The Angels of Dhikr [1]

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Yet another type are the traveling Angels who seek gatherings of *dhikr*. It is related that Abū Hurayra ﷺ said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> Allah Almighty has Angels who roam about seeking the people of *dhikr*. When they find a group doing *dhikr* of Allah, they call to one another, 'Come to that which you have been seeking!' And they beat their wings and fly up to the nearest heaven. Then their Lord questions them – and He knows better – 'What do my slaves say?' They say, 'They glorify and proclaim You great, praise you and magnify You.' Then He says, 'Have they seen Me?' Then they say, 'No, by Allah, they have not seen You.' Then He says, 'And how would it be if they did see Me?' They say, 'If they did see You, they would be even stronger in worshipping You, stronger in glorifying You, and stronger in magnifying You.' He says, 'And what do they ask of Me?' They say, 'They ask You for the Garden.' He says, 'And have they seen it?' They say, 'No, by Allah, they have not seen it.' He says, 'Then how would it be if they had seen it?' They say, 'If they had seen it, they would be all the stronger in their striving for it, stronger in their seeking it, and stronger in their desire for it.' He says, 'Then from what do they seek deliverance?' They say, 'From the Fire.' He says, 'Then how would it be if they saw it?' They say, 'If they saw it, they would be stronger in their flight from it and stronger in their fear of it.' He says, 'I call you to witness that I have forgiven them.' One of the Angels says, 'Among them is so-and-so, and he is not one of them. He has only come for something which he needs.' He said, 'They are companions of whom it can be said that no one who is their companion will be wretched.' (al-Bukhārī & Muslim)

Ibn Hajar said in the *Fath al-Bārī*,

> This Hadīth shows the excellence of gatherings of *dhikr* and those who do *dhikr*, and the excellence of people gathering together for that reason, as well as the fact that anyone who sits with them is included along with them in all that Allah Almightry bestows on them to honour them, even if he does not participate with them in the *dhikr* itself. It also shows the love and concern of the Angels

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for the tribe of Adam. It also contains the fact that the questioner comes to the One who asks even though who asks even though He has better knowledge of the one He asks about than the one who is asked. This is in order to show His concern for those He asks about, to praise their ability and to proclaim the nobility of their station.

"It is said that another of the features of Allah's asking the Angels about the people of *dhikr* is to call attention to what they said when they said, 'Why place on it one who will corrupt it and shed blood when we glorify Your praise and call You holy?' (2:30) So it is as if He were saying to them, 'Look at the glorification and proclamation of Your holiness that comes from them in spite of the appetites and whisperings of Shaytān which overpower them. See how they deal with that and yet resemble you in respect of glorification and holy praise.'

"It is said that also taken from this Hadīth is that *dhikr* of the tribe of Adam is more sublime and nobler than that of the Angels since those descended from Adam manage to do *dhikr* in spite of the many preoccupations they have and the transactions they are involved in, while none of that is the case where the Angels are concerned.