrust my affair to Thee. I retreat unto Thee for protection with hope in Thee and fear of Thee. There is no resort and no deliverer (from hardship) but Thou only. I affirm my faith in Thine books which Thou revealed and in Thine Apostles whom Thou sent." Make this as the last word of yours (when you go to sleep) and in case you die during that night, you would die upon Fitra (upon Islam). And as I repeated these words in order to commit them to memory, I said:" I affirm my faith in Thy Messenger (Rasul) whom Thou sent." He said: Say:" I affirm my faith in the Apostle (Nabi) whom Thou sent." ([Sahih Muslim Bk 48, Hadith 75](#))

Dear Moslem, so when you say these words you will be assured that if you die during the night, you die as one on the right path, orientated toward the truth. But

is this not treating words like magic? Surely, it is not words that count, but your heart? If your heart is right with God; if you and God have made peace; then you are safe with him and don't need to recite certain words before sleep.

Khaula bint Hakim Sulamiyya reported:

I heard Allah's Messenger as saying: When any one of you stays at a place, he should say:" I seek refuge in the Perfect Word of Allah from the evil of that He created." Nothing would then do him any harm until he moves from that place. Abu Huraira reported that a person came to Allah's Messenger and said:" Allah's Messenger, I was stung by a scorpion during the night. Thereupon he said: Had you recited these words in the evening:" I seek refuge in the Perfect Word of Allah from the evil of what He created," it would not have done any harm to you. ([Sahih Muslim Book 48, Hadith 73](#))

Dear Moslem, again, is this not using words as magic? Is this not Allah encouraging you to engage in magical thinking, and so believe that certain words contain power to protect you from harm. Is this not a continuation of old tribal superstitions where words and amulets were used to ward off threat and danger!

Mus'ab b. Sa'd reported that his father told him that he had been in the company of Allah's Messenger that he said:

Is one amongst you powerless to get one thousand virtues every day. Amongst those who had been sitting there, one asked: How one amongst us can get one thousand virtues every day? He said: Recite:" Exalted is Allah (He is free from imperfection) one hundred times for (by reciting them) one thousand virtues are recorded (to your credit) and one thousand vices are blotted out. ([Sahih Muslim Book 48, Hadith 47](#))

Dear Moslem, you are told it is so easy to accumulate virtues in Allah's sight. You don't need to follow the long hard road of personal growth, endlessly grappling and wrestling with all the ungodly forces at work in you – the selfishness, the lust, the pride. No, you can just apply yourself to reciting again and again and again how exalted Allah is. Allah will multiply each recitation 10 times, such that having made the recitation 100 times, 1000 virtues will be credited to you. Don't worry Moslem, if you are a bit light on with

your good works, if you've been bad even, then you can make up for this by reciting ... and reciting ... and reciting.

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

He who uttered these words:" There is no god but Allah, the One, having no partner with Him. Sovereignty belongs to Him and all the praise is due to Him, and He is Potent over everything" one hundred times every day there is a reward of emancipating ten slaves for him, and there are recorded hundred virtues to his credit, and hundred vices are blotted out from his scroll, and that is a safeguard for him against the Satan on that day till evening and no one brings anything more excellent than this, except one who has done more than this (who utters these words more than one hundred times and does more good acts) and he who utters:" Exalted is Allah (He is free from imperfection), and all praise is due to Him," one hundred times a day, his sins are obliterated even if they are equal to the extent of the foam of the ocean. (*Sahih Muslim Bk 48, Hadith 38*)

Dear Moslem, you are told how amazing recitation is for you! Through recitation you can emancipate slaves, be credited with virtues, have vices wiped out, and be kept safe from Satan. Furthermore, if you add another 100 recitations of a different wording on top of the original 100 recitations (that's a lot of recitation), your sins will be obliterated even if the sin has been huge in extant. Dear Moslem, you don't need to address your sins. You don't need to grieve over your sins. You don't need to face your own depravity and ungodliness. No, just recite and recite and recite, and your sins will be wiped away. Dear Moslem, is your Allah not concerned about your lack of holiness? Are your sins so inconsequential to your Allah that he will just wipe them away on the basis of a few recitations?

Dear Moslem, if you were to take all these commands and instructions of Mohammad / Allah seriously you would be spending a lot of your day repetitively reciting all sorts of set words and prayers, believing you were following a pathway into the presence and blessing of God. It needs to be said that this recitation pathway is a construction of the devil and a mockery of the true God. The devil laughs at what he has

deceived you into believing and doing. He demeans God, and also demeans you, because you are made in the image of God for a depth and quality of life that is not expressed by reciting and reciting and reciting.

God is holy and his holy wrath is not about to be appeased by the endless repetitious recitation of certain words and prayers. God has provided the escape from his holy wrath. That escape is through his Son, Jesus Christ, who bore the penalty for all our sin on the cross, because there was no way we could pay for our sin; not by any good works and certainly not by reciting certain words over and over again.

God is holy and he does not bring us into holiness in his presence by training us to recite words, but by working on our hearts to turn us away from deep seated sin within.

God is holy and the calling he puts on our lives is a holy calling, one in which we live our lives for his glory, discovering and growing into who he made us to be, as people made in his image.

God is love, and he does not protect and care for us by getting us to recite words (and treat those words as magic), but by showing real tangible care through changing the circumstances in our lives, and not least through the love of others.

Dear Moslem, in all your reciting you are living a delusion, and are being made a fool of by the devil. Come to Jesus in repentance and faith. Put your trust in him. Carry the beautiful words of the truth of his love and grace in your hearts. Remind yourself of them, and speak them out to others.

'If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.'
Romans 10:9



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