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First, second, fourth and fifth questions from Fatwa No. 948

**Q 1: Some Sufis say that Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) is better than the obligatory Salah. Allah says: ﴿ and the remembering (praising) of (you by) Allâh (in front of the angels) is greater ﴾ Is Dhikr of Allah better than Salah as they say?**

**A:** Allah orders us to offer Dhikr. Allah (may He be Exalted) says: ﴿ O you who believe! Remember Allâh with much remembrance. ﴾ ﴿ And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon [the early morning (Fajr) and 'Asr prayers]. ﴾ He (may He be Exalted) points out that hearts receive tranquility and rest by remembering Him. He says: ﴿ verily, in the remembrance of Allâh do hearts find rest. ﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned that he who remembers Allah in private and his eyes shed tears is among the seven people whom Allah will give protection by his shade on the Day when there will be no shade except with Him. ﴿ The prophet (peace be upon him) also pointed out the similitude of he who remembers his Lord and he who does not remember Him as like that of the living and the dead. The life and tranquility of the hearts and the rest and purity of the souls are in the Dhikr of Allah. Also, its reward will be great with Allah. ﴿

There is no doubt that Salah contains the best kinds of Dhikr such as reciting Qur'an,

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Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"), Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]") and the Shahadatayn (two Testimonys of Faith). The preference of the words of Allah over the words of His servants is similar to the preference of Allah over mankind. The best words said by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and the prophets before him is "There is no deity but Allah". ﴿ All these Adhkar (remembrance of Allah) are included in Salah. Salah also contains Ruku` (bowing) and prostration. The closest a servant comes to his Lord is while he is prostrating himself. Therefore, saying that Dhikr outside Salah is better than Salah is like saying that something is better than itself. It may also as giving preference to something over what is better than that which is invalid.

The meaning of the saying of Allah (may He be Exalted): ﴿ and perform As-Salât (Iqamât-as-Salât). Verily, As-Salât (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahshâ' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed) and the remembering (praising) of (you by) Allâh (in front of the angels) is greater indeed [than your remembering (praising) of Allâh in prayers]. ﴾ is the obligatory Salahs in their due times as they were prescribed by Allah and pointed out by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) through his sayings and deeds. If Muslims perform Salah as it was prescribed, it will prevent them from

committing evil sins and Allah will protect them by its virtue, from doing undesirable things. Allah's mentioning of them when they offer Dhikr is greater in reward and estimation. Allah (may He be Exalted) says: ﴿ [Therefore remember Me \(by praying, glorifying\), I will remember you](#) ﴾ Ibn Jarir chose this meaning in his exegesis of the Qur'an. A group of interpreters of the Qur'an agreed with him relying on what was said by many of the Companions and the second generation of the Muslim Ummah (nation) in this regard. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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