

Class 4

‘Virtues & Rewards of Tawbah’

VIRTUES OF REPENTANCE

Man errs due to the obedience to its *nafs* [soul] or another person. Tawbah is a way to get out of the slavery of *nafs*, Satan or another human being and become a true slave of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* alone.

If the conditions of Repentance are met and the repentant person is sincere in his repentance, let him receive the glad tidings of great blessings. The blessings of repentance come in this world and in the Hereafter, some are visible and some are hidden.

1. Allah Loves those who repent

Allaah is Kind to His slaves and loves those who repent. He accepts their repentance, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

- *“Truly, Allaah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves”* [al-Baqarah 2:222]
- *“And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you do”* [al-Shooraa 42:25]
- *“Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven”* [al-Anfaal 8:38]

Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful, and He loves the repentance of His slaves. Man is weak. If a person sins then he has to repent and seek forgiveness every time. Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful, and He is the One Who says (interpretation of the meaning): *“And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allaah’s forgiveness, he will find Allaah Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful”* [al-Nisaa’ 4:110]

The Muslim is vulnerable to making mistakes and sins. So he has to repent and seek forgiveness repeatedly. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: *“By Allaah, I seek the forgiveness of Allaah and I turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times each day.”* (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, no. 6307)

Allaah loves the repentance of His slaves, and accept it. Indeed, He rejoices over it, as the Prophet ﷺ said: *“When a person repents, Allaah rejoices more than one of you who found his camel after he lost it in the desert.”* (Agreed upon. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, no. 6309)

For perspective, imagine a person who hurts you and then hurts you again, and then hurts you again, is it possible for you to still love this person? Generally it’s not even possible for to continuously forgive this person... to let though one scar hasn’t even healed, the next one is opened up, after the next one is opened up... I can’t keep doing this. It’s impossible for me.

And now put this in perspective: We do wrong by Allah. He asks us to do something that's actually in our own favor, but we neglect Him, we disobey Him, we disregard Him and we don't do it once. We do it over and over, and over again.

And yet Allah, so massive in His love, so incredibly infinite in His mercy. He doesn't just say:

"No doubt Allah forgives people who repent"

By the way, why do you repent over and over again? Because you messed up over and over again. People who messed up over and over again, Allah doesn't say "he accepts their repentance" even though they keep coming back and repenting over and over again, he didn't say that. He said "He loves those who repent over and over again."

Subhanallah!

It is in fact Allah, He, loves people who keep repenting over and over again. No one else is capable of that. That's only Allah.

And what happens when Allah loves us?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"If Allah has loved a servant of His, He calls Jibril A.S. and says: I love So-and-so, therefore love him. So Jibril loves him. Then he (Jibril) calls out in heaven, saying: Allah loves So-and-so, therefore love him. And the inhabitants of heaven love him. Then acceptance is established for him on earth..."* (Bukhari & Muslim)

May Allah make us of those who he loves and may Allah make us of people who genuinely make it to Him over and over again.

2. Angels supplicate

As Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* said, *"Those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it exalt (Allah) with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [saying], 'Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire.'"* [Ghafir 40: 7]

Imagine, the angels interceding for us!

3. Success

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* says, *"And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed."* (an-Nur 24: 31)

Everyone desires success in both the worlds. He who is inspired to repent should know that he is on the path of success. How frightening then it is, if one is not inspired to repent? May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* protect us, aameen.

4. Jannah

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* says, *"But there came after them successors who neglected prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil – Except those who repent, believe and do righteousness; for those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged at all."* (Mariam 19: 59-60)

Negligence toward obligatory duties is sin. Sleeping is a need but sleeping at odd times or sleeping late and missing Fajr prayer snatches the pleasure of worship. Likewise, overeating in Ramadan makes one miss their Taraweeh or stand with laziness. We need to pay attention toward beautifying our prayers and not just get done with them.

It requires Tawbah and paying attention to our prayers. The repentant and those who reform their ways will enter Paradise. This is the hope that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* gives us. We should thank Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* for giving us the *tawfeeq* [ability] to repent and protect ourselves from conceit.

5. Ample provisions

Allah The Almighty Mentioned that Nooh said (what means): *"And said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers. And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers".* (Quran 71: 10-12)

Ibn Katheer -Rahimullaah- said in his Tafseer: 'If you repented to Allaah and sought forgiveness from Him and showed obedience to Him your Rizq (provision) would increase and rain would fall from the blessings of the skies, and the blessings of the earth would spring forth, crops would grow for you. You will be given abundant livestock. You will be aided with wealth and offspring; meaning that offspring and wealth would be given to you. And you will be given gardens that have numerous types of fruits and throughout there will be rivers that flow in these gardens. This is the way of giving Dawa' by encouragement.'

