

KHUTBA

Friday 19.02.10

English

Repentance (Tawbah)

Dear Muslims.

By their nature, humans are weak against their desires and feeling. They can commit mischief, sins and abandoned morals for the sake of profit and pleasure. As Muslims, we know that we were not created to fulfill our desires but rather to worship Allah. To fulfill our worshipping responsibility we have to live and enjoy our lives within the religious boundaries. However, sometimes we get carried by our desires to cross these borders and commit sins. The only way to clear these sins is by repentance (Tawbah).

Repentance is the feeling and act in which one recognizes, and tries to right a wrong, or gain forgiveness from someone that they wronged. In religious contexts it usually refers to repenting for a sin against Allah. As Muslims, we are urged to perform repentance everyday from the sins that we know (i.e. we know we have committed sin by doing certain act) as well as that we don't know. This has been stated in Quran and hadith: ***Why turn they not to God, and seek His forgiveness? For God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.*** [5:74].

.....For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean. [2:222].

O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God: for God forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [39:53].

And O ye Believers! turn ye all together towards God, that ye may attain Bliss. [24:31].

Al-Agharr al-Muzani who was from amongst the Companions of Allah's Apostle (saws) reported that Ibn 'Umar stated to him that Allah's Messenger (saws) said: **O people, seek repentance from Allah. Verily, I seek repentance from Him a hundred times a day.** [Muslim]

Abu Mosa reported Allah's Messenger (saws) as saying that: Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, Stretches out His Hand during the night so that the people repent for the fault committed from dawn till dusk and He stretches out His Hand during the day so that the people may repent for the fault committed from dusk to dawn. (He would accept repentance) before the sun rises in the west (before the Day of Resurrection). [Muslim]

Repentance can be from unbelieving or sins. ***Say to the Unbelievers, if (now) they desist (from Unbelief), their past would be forgiven...*** [8:38]. In both cases there are some conditions for it to be accepted:

- 1- It should be directed to Allah. ***O ye who believe! Turn to God with sincere repentance: In the hope that your Lord will remove from you your ills and admit you to Gardens beneath which Rivers flow,- the Day that God will not permit to be humiliated the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands, while they say, "Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us, and grant us Forgiveness: for Thou hast power over all things.*** [66:8].
- 2- It should include an admission of guilt and regretting what has happened in the past.
- 3- Giving up the sin immediately and attempt to make restitution for the wrong, or in some way to reverse the harmful effects of the wrong where possible.
- 4- It should include a solemn promise or resolve not to repeat the sin.
- 5- It should be within the time limit where it is accepted. ***Are they waiting to see if the angels come to them, or thy Lord (Himself), or certain of the Signs of thy Lord! the day that certain of the Signs of thy Lord do come, no good will it do to a soul to believe in them then if it believed not before nor earned righteousness through its Faith. Say: "Wait ye: we too are waiting.*** [6:158].
Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil, until Death faces one of them, and he says, "Now have I repented indeed;" nor of those who die rejecting Faith: for them have We prepared a punishment most grievous. [4:18].

Ibn Umar reported Prophet Mohamed as saying: **Allah will accept the repentance of His servant as long as he does not breathe his last breath.** [Al-Tirmidhi]

Dear Muslims,

Allah is merciful and forgiving. He opened the door of repentance for us in order to be cleared from sins and be secured from punishment. Although it is our duty to worship Him, He is happy to see us doing good deeds. He is even happier if we perform repentance after sins. Anas Ibn Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (saws) said: **Allah is more pleased with the repentance of a servant as he turns towards Him for repentance than this that one amongst you is upon the camel in a waterless desert and there is upon (that camel) his provision of food and drink also and it is lost by him, and he having lost all hope (to get that) lies down in the shadow and is disappointed about his camel and there he finds that camel standing before him. He takes hold of his nosestring and then out of boundless joy says: «0 Lord, Thou art my servant and I am Thine Lord». He commits this mistake out of extreme delight.** [Muslim].

If we are sincere in Tawbah, Allah will help us to escape His punishment. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported Allah's Messenger (saws) as saying: **There was a person before you who had killed ninety-nine persons and then made an inquiry about the learned persons of the world (who could show him the way to salvation). He was directed to a monk. He came to him and told him that he had killed ninety-nine persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted. He said: No. He killed him also and thus completed one hundred. He then asked about the learned persons of the earth and he was directed to a scholar, and he told him that he had killed one hundred persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted. He said: Yes; what stands between you and the repentance? You better go to such and such land; there are people devoted to prayer and worship and you also worship along with them and do not come to the land of yours since it was an evil land (for you). So he went away and he had hardly covered half the distance when death came to him and there was a dispute between the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment. The angels of mercy said: This man has come as a penitent and remorseful to Allah and the angels of punishment said: He has done no good at all. Then there came another angel in the form of a human being in order to decide between them. He said: You measure the land to which he has drawn near. They measured it and found him nearer to the land where he intended to go (the land of piety), and so the angels of mercy took possession of it. Qatada said that Hasan told him that it was said to them that as death approached him, he crawled upon his chest (and managed) to slip in the land of mercy)** [Muslim].

Know that people are of four types: The first type is those who do sins and evil throughout their life until they die, hence they will be punished. The second type is those who do good deeds at the beginning of their life but they end their life doing bad deeds, they will also suffer from punishment. The third type is those who do bad deeds at the beginning of their life but they end their life doing good deeds, they will escape the punishment. The last type is those who do good deeds throughout their life, those are the blessed people and they will be paradise. You are free to choose any of these types to be, but remember that you are dragged by Satan, who is your enemy, to do sins in order to be with him in hell. Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri said: I heard the Prophet Muhammad (saws) saying: **The devil said to his Lord: «By Your Glory and Majesty! As long as the progeny of Adam exists on earth, I shall continuously misguide them». At this Allah remarked: «By My Glory and Majesty! As long as they seek My forgiveness, I will go on to pardon them».** [Ahmed]. The pleasure you get is temporary and limited only to this worldly life while the rewards of good deeds come both in this life and at the Judgment day.

We ask Allah, by his grace and generosity, to turn us towards Him by his mercy, forgive us, cover our faults and accept our repentance.

Amen

Khutba by Side Mohammed Ould Cherif