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## LECTURES DELIVERED ABROAD = A SPECIAL SERIES BY AMR KHALED =

### Towards a bright beginning – part 1 :

In the Name of Allah the most Gracious. Most Merciful.

May the blessing and Peace be upon the Messenger of Allah and all praise be to Allah: we praise Him, we seek His Aid, His Guidance onto the right path, His Forgiveness, and his Refuge from the evils in our souls and the sins in our deeds.

**He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided; but he whom HE sends astray, for him you will find no guiding advocate.**

To start I have three suggestions to make and agree on so we could apply them together:

1. Sincerity and Honesty in your work is for Allah (*SWT*) alone. Your work should be sincere and devoted to the service and the pleasure of Allah (praise and Glory to Him) and not to a person that you hold dear to heart. People come and go, don't let yourself become attached to someone in such a way that you are only ready to become "guided" for his/her sake.
2. Just like the moon and the sun, Islam is a natural Phenomenon. It is one of the main fundamentals of life. If the moon and the sun disappear it will be doomsday. Islam is great; it organizes and guides human life. It has remained strong since its appearance in the days of the Prophet (*PBUH*).

Don't look at our Ummah's situation now. It is not what Islam is about. Islam in our current Ummah's situation is like the eclipse of the sun. An eclipse of the sun is different from a setting of the sun. The birds with their natural instincts know when it is an eclipse of a sun rather than a setting of the sun. They go to their nests during an eclipse and remain there waiting till the sun appears again. The birds are sure that this is not a setting of the sun because of the flicker of light that appears from the eclipse.

Therefore Islam is strong... maybe not at the moment... but at the moment it is like an eclipse of the sun... an exceptional case... but there is still that flicker of light.. That flicker is "the young Muslims" ... the youth... our biggest hope for the future.

Allah's Messenger (*PBUH*) said: *"Allah (glorified and exalted be He) has supernumerary angels who rove about seeking out gatherings in which Allah's name is being invoked: they sit with them and fold their wings round each other, filling that which is between them and between the lowest heaven. When [the people in the gathering] depart, [the angels] ascend and rise up to heaven. He (the Prophet, Peace and blessing be upon him) said: Then Allah (mighty and sublime be He) asks them - [though] He is most knowing about them: From where have you come? And they say: We have come from some servants of Yours on Earth: they were glorifying You (Subhan Allah), exalting you (Allahu-akbar), witnessing that there is no god but You (La-ilaha illa-llah), praising You (Al-Hamdu lillah), and asking [favors] of You. He says: And what do they ask of Me? They say: They ask of You Your Paradise. He says: And have they seen My Paradise? They say: No, O Lord. He says: And how would it be were they to have seen My Paradise! They say: And they ask protection of You. He says:*



*From what do they ask protection of Me? They say: From Your Hell-fire, O Lord. He says: And have they seen My Hell-fire? They say: NO. He says: And how would it be were they to have seen My Hell-fire: They say: And they ask for Your forgiveness. He (the Prophet, Peace and blessing be upon him) said: Then He says: I have forgiven them and I have bestowed upon them what they have asked for, and I have granted them sanctuary from that from which they asked protection. He (the Prophet, Peace and blessing be upon him) said: They say: O Lord, among them is So-and-so, a much sinning servant, who was merely passing by and sat down with them. He (the Prophet, Peace and blessing be upon him) said: And He says: And to him [too] I have given forgiveness: he who sits with such people shall not suffer.” (It was related by Muslim (also by al-Bukhari, at-Tirmidhi, and an-Nasa’i)*

As you notice, Allah (Praise and Glory be to Him) did not mention the extent of His Forgiveness because it varies according to the intentions and the sincerity of the person asking for it and his nearness to Allah. The more you love being nearer to Allah, the more the forgiveness. This will surely reinforce your devotion to Him and no one else.

3. There is another point I would like to clarify before I start talking about the topic of my lecture. It is something to do with our youth. You are our hope in making Islam prosperous again and you are our hope to see our country become one of the best countries in the world.

The lack of objective we have in mind when we are studying in schools and in universities is our problem. No one thinks that he/she could become someone important in the future.

Sociologists have performed some experiments to determine which societies will fall and which ones will continue to strive in the future. They have been able to pinpoint exactly the time at which some societies would fall or prosper. Their findings have not been proven to be wrong in fact they have proven to be correct every time the research has been performed. According to these studies, Norway has 30 years to go until we witness the fall of its society whereas Jordan needs 10 years to be an influential country in the world.

