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More on Bondage

Bondage is an essence, the inner nature of which is lordship (rububiyah). Whatever is missing in bondage is found in lordship, and whatever is veiled from lordship is found in bondage. As Allah said,

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

We will soon show them Our signs in the universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not sufficient as regards your Lord that He is a witness over all things? (41:53)

This means He exists both in your absence and in your presence. Bondage means ridding oneself of everything, and the way to obtain this is to deny the self what it desires and to make it bear what it dislikes. The key to this is abandoning rest, loving seclusion and following the path of recognition of the need for Allah.

The Holy Prophet (S) said, 'Worship Allah as if you see Him. Even if you do not see Him, He sees you.'

The letters of the Arabic word for 'bondsman' ('abd) are three; 'ayn, ba' and dal. The 'ayn is one's knowledge ('ilm) of Allah. The ba' is one's distance (bawn) from other than Him, and the dal is one's nearness (dunuw) to Allah with the restriction of neither contingent qualities nor veil.

The principles of conduct have four aspects, as we mentioned at the beginning of the first chapter.

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