6. Turns sins into good deeds

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* said,

- *"Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah forgiving and merciful".* (Quran 25:70)
- *"And whoever should do that will meet a penalty. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated – Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful."* [al-Furqan : 68-70]

And the Prophet ﷺ said, *"He who repented is like him who has no sin on him."* (Ibn Maajah; classed as Hasan by Al-Albaani)

Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* desires that we should be cleansed of our filth. Therefore, we too need to be sincere in our repentance.

7. A good life in the shade of faith, contentment, peace of mind and tranquility.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): *"Seek the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance, that He may grant you good enjoyment, for a term appointed, and bestow His abounding Grace to every owner of grace (i.e. the one who helps and serves the needy and deserving, physically and with his wealth, and even with good words)"* (Hood 11:3)

8. Strengthens us in all aspects

Allah said, *“And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send (rain from) the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength (added) to your strength. And do not turn away, (being) criminals.”* (Hud 11: 52)

This includes physical, spiritual and collective strength. When blessings increase, a person naturally becomes strong. Then why should one not repent?

So many virtues, so many rewards both in this life and the next but we still keep ourselves from repenting? Don't procrastinate, do it now.

Ibn Al-Qayyim derived a number of benefits the believer realizes in this world as a result of abandoning sin—these benefits serve as tremendous motivation to do so immediately. Among them is that *tawba* becomes a means of protecting one's honor and wealth. When one leaves sinning, one's heart, body, and soul are all strengthened and contentment overtakes sadness and grief. The path to righteousness is made easier for the believer, he is drawn closer to Allah, and his supplications and those of others for him are readily answered as he gains the love and respect of the people around him. Despite these worldly gains, he becomes eager to meet Allah and desires the reward that awaits him, no longer fearing death. The greatest of benefits no doubt will be realized in the Hereafter when the believer will taste the sweetness of his faith and experience everlasting joy far greater than any pleasure derived from sinning.

Ibn Al-Qayyim also articulated some of the most subtle and beautiful spiritual benefits of *tawba*: the knowledge and insights one develops with regard to the Names and Attributes of Allah. The sinner's journey through the steps of *tawba* is interlaced with the recognition of Allah's Might (*Al-Azeez*) and the Perfection of His Decree (*Al-Qadir*) when one acknowledges one's imperfections and the need for Allah to safeguard one from failure. The believer appreciates that Allah has concealed his sins from being exposed, even though He is the All-Seeing (*Al-Baseer*). It is His Forbearance (*Al-Haleem*) which has delayed punishment, giving the believer time to repent. He feels gratitude for the blessings of Divine Generosity, Mercy (*Al-Rahman, Al-Raheem*) and the Oft-Forgiving (*Al-Ghaffar*) nature of Allah, as the Effacer of sins (*Al-Afu'*) and the One who repeatedly turns to His servants in forgiveness (*At-Tawwab*). One is led through *tawba* through the states of humility, surrender, need, and submission, giving the believer a heightened appreciation for Allah as the All-Seeing (*Al-Baseer*), All-Hearing (*Al-Sami'*), and The Sustainer (*Al-Razzaq*).

Some Quotes of Salaf about Repentance

- *If you sin, you should never give up on repentance. Repent until Shaytan is the one defeated, not you. (Ali bin Abi Talib R.A. - Kitāb Al-Zuhd)*
- *“Tawbah is only through action, and turning back from what has been done. Tawbah is not by mere speech.” (Ali b. Husayn Zain Al-Abidin)*
- *Taking account of one's sins and seeking forgiveness for them is something everyone should set aside time for. (Masruq - Ahmad b. Hanbal, Al-Zuhd)*
- *The brother who can guide you to your faults is better for you than the brother who pays you. (Bilal b. Sa'd)*
- *We shouldn't be hasty to judge, for people can change, and Allah forgives. (Abdullah ibn Masud)*

- *“Indeed whenever I waiver and become indecisive in my mind about an issue, or about something or a situation [which is problematic for me] then I ask forgiveness of Allaah the Most High, a thousand times or more, or less until He opens my chest for me and solves the problem which I was confused about. Even if at that time I was in a market place, or in a masjid or in a mountain pass or a school, that does not prevent me from the remembrance [of Allaah] and asking for forgiveness until I achieve my objective.” (Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah)*