How did they know that?

The way they do their research is by going to the universities in each country and asking the young people there what do they hope to achieve in life?. Through their answers they are able to determine the future of each country. Unfortunately some young people in some countries are not able to reply whereas in other countries they would have very high ambitions. Some of them would want to be scholars in various domains and others would want to have sons whom they would like to raise-up to be a new Saladin (Salahu-Deen). Therefore they suggested that the countries with highly ambitious young people will become the best in the world in terms of development and progress. It will be the best in a one year’s time.

This research is not a new idea. It existed since history began. It also existed since when Muslims used to be in Andalusia (Spain now). Socialist back then used to be Portuguese. They used to be sent to the Muslims in Andalusia under the decoy of researchers but in fact they were spies sent to know how the young Muslim people think. They knew that youth of a country are its hope for the future, so they wanted to know if the young Muslims were serious in life or if they had an objective in life. At first they used to find examples like; a young Muslim telling them that he started memorizing Sahih Muslim after having already memorized Sahih Bukhari. Another one would be training hard to excel in archery and another one would tell them that he is the best knight in the country and no one would dare challenge him.



What I am implying by these examples that there has to be an objective in life that you need to live for. It does not have to be something that's only in Sharia (Islamic law) or in religion. After all, we do not want to suppress talents and enthusiasm. Rather, we want to encourage exceptionality in any domain that a young Muslim person can see himself excel in. So get going, use your talents, achieve your objectives as long as your final goal is to honor your soul and to triumph Islam.

So, getting back to the story of the Portuguese spies, they did not have much options but to tell the army of their country not to attack the Muslims because of the will and the earnestness of the youth. Until one day, a Portuguese spy approached two young Muslims one of whom was crying. He asked him: why are you crying?. The young Muslim answered: My girlfriend has left me. Then the Portuguese spies knew that it was their chance to attack the Muslims and throw them out of Andalusia. The Muslims reined in Andalusia for 800 years but withdrew out of it in one month only.

Do you understand what I'm trying to tell you?

Now I want to talk to you about something that would make us very happy and more willing to be nearer to Allah (*SWT*). So all of you young people, be the pride of Islam and start a new promise to Allah i.e. towards a brighter future... This will happen with Repentance.

So now I will talk to you about repentance and why we repent.

There are major sins and there are minor sins in life. There are sins that we do as a result of human weaknesses and there are those sins that we do intentionally.

You might say to yourself now: There are no major sins in my life. Do you think that major sins are only drinking alcohol? Taking drugs? Committing adultery? No there are other intentional major sins that we do such as not praying, or praying for one day and skipping the other or even not praying Al-Fair salat on time. Don't you agree that such examples are major sins from which we need to repent?.

Scholars have classified major sins as follows:

1. Polytheism.
2. The killing of a human soul (murder/suicide)
3. Not performing Salat (the five obligatory prayers).

Therefore for those who do not pray Al-Fajr prayer on time do you still think that Allah does not regard this act as one of the major sins? Do you really understand what it means when you don't pray or when you pray but not all the prayers or even when you pray because it is only a duty rather than being out of devotion to Allah? This means that worshipping Allah is a heavy load to carry. Don't you see the contradiction when you hear a person saying I love Allah yet I cannot worship him because it is difficult for me to do so? Or when you see another person watching a football match and he is careful not to miss one minute but when you remind him of his duty to pray, he gets frustrated or even changes the whole subject!.

Do you know that whoever leaves Al Salat is leaving Islam? It is like you have cut all the links or you have destroyed all the opportunities to be near to Allah (*SWT*). As if you are saying: O Lord I do not need you!.



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There is a big difference between a person who puts the alarm on to wake up to Al Fjr prayer on time and another one who doesn't want to wake up to pray at all.

Whoever prays on time at Al-Fajr and makes it a regular habit, his relationship with Allah no doubt becomes stronger. Al-Fajr prayer is a proof how much we love Allah and this was the reason why it was ordained on us in the first place. So when we perform Al-Fajr prayer it is like saying: O Lord you are dear to us!. So let's encourage our children to perform Al-Fajr prayer on time the same way we make sure that they wake up early to catch the bus and go to school on time. Which one of these two is a priority with Allah?.

