

83250 - He visualizes the Ka'bah when he prays and says du'aa'. Is this ihsaan?

the question

When I am praying and saying du'aa', I try to visualize the Ka'bah. Am I achieving what is meant in the hadeeth, "Worship Allaah as if you see Him"? When I visualize something else – which happens often and is not waswaas – I feel that I am not attaining complete khushoo' (focus), and when I am addressing Allaah I try to feel that. (And I do this) because looking at the sky is makrooh. Please advise me, may Allaah bless you.

Detailed answer

Ihsaan means doing a thing well. In sharee'ah this includes doing acts of worship well and in the manner enjoined by Allaah.

If the worshipper remembers that Allaah is watching him and looking at him, this will make him do his act of worship well and enable him to reach a high status thereby.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: One day the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings be upon him) appeared before the people and Jibreel came to him and said: O Messenger of Allaah, what is faith? He said: "To believe in Allaah, His angels, His Book, the meeting with Him, and His Messengers, and to believe in the resurrection hereafter." He said: O Messenger of Allaah, what is Islam? He said: "Islam is to worship Allaah and not associate anything with Him, to establish the prescribed prayers, to pay the obligatory zakaah, and to fast Ramadaan." He said: O Messenger of Allaah, what is ihsaan? He said: "It is to worship Allaah as if you can see Him, for although you cannot see Him, He can see you."

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (50) and Muslim (9).

Ibn Rajab (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: This indicates that one should worship Allaah in this manner, which is keeping in mind that He is close, and that is He is before you as if you could see Him. This leads one to fear Him, venerate Him and show respect. It also leads one to be sincere in worship and strive hard to do it well and make it perfect and complete. End quote.

Jaami' al-'Uloom al-Hukam (1/35).

He also said: The basic meaning of khushoo' is softness of heart, tranquility, submission and humility. If the heart is properly focused in this manner, then the rest of the body will follow it in focus, because they follow it as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "In the body there is a piece of flesh which, if it is sound, the entire body will be sound, but if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. Verily it is the heart." Narrated by al-Bukhaari (25) and Muslim (1599).

If the heart is focused then the hearing, sight, head, face and all the parts of the body will be focused, as will all the things that stem from them, even speech.

Then he said: The focus that appears in the heart stems from awareness of Allaah and acknowledgement of His might, power and perfection. The one who knows more of Allaah will be more focused.

People vary in their focus according to their knowledge of the One before Whom they are standing and their awareness of the attributes of Allaah that lead to more focus. Some focus because of their sense of being so close to the Lord and that He is aware of what is in their hearts and minds. That leads them to feel humble before Allaah and know that He is watching all their movements. And there are some who focus because of their awareness of His might, glory and greatness, which leads them to venerate Him and fear Him. And there are some who focus because of their awareness of His perfection and beauty, which leads them to be filled with love for Him and long to meet Him.

And there are some who focus because they are aware of the severity of His wrath, vengeance and punishment, which leads them to fear Him.

Allaah is the One Who takes care of those who are humble before Him, because He draws close to those who submit to Him, as He draws close to the one who addresses Him in prayer and lowers his face in the dust before Him when prostrating, and He draws near to those who come to His House to stand before Him and beseech Him as they stand in 'Arafah. He draws close to them and boasts of them before the angels, and He draws near to His slaves who call upon Him

and ask of Him and pray for forgiveness of their sins in the time before dawn. He answers their prayers and grants them what they ask for, and no better reward for the slave's humbleness than the closeness of Allaah and His response to their prayers. End quote.

Al-Dhill wa'l-Inkisaar li'l-'Azeez al-Jabbaar (in Rasaa'il ibn Rajab, 1/290, 293).

As for that which the questioner mentions about visualizing the Ka'bah when he prays, we do not know of any basis for that and it does not seem that this visualizing would help in attaining true focus (khushoo') in prayer. How many of those who have been in the vicinity of the Ka'bah and seen it with their own eyes prayed as if they were praying in the marketplace, without any real focus.

In the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah that is quoted above, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) explained what ihsaan is, and said that it means "to worship Allaah as if you can see Him"; he did not say, "as if you can see the Ka'bah."

And Allaah knows best.