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Remembrance

He who truly remembers Allah is the one who obeys Him: whoever forgets is disobedient. Obedience is the mark of guidance, disobedience the sign of misguidance. The root of both states lies in remembrance (dhikr) and forgetfulness. Make your heart the focal point of your tongue, which should not move unless the heart indicates, the intellect agrees and your tongue accords with belief. Almighty Allah knows what you conceal and what you reveal.

Be like someone who has shed his soul from his body, or like someone who is attending the great parade on the Day of Reckoning, not distracting yourself from the obligations which your Lord has laid on you in His commands and prohibitions, His promise and His threat. Do not be occupied with yourself rather than with the duties laid down for you by your Lord. Wash your heart clean with the water of sorrow and fear; make remembrance of Allah part of His most glorious remembrance of you. He remembers you, but He does not need you. His remembrance of you is more glorious, more desirable, more praiseworthy, a more complete and more ancient than your remembrance of Him.

The knowledge you obtain by His remembrance of you will beget you humility, modesty and contrition, which will in turn be the cause of your witnessing His nobility and previous, overflowing favour. The latter will then belittle your obedience in your own eyes, however copious it may be as a result of His favours; and you will be sincerely devoted to Him. But your consciousness and esteem of your own remembrance of Him will lead to showing off, pride, foolishness and coarseness in your character, for it means attaching too much importance to your obedience while forgetting His overflowing favour and generosity. It will only make you more distant from Him, and all that you will acquire with the passing of the days is alienation.

There are two sorts of remembrance: sincere remembrance with which the heart is in harmony, and remembrance which arises through banishing any remembrance of other than Allah. As the Messenger of Allah said, 'I cannot do justice in properly praising You as You praise Yourself.' The Messenger of Allah did not set any limit on remembering Allah, since he knew the truth that Allah's remembrance of

His bondsman was greater than the bondsman's remembrance of Him. Thus it is even more fitting that whoever comes after the Holy Prophet should not set any limits, and whoever wants to remember Allah should know that as long as Allah does not remember the bondsman by granting him success in remembering Him, that bondsman will not be able to remember Him.

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