Do you know that Hellfire has many doors? One of them is called SAQAR. It is the most difficult entries to Hell. Allah says about it what can be translated as, **“and what will explain to thee what hell-fire is?.. Naught does it permit to endure and naught doth it leave alone” (TMQ, 74:27-28)<sup>1</sup>**. That means that whoever enters this door, will leave no seen trace; he will disappear; he will melt in the intensity of the heat. Then Allah will bring him up again to be melted yet again; it is a way of torture. Then when the angles will ask one of those who enter SAQAR: Why have you come here? He would say: I wasn't one of those who prayed, nor was I one of those who fed the poor (ie didn't do Zakat) and I was from those who did sins with my friends all the time.

So I ask this of whoever postpones his prayers or whoever prays them all at once; don't you think it is one of the major sins? It is also the same to those who pray Al-Asr prayer just before Al-Maghreb prayer or join prayers.

There is also another major sin that we do. It has got to do with your parents and if they are happy with you. Do you know that when your mother cries because she is not happy with you; one of her tears would be greater to Allah then the amount of sins you accumulate in one year? Or when a father's face turns red with anger from one of his children this would be greater than hundreds of sins?

Displeasing your parents is the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest sin in Islam.

Isn't it a major sin when a young girl mocks her mother in front of her friends because she thinks that her mother is “old fashioned” and does not understand her?

Isn't it a major sin when a boy looks at one of his parents in a challenging way?

How about when a young boy or a young girl, makes their house like a hotel. They eat and drinks in it without giving attention or talking to their parents. The parents, on the other hand, try their best to talk with their children, who in turn would not care to exchange any conversation with their parents and prefer to lock themselves up in their rooms for hours.

What do you call such examples?

Do you now know that there are major sins that we do in life without even knowing?

How about the newly married couple who do not call their parents up on the phone to know if they are well or not. Isn't this one of the major sins? All these examples require our repentance.

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<sup>1</sup> TMQ=Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'an. This translation is for the realized meaning, so far, of the stated (Surah:ayah) of the Qur'an. Reading the translated meaning of the Qur'an can never replace reading it in Arabic, the language in which it was revealed.



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We also do minor sins in our lives. For example, ask yourself how many times did you try to lower your eyes from looking at “*Haram*” the whole week?

I know of a young man who wanted to do a competition between himself and Satan to know how many times he can lower his eyes from looking at “*Haram* and how many times he cannot. So he started writing the results on a paper. At the end of the day he looked at his results and found for example that he was able to lower his eyes 6 times while he couldn't help but look 4 times. Unfortunately some people's results are 0/10000 i.e. they don't even try to lower their eyes.

Another example of the minor sins we make is that of a young lady who wears tight and revealing clothes. Doesn't that brings a great wrath from Allah?. If she went out of her house for half an hour she acquires 100 bad deeds but if she went to university with such clothes, 1000 deeds will be written for her. Al Hijab is what a Muslim woman should wear but if a lady cannot wear the *Hijab* (she should pray that may Allah eventually help her to wear it). Until that happens, I beg of her not to wear tight or revealing clothes... because Allah's wrath will be great on her.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *“two types of women from my people do not enter Paradise nor would they seek its scent. Even if the scent of Paradise can be smelt from a 500-year walk. These are women who are dressed yet undressed (because of the revealing and tight clothes), swaying in the way they walk and making the heads spin around to watch them.”* This does not mean that they won't enter Paradise but their entry will be delayed.

Another example of the minor sins we make is gossiping. How many times do we gossip about a person or two over the phone? Can you see some of the minor sins that can destroy our life and make us carry a lot of heavy burdens?

The problem is that we do not see a need to repent because we are not aware that we make such minor sins.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: *“a Muslim will be brought on the Day of Judgment then Allah will ask the angles to spread open the record of his bad deeds. In sixty years only, 99 records of bad deeds will be spread open, each one reaching as far as the horizon”.*

This is an example that's similar to that of a young man who comes home with 100 bad deeds in one day or a young lady who comes home with 300 bad deeds in one day. Do you now understand how did the man come up with 99 records of bad deeds?

Do you know that there are other sins that we make besides those minor and those major sins? What are they?

These are the sins that we used to do and stopped doing but did not repent from. Any sins we make won't be forgiven just because we stopped doing them, they will only be forgiven if we repent.

So for a young man who used to do a particular sin when he was in high school and stopped doing since going to university only because he thinks he has grown up now for such sins not because he repented, he would say to Allah: O Lord! I have stopped doing that sin since when I started university. So how come I am asked for it? Then Allah would ask him: did you repent? Then the servant would say: no my Lord I have not repented. Then Allah would say: then, this sin will still be written down.



Did you know that when you intend to repent from all the sins you've done and all the sins you've stopped doing and forgotten, did you know that Allah will forgive you for all those sins? It is because your intentions were sincere for repentance.

