



Core Curriculum

6 Measuring Good and Bad in Islam

6.10 Repentance and Forgiveness of Sins in Islam

INTRODUCTION

Bismillāhir Rahmānir Rahīm, As-salāmu ‘Alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. Peace be upon you brothers and sisters.

Welcome back to the Muslim Converts Channel!

Disobeying means incurring Allah’s displeasure. However, we know that Allah is the Most-Merciful and the Most-Forgiving. Due to His kind nature, Allah has provided us the opportunity to make up for our mistakes and “turn back to Him” by having us ask Him for forgiveness.

Asking for forgiveness is called repentance. In this lesson, we will go over what it means to ask Allah for forgiveness and to repent, and the different kind of ways through which we can go about in acquiring Allah’s forgiveness.

BODY OF TEXT

“O My servants who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of God: verily, God forgives all sins. Truly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Chapter 39:, verse 53 of the Holy Qur’an)

The Arabic word for repentance is tawbah. Tawbah literally means to “return” or to “turn back.” In other words, when we sin and disobey Allah, what we’re doing is that we’re turning away from Him instead of

moving towards Him. The act of tawbah is to know that one made a mistake and by acknowledging that mistake, one turns around to God and seeks His forgiveness.

Allah forgives us as He knows that we are weak and fallible. He knows that we get distracted and we make wrong choices. He knows that we make mistakes, sometimes out of ignorance and sometimes out of selfishness whilst knowing better. By giving us the opportunity to repent, and the opportunity to be forgiven, Allah demonstrates that He is not interested in punishing us or throw us in hell, He is interested in reforming us and making us better people who live moral lives and are God-conscious in all that they do.

When Allah sees that we have repented and have tried to change, He even takes our sins and turns them into good deeds. This is proof that punishment and hell is the last thing Allah wants for us. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“And those who do not supplicate to another god along with Allah, nor do they kill a person that Allah has made forbidden (to kill) except with just cause, nor do they commit fornication. And whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection and he will abide therein in disgrace. Except those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds; for those, God will change their sins into good deeds, and God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”
(Chapter 25, verse 68-70 of the Holy Qur'an)

There are also other forms of repentance in Islam. Shafa'ah is one of them. Shafa'ah means intercession on the Day of Judgment. On the Day of Judgment, there will be a group of people who will be condemned to hell. However, through the intercession of the Prophet, the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) or other righteous people, where they will ask Allah to forgive these people who are bound to hell, and Allah may forgive them.

Here is an important question, Allah doesn't need people to intercede in order to be merciful. Remember that as people who are faithful to Allah, we are all one community. When we come together as a community,

even on the Day of Judgment, in order to vouch for one another, we display great forms of compassion. This kind of compassion, especially coming from the righteous among Allah's creation, is something that is very pleasing to Allah.

Repentance, however, is not just restricted to this world. Allah gives us the opportunity to repent sincerely in the grave, on the Day of Judgment, as well as in hell. But this point here needs to be expanded upon.

Let's first start with repentance in this world. Just merely saying *astaghfurallah* (God forgive me) is not enough. *Tawbah* is to return to God, which means that one must sincerely regret what one did and do one's best to put a stop to that sin. In other words, *tawbah*, for it to be fully complete, must come about through a change of heart.

On the Day of Judgment and in hell, there will be many people who will ask Allah for forgiveness. But as the Qur'an teaches us, their repentance is not sincere for if they were given the chance to live again, they would commit the same sins over and over again.

However, if a person on the Day of Judgment or in hell has a genuine change of heart, then he or she will be forgiven on the Day of Judgment or in hell and will go to heaven.

Real repentance and full forgiveness is a matter turning to Allah sincerely. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Say to those who have disbelieved [that] if they cease, what has previously occurred will be forgiven for them..." (Chapter 8, verse 38 of the Holy Qur'an)

Repentance is therefore a state of being, and not merely an utterance of words. Islam teaches us that Allah loves the repentant sinner but dislikes the person who does good deeds but becomes arrogant as a result of it.

Allah says the following in the Qur'an:

"Verily, Allah loves those who repent and those who purify themselves."
(Chapter 2, verse 222 of the Holy Qur'an)

Until Next Time, Thank you for watching. As-salāmu 'Alaykum wa
rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh