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## 3) Inhabit your Heart with God's Remembrance

Remembering God is emphasized both in the Holy Qur'an and Islamic traditions 1 to the degree that it is considered more important than the prayer 2 itself. It is considered the most favorable act. 3

In the Qur'an and tradition a lot of benefits are enumerated for God's remembrance. Among them are the following:

(i) God's remembrance is a comfort for hearts:

"Those who believe and whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah; now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest." 4

- (ii) Allah's remembrance takes away any mental disturbances and forces one to perform good deeds both in the private and in public and keeps him from evil-doing and sins.
- (iii) Allah's remembrance keeps man away from disunion and Satan's temptations. "God's remembrance is a believer's capital and its benefit is protection against the Satan."

On the other hand, stopping God's remembrance and forgetting Him entails the following consequences:

i. Turning away from God's remembrance results in one's life becoming straitened:

"And whoever turns away from my remembrance, his shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise him on the day of resurrection, blind".5

ii. Anybody who forgets God's remembrance will be the Satan's companion.

"And whoever turns himself away from the remembrance of the Beneficent God, We appoint for him a Shaitan, so he becomes his associate".6

**iii.** Anybody who forgets Allah's remembrance shall be subjected to forgetting his own identity. Such a person will definitely go against man's perfection:

"And be not like those who forsook Allah's so He made them forsake their own souls".7

And in Sura al-Tawbah Allah has stated:

"They have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them."8

## **Factors For And Against God's Remembrance**

In the Holy Qur'an and Islamic Tradition there are mention of those factors which either make God's remembrance easy or make it difficult:

**a.** There are some God-wary persons whose appearances make one remember God. Regarding this, the Great Prophet has stated:

"The best of you are those looking at whom reminds you of God, whose speech increases your knowledge and whose actions make you desire the Hereafter".9

**b.** The Holy Qur'an and its constructive verses is a good factor to remember God:

"Surely this is a reminder, then let him who will, take the way to his Lord". 10

**c.** The Prophets, too, are good reminders of Allah:

"Therefore do remind, for you are only a reminder."11

**d.** A Survey of the lives of the great men in the past, too, is a factor to remember Allah.

"And how many a generation did we destroy before them who were mightier in prowess than they, so they went about and about in the lands. Is there a place of refuge? Most surely there is a reminder in this for him who has a heart or he gives ear and is a witness. 12

e. God's prayer is also a factor to remember God.

"Keep up prayer for My remembrance" 13

But there are factors which hinder Allah's remembrance: Among them are the following:

**a.** A liking for the transitory appearances of the world:

"Let not your wealth or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah". 14

**b.** Far-fetched and unattainable hopes:

"That hope may beguile them". 15

**c.** Shaitan (Satan) is also one of the factors which make us forget God:

"Shaitan has gained mastery over them, so he has made them forget the remembrance of Allah". 16

**d.** Committing sins and following one's desires are also among the factors that make us forget God:

"Among sins, there is no sin worse than following one's desires. Therefore, do not obey them since they will divert you from the remembrance of God." 17

The Great Prophet, regarding this, has stated: "A person who obeys God definitely remembers God, although his prayers and fasting and his reading of Qur'an might be little. Anybody who commits sins has definitely forgotten God although his prayers and fasting and his reciting of the Qur'an might be a lot.18

## The Reality Behind God's Remembrance

At the end of this discussion, it is necessary to mention the following fact: should God's remembrance, which has so many benefits and whose negligence entails so many evil consequences, including the one which the Imam has emphasized: "My son, I recommend that you inhabit your heart with remembrance of God," be taken superficially or is there some other reality behind it?

Man should not be negligent of God. Obviously such remembrance of God forces man to carry out his tasks and makes him avoid indulging in disobedience.

Fortunately, in our Islamic traditions, there is a lot of emphasis on this point: Some of these will follow:

a) The Great Prophet, in his will to Imam 'Ali (as), stated:

"O 'Ali, a person cannot do justice in three things:

In sharing his possessions with his brother in faith, in carrying out justice towards others, and in remembering God at all times. God's remembrance does not only include saying "glory be to Allah, praise be to Allah, there is no god but Allah and Allah is great". Rather, it simply means: "when you want

to commit a sin, be afraid and stop doing it."19

- **b)** Imam as–Sadiq (as) has said, "Anybody who really remembers Allah, is obedient to Him and anybody who is negligent of such remembrance is sinful. Thus, obedience towards God is a sign of being on the right path and sin is a sign of being misguided. Both of these stem from either God's remembrance or negligence of His remembrance."20
- c) Imam 'Ali (as) has said, "Don't remember God only at leisure time, neither forget Him when you are busy.

Remember Him when your tongue and your heart are in harmony. You will remember Him truly only when you forget yourself entirely".21

Clearly, this kind of remembrance of God will stop man from committing sins and will force him to carry out prayers. Such remembrance will enlighten and construct your hearts.

- 1. O you believe! Remember Allah, remembering frequently, And glorify Him morning and evening [Qur'an 33:41-42].
- 2. And certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest [Qur'an 29:45].
- 3. Kanz al-Ummal.
- 4. . Qur'an 13:28.
- 5. . Qur'an 20:124.
- 6. . Qur'an 43:36.
- 7. . Qur'an 59:19.
- 8. . Qur'an 9:67.
- 9. Mizan al-Hikmah, vol.3, p.429.
- 10. . Qur'an 73:19.
- 11. . Qur'an 88:5.
- 12. . Qur'an 50:36-37.
- 13. . Qur'an 20:14.
- 14. . Qur'an 63:9.
- 15. . Qur'an 15:3.
- 16. . Qur'an 58:19.
- 17. . Ghurar al-Hikam.
- 18. . Mizan al-Hikmah, vol. 3, p.425.
- 19. . Safinah al-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 484.
- 20. Bihar, vol. 93, p. 158.
- 21. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

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