There are also other sins which we do unknowingly..

When we do not thank Allah for all the bounty He has bestowed upon us. Let me ask you this: are all those blessings, that you have, from Allah or from your parents? Did you thank Allah for his blessings or no??

Do you know that Satan hatred is so great to us that he says to Allah in the Qur'an, what can be translated as, "**Seest Thou? this is the one whom Thou hast honored above me! If Thou wilt but respite me to the Day of Judgment, I will surely bring his descendants under my sway - all but a few!**" (TMQ, 17:62). So this is Satan's curse on us.

The phrase "**bring his descendants under my sway**" (in Arabic "*ahtanekanna*") comes from the Arabic expression : (حنكت الفرس) "*hanakto el farass*" which means bridling the horse to be able to ride it to any place.

Do you understand now what does "*ahtanekanna*" mean? Do you know what Satan is doing to us? Satan whispers to us: do this sin and you do it.

Do you like it when Satan does this to you?

Do you know that there should be a repentance on a sin that is much more important than all the sins we have mentioned here?

The repentance on being "unmindful" about Allah. Unfortunately many of the religious people fall in this sin.

Humans are three types:

1. The transgressors, those who always do intentional sins.
2. The believers, those who obey Allah, make mistakes but in concept they love Allah very much
3. And those who are unmindful.... Meaning they are in an "insipid" state with Allah.

Translated by:



The English Convey



## Towards A Bright Beginning – part 2:

Being oblivious is something that requires sincere repentance. For instance, when you ask an oblivious person about his love to Allah (Exalted and Glorious) and if it is number one in his heart, you will unfortunately get a negative answer. Also when you ask an oblivious young woman to compare her religious status when she decided to put on hijab (head veil) to her status today, you would find that she is unaware that it is in constant decline. Do you know why? Because the sinful as well as the corrupt go through a phase when they feel that they are tired of these very sins that they become reluctant to fall in them again, let alone the extreme self-hate they experience. On the other hand, the oblivious person is always content with his conduct that he never realizes any of his defects. For instance, when you ask an oblivious young woman about her ethics, she tells you “My ethics are perfect” adding “I’m wearing hijab, am I not?” and she fails to realize the fact that she is oblivious. Thus, we have to be careful that Allah (*SWT*) should always be number one in our lives.

Satan has a very powerful role with oblivious people; do you know what he does? He never incites them to commit major sins; because once they do they immediately regret it and return back to Allah (*SWT*) to repent. Therefore, Satan does not want them to awake at all; on the contrary he wants them to stay in their slumber till their lives end. Consequently, sinful people repent faster than oblivious ones.

Hence, why do we need to repent? Because we have major sins, thousands of minor sins, lots of blessings we did not thank Allah for, sins we’ve committed in the past and did not repent about them though we have already abandoned them, and last but not least we have to repent for being oblivious.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Say: "O my Bondmen who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”** (TMQ, 39:53)<sup>2</sup>. You see, all your sins will be forgiven even your major ones if you have the intention for true repentance. Can you imagine what will actually happen when we repent? Allah (*SWT*) will forgive all sins. Hence, let us agree to repent this very minute. Read the verse once again.

But you may wonder sometimes what Allah (*SWT*) wants from us? Read this verse with me, in which Allah says what can be translated as, **“Allah doth wish to turn to you, but the wish of those who follow their lusts is that ye should turn away (from Him), far, far away. Allah doth wish to lighten your (difficulties): for man was created weak (in flesh).”** (TMQ, 4:27-28) Then, Allah wants to forgive us and whoever insists on not repenting, wrongs his own soul. In other verses Allah also says what can be translated as, **“Those who invoke not, with Allah, any other God, nor slay such life as Allah has made sacred, except for just cause, nor commit fornication, and any that does this (not only) meets punishment. (But) the Penalty on the Day of Judgment will be doubled to him, and he will dwell therein in ignominy. Unless he repents, believes and works righteous deeds, for Allah will change the evil of such persons into good, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”** (TMQ, 29:68-70) This means that Allah (*SWT*) will not only forgive us, but will also change the evil we were doing into good.

For instance, I am certain that Allah (*SWT*) has forgiven the young man who has not prayed for 5 years and now intends to repent and pray, and even intends to pray the Sunnah (non-obligatory)

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prayers. Moreover, He has erased the 5 years of not praying from his deeds. You have to be absolutely certain of Allah's forgiveness; it is once you have the intention supported with sincere effort, Allah (*SWT*) will forgive you and change your evil into good.

