72826 - Will he be rewarded for dhikr of the tongue when his heart is not focused?

the question

When I recite tasbeeh and dhikr (remembering Allah), my heart is not focused and my mind wanders to other things. If I say tasbeeh and my mind is wandering, will I be rewarded for this tasbeeh or not?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Dhikr-Allah (remembrance of Allah) is one of the greatest of good deeds and the best of actions by means of which one may draw closer to Him. There are dozens of texts which speak of its virtues, enjoin it and encourage it, such as the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “Shall I not tell you of the best of your deeds, the most pleasing to your Sovereign, those that raise you most in status, and that are better than your giving gold and silver, or meeting your enemy (in battle) and you strike their necks and they strike you necks?” They said: “Yes,” He said: “Remembrance of Allah (dhikr), may He be exalted.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (3373) and Ibn Maajah (3790); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

The most perfect of dhikr is that in which the heart and tongue are both focused, then that which is in the heart only, then that which is on the tongue only. In all cases there is reward, in sha Allah.

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Dhikr may be in the heart, or on the tongue, but the best is that which is both in the heart and on the tongue. If it is limited to just one of them, then the heart is better. End quote from al-Adhkaar (p. 20).

But those who understand spiritual matters have drawn attention to the fact that dhikr which is

limited to the tongue only and not the heart is of little value and that it is little benefit. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The types of dhikr may be in the heart and on the tongue sometimes, which is the best of dhikr, or they may be in the heart only sometimes, which is the second level, and on the tongue sometimes, which is the third level. The best of dhikr is that on which both the heart and tongue are focused, and dhikr in the heart only is better than dhikr on the tongue only, because dhikr in the heart increases knowledge, provokes love, increases shyness before Allah, promotes fear of Allah, calls one to draw closer to Him, and it prevents one from falling short in acts of worship and being heedless about sins and bad deeds. Dhikr on the tongue only does not give any of these results and it is of little benefit. End quote from al-Waabil al-Sayyib min al-Kalim al-Tayyib (p. 120). See also Madaarij al-Saalikeen (2/420)

We ask Allah to make us among His slaves who remember and thank Him, and to help us to remember Him, thank Him and worship Him properly.

And Allah knows best.