The young lady who was too busy with worldly matters like fashion and routine husband and children chores to be close enough to Allah, and intends to repent, feeling the urge deep inside to do it, will be blessed with Allah's forgiveness. Moreover, with her intention to carry out righteous deeds, Allah will change her evil into good. This means that repentance in itself guarantees forgiveness, and that the intention to increase righteous deeds grants that Allah (*SWT*) will change your evil into good. See how bountiful Allah is?!!

The Prophet (peace be upon him) narrated a scene on the Day of Judgment when Allah orders a man of his bondmen to read his book of deeds and he passes by his evils one after another which glooms his face because of the huge number of evils and he thinks himself totally ruined. Then Allah tells him "O my bondman, have not you repented for all that?" And he replies "yes my Lord", then Allah orders him to reread his book of deeds, and he passes by his evil and finds them changed into good. All evils changed into good deeds and he takes the reward of repentance. Hence, why don't you repent? Then the man hopes that he has had much more evils to be changed into good deeds and he says to Allah: O my Lord I had other evils that angels did not write. And the Prophet (*PBUH*) laughs at that man who wants to deceive Allah on the Day of Judgment as Allah changes evil deeds into good ones. Don't you want to repent now? It is as if Allah (*SWT*) wants to tell us that repentance erases all previous evils. Therefore, let's have a new start.

When he talks about repentance, the Prophet (peace be upon him) says that he repents and asks for Allah's forgiveness more than 100 times a day. You see, Allah's messenger, who is infallible, was repenting and asking for Allah's forgiveness daily. Those who feel that they are in no need to repent should observe how the prophet's companions used to count his asking for forgiveness throughout the day; which could reach 70 times. In a single session he would keep repeating "*Astaghfirollah, Astaghfirollah...*" [O, Allah I ask thee for forgiveness]. He would then continue talking and smiling with his companions, only to stop for a while when they were busy doing something else, to return back to his dhikr (remembrance) and asking for Allah's forgiveness saying "*Astaghfirok Rabby wa Atoobo Elaik*" [O, Allah I repent to thee and ask your forgiveness].

The Prophet (peace be upon him) says that: Every night Allah (*SWT*) unfolds His hand for those who did evil in the day to repent and He unfolds His hand every day for those who did evil in the night to repent.

Think with me, who is the one in need to ask the other for repentance Allah (*SWT*) or the bondman of Allah. Of course the bondman is the one in need for it and not Allah (*SWT*). Observe how the door of repentance is permanently opened 24 hours a day and is never closed.

In another Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) says "In the last third of each night [from 1:00 to 5:00 approx.] Allah (*SWT*) gloriously descends into the first sky a glorious descending which suits His glory. And He calls: "Is there any one who wants to repent and I grant him repentance. Is there any one who wants to ask for forgiveness and I forgive him? Is there any supplicate and I give him." As if Allah (*SWT*) is telling us that if we failed to wake up at that particular time in the past, the chance is still there as He will keep on calling us each and every night. Do you know what we usually do at that part of the night? We sleep, watch T.V., or chat carelessly on the phone. All this while Allah (*SWT*) is calling for us!! For this reason Satan insinuates us to commit sins in this particular time to make us challenge Allah (*SWT*).



Allah (SWT) in a Qudsi (divine) Hadith describes such a state saying that, " *I, mankind, and Jinn are in an odd case: I create, and they worship others. I give and they thank others. My blessings go down to them and their evils come up to Me. I kindly offer them My mercy despite I'm in no need of them. And they are fighting Me with sins while they are in poor need of Me. Those who are praising Me, are in My attendants. Therefore, whoever wants to be in My attendants just celebrate the praises of Me. Those who obey Me, are those whom I love. And those who disobey Me, I never exclude them of My Mercy. If they repent, I grant them My love, and if they refused to repent, I will cure their hearts by afflictions till they are purified from defects. The good deed in My accounts equals ten and more, and the evil deed equals one and I forgive. I swear with My Glory and Honor, if they ask for forgiveness I'll forgive them. Whoever repents and comes to Me, I'll receive him though he is far away. And whoever turns back, I'll call him closely telling him O My bondman where are you going? Do you have another God? O mankind, I created thee with my Hands, and brought up thee with My blessings and you disobey. If you repent afterwards, I'll accept thee. Where can you find a God like Me, The Most Merciful, Most Forgiving.*"

I'll tell you a true story. I know a man, 40 years old; who said to me "One day I wanted to repent for all of my past evils, so I tried to remember each year in my life and what I was doing during it and repent for everything and ask Allah to forgive me. I decided to judge my deeds since I became responsible for my actions, that is since I was 14 or 15 years old and found that the most evil deed I was doing is disobeying my parents for which I asked Allah (SWT) to forgive me, and so on for each and every year passed in my life. After that I felt that I am someone else and I sensed a great happiness in my heart; the same feeling I had on my wedding day or the day my child was born." I told him that there is a Hadith that ensures what he was saying and feeling; it describes the happiness of Allah (SWT) when one of us repents. It is like that of a man walking in the desert and holding his camel which carries his food and water and suddenly the camel eloped from him. Then the man felt sure that he would die and started digging his grave desperately, when suddenly he found his camel returning back to him with his food and water. He was extremely happy to the extent that he got confused when he was thanking Allah (SWT) that instead of saying "O Allah You are my Lord and I'm your humble bondman" he said the opposite. The prophet PBUH swears that the happiness of Allah (SWT) exceeds this man's happiness.

If you repent now, you can be granted the love of The Most Gracious because the moments of repentance are very dear to Allah. Hence, it is a Sunnah to ask people who repent to make supplication or Dua'a for you because their Dua'a is accepted and also because they are granted Allah's love. If you are in serious need of something and you want Allah to grant it to you, repent now.

I'll tell you something that will help you to repent. It actually happened to me: I was with ten of my friends and I wanted to stir up the will of repentance inside them, so I told every one of us to bring a paper and a pen and to divide the paper into two halves. Every one of us would write his sins on the right half and Allah's blessings on the left one. Try to do this now and notice what you have written in the part of Allah's blessings, for instance: eyesight, hearing, logic, feeling, that you are a Muslim, etc. Of course that you are a Muslim should be written as number one, but unfortunately I said it at the end and this is because a lot of us are not aware of this blessing.

As for the other half of the paper try to write your evil deeds; for instance that you don't care about praying Al-Fajr on time; that you don't care about being humble in prayers, that you abandon the Holy Qur'an, or about not wearing Hijab (if you are a young woman). And then look at what you've written, only to find yourself crying heartily. Among the blessings of Allah which my friends wrote



were being Muslims; that they were well brought up; or that they are blessed with advanced mental abilities. Each one counted and wrote the different blessings of Allah till we reached the youngest of us, who was 18 years old. The way he expressed himself was so simple; he said "The greatest blessing that Allah (*SWT*) has granted me is that *He* is my God and that He forgives me and loves me to that extent." Notice how wonderful it is to express your love to Allah (*SWT*).

A Hadith in Bukhari and Muslim narrates that a 40 year old man from the people of Israel committed every possible sin in his life without repenting. When nearing death, he said to his children, "When I die burn my body until it becomes ashes. Then, grind it and wait for a windy day to scatter it over the mountains, because if Allah holds power over me He will punish me in a way that no other sinner would ever face." Of course, this is unacceptable in the Islamic Shari'a/law, but it was a tradition for the people of Israel. When the man died, his children did as they were told. However, Allah (*SWT*) ordered him to "BE" and he became a man with a complete body again. Allah (*SWT*) asked him why he did that, and he replied "Because I feared Thee and Your Punishment for my evil deeds." Allah told him "Because you feared Me, I forgive you. Go to heaven".

Let us ask ourselves how many times we repent to Allah (*SWT*) in our life. I'm afraid a day might come when we become like that man.

Another incident also took place in the era of Musa (Moses) (*PBUH*). The people of Israel went to Musa and asked him to pray to Allah for rain to fall as it had not fallen for a whole year. Certainly, life is difficult without rain. Musa gathered the people of Israel and began to pray to Allah, saying: "O Allah, The Lord of rain, You have always answered me. Without rain we will die". Allah (*SWT*) answered him saying that the rain will not fall because among them is someone who has been disobeying Him for 40 years. As a consequence of his evil deeds, Allah has forbidden them from rain. Musa then asked Allah (*SWT*) what must be done for the rain to fall. Allah said, "Remove him from your group and the rain will fall again."

Musa began to speak to the people of Israel explaining to them the situation about the man who disobeyed Allah for 40 years and how he must leave for the rain to fall. This man knew himself but he looked right and left hoping someone else will step up. No one did so, making him feel greatly ashamed. When no one came out, Musa (*AS*) called for the man. Ashamed, the man started making dua'a to Allah (*SWT*) saying, "O Allah, I disobeyed you for 40 years and you never exposed my evil deeds. If I step up today, I will be exposed. If I stay, we will all die without the rain. What can I do? All I can do is to repent, regret what I have done, and ask for Your forgiveness. I promise Thee that I will never return to my previous acts. O Allah, protect me and accept my repentance." Amazingly, it began to rain.

Musa was astonished because the rain fell while no one left the community. Musa asked Allah (*SWT*) and He told him that the rain fell because of My happiness with the repentance of My servant after disobeying Me for 40 years. Musa asked Allah to tell him who that person was in order to join his happiness. However, Allah (*SWT*) told him that after concealing the man's evil deeds for 40 years, He will not expose him now after his repentance.

Surely, it is a blessing from Allah when our deeds are only known to Him. What if Allah exposes our sins? What if our sins were written on our house? What if a smell is expelled from us whenever we sin?



Truly, don't you agree that we must love Allah (*SWT*) more than we do? Do you feel the urge to repent in your heart?

If you want to repent at this very moment, you have to adhere to the following three conditions for repentance. These three are achieved by the heart.

- 1) Regret committing the sin. Your heart should feel remorseful for committing that sin, reminding yourself that you must not go back to it since Allah concealed it. The Prophet *PBUH* said that repentance is feeling regretful.
- 2) Stop committing that sin.
- 3) You must have a resolution not to return to that sin in the future, which is the most important condition.

Religious scholars say that whoever repents to Allah but knows in his heart that he will return to it again is acting in a way that ridicules Him.

For instance, if you asked a young man who repented because he dated young women, he would tell you "I have repented and stopped dating, but I cannot delete their phone numbers from my cell phone."

Hence, if you followed the three conditions, you will be granted Allah's love, and all your past evil deeds will be erased. Moreover, if you perform good deeds, your past evil deeds will be replaced with good deeds. Now consider what your happiest day will be. Is it your wedding day? Is it the day you joined your favorite college? Without a doubt, the happiest day in our lives is the day of our repentance.

An example of this situation is with Ka'b Ibn-Malik, a companion of the Prophet (*PBUH*). Ka'b committed a grave mistake by not attending the battle of Tabuk, which made the Prophet (*PBUH*) very angry. Allah (*SWT*) ordered the Prophet's companions to stop communicating with K'aba for 50 days. When the 50 days were over, K'aba was praying the dawn prayer (Fajr) on the roof of his house. At that time, the revelation came to The Prophet (*PBUH*) with the verses of repentance indicating that Allah (*SWT*) accepted the repentance of Ka'b. This is in Surat At-Taubah (chapter of the Holy Qur'an) in verse 117, which can be translated as, "**Allâh has forgiven the Prophet (*PBUH*) the Muhâjirûn (Muslim emigrants who left their homes and came to Al-Madinah) and the Ansâr (Muslims of Al-Madinah) who followed him (Muhammad *PBUH*) in the time of distress (Tabûk expedition), after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated (from the Right Path), but He accepted their repentance. Certainly, He is unto them full of Kindness, Most Merciful.**" (TMQ, 9:117).

The Prophet's companions wanted to tell K'aba about the glad tidings of Allah's forgiveness. One of them rushed to a mountain and loudly called K'aba to inform him that Allah has forgiven him and accepted his repentance. Another companion rode his horse and went to congratulate him. K'aba said that on his way to personally hear the good tiding from Allah's apostle (*PBUH*), he met many people congratulating him for Allah's forgiveness. When he reached the mosque, the Prophet (*PBUH*) looked at him and smiled while his face was as bright as a full moon. The Prophet said, "Come K'aba." K'aba sat in front of him as he was told that receiving Allah's forgiveness is the best day in life from the time he was born.



Let us now examine three cases of people who repented, in hope of following their example. First, let us assume that you repented then returned to the same evil deed. Could you repent once again and be forgiven? Yes you can, adhere to the previous three conditions of repentance and Allah will accept it. This is confirmed in the Hadith where the Prophet (*PBUH*) tells us that a man came to him and asked "If I did an evil deed, will it be written?" Allah's apostle (*PBUH*) said, "Yes, the angels will write it in your book of deeds." The man asked, "What if I repented?" The Prophet said, "It will be erased." The man questioned again, "What if I returned to it?" The Prophet said that it will be written. The man continued asking, "And if I repented?" Once again, the Prophet said it will be erased. The man repeated his question several times and then asked, "How many times will it be erased?" The Prophet (*PBUH*) said, "Allah does not tire from forgiving until you tire from repentance."

Once again, don't you agree that we must love Allah (*SWT*) more than we do?

Regarding the three cases, the first is about a man who killed 99 souls and wanted to repent but wondered if Allah will accept his repentance or not. The man asked an ascetic worshiper and was answered negatively that his repentance would not be accepted. Out of frustration, the man killed the worshiper and reached a number of 100 killed souls. Nevertheless, he was frustrated and wanted to repent. Once again he asked whether his repentance will be accepted or not. The people advised him to go to a certain religious scholar. He went to him and the wise man said, "No one can forbid Allah's forgiveness. Yet, you must leave the land you are in as it is a land of evil. Go to a certain land for its people are virtuous." (When we apply this to our case, we find that our land, thanks to Allah, is good. Yet, what is meant here is to abandon bad companions. If you ask about repentance, I will first ask about your companions to judge whether you will be committed to repentance or not. Hopefully, you will choose good companions who can support you in obeying Allah.)

Thus, the man decided to leave his land and go to another one. While he was on his way to the virtuous land, he died. The angels disagreed whether he was forgiven or not. Allah (*SWT*) then sent an angel to judge by measuring the distance between the two lands. If he was closer to the virtuous land, the angels of virtue will lift his soul to heaven and vice versa. When they measured the distance, they found that he was closer to the virtuous land with a span of the hand. As a result, the virtuous angels lifted his soul and he entered heaven. Therefore, let us strive to be closer to that span of the hand with our good deeds.

Another case is with Malik Ibn-Dinar's repentance. He was a pious man and one of the prominent scholars in the Muslim Ummah. Yet, during an earlier phase of his life, he was not religious. He described himself as being impious, sinful and drunkard for he committed every possible sin. One day, while still impious, he was in the super market and found a man trying to buy some sweets with a cheaper price for his daughters since the Prophet (*PBUH*) said that whoever makes his three daughters happy will enter Heaven. The desire to have a daughter grew in Malik Ibn-Dinar's heart. For some reason, the vendor refused to sell the sweets with a cheaper price. Thus, Malik beat the vendor, took the sweets, and gave them to the man asking him to let his three daughters make dua'a for him. Malik thought about getting married and having daughters. He wondered who would accept him as a husband since he was disliked.

Malik went to the auction, bought a female slave, and then set her free to marry her. He had a baby girl and named her Fatima. He loved her very much to the extent that as Fatima grew older, the love of goodness increased in his heart while evil decreased. Whenever she found him drinking alcohol, she would take the cup away from him as if she was inspired by Allah to do so. Fatima died when she was three years old. After that, Malik said, "I became worse than before. One day, I decided to



drink alcohol to the point that I dropped unconscious like never before. I dreamt that I was on Dooms Day and that a caller was calling people by their names to stand in front of the Almighty Allah (which all of us one day will experience). I saw people trembling from fear. The caller then called me to stand in front of the Almighty. I was trembling, and I saw a snake that wanted to bite me. I ran away from it, but it was behind me all the time until I reached a weak man and asked him for assistance. The weak man said "O my son, I'm a weak man and I can't save you from that snake. Try to run in this direction and you may escape the danger of the snake." I ran in that direction but I found the Hell Fire in front of me and wondered, "Am I escaping the snake to be thrown in the Hell Fire?" I returned and the snake was still behind me. I saw the weak man again and asked him to assist me. He replied that he is too weak to do anything. He said run in the direction of a certain mountain to escape from the snake. I saw some children playing. When they saw me they called Fatima, saying "O Fatima, save your dad."

"Fatima came, grabbed me with her right hand, and pushed the snake away with her left hand. She then sat on my lap as she used to do in her life. I was nervous. She said, "O my dad", and then recited the holy verse, "Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and of the Truth which has been revealed (to them)." I asked her about that snake and she told me it was your evil deeds which intensified to the point of killing you. Then, I asked her about the weak man and she replied "He is your righteous deeds which have become weak because of their scarcity. If I did not die so young, you would have not been going to Heaven." Then she recited the same verse again "Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and of the Truth which has been revealed (to them)." I woke up from my slumber saying, "O Allah, yes it is time. The time is now." I went to perform *wudu'* (ablution) and went to the mosque to pray *Fajr*. I was surprised when the Imam recited the same verse from my dream, "Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and of the Truth which has been revealed (to them)."" From that day on, Malik Ibn-Dinar's sincerely repented.

Finally, let us make a sincere intention to repent and start anew with Allah.

Translated by:



The English Convey