

April 2012

Jumada al-Awwal /Jumada at-Thani

Repentance (Tawbah)

There are many words for repentance in the Qur'an. For example Tawbah, Inaabah (turning to Allah (SWT) in repentance), Istighfar (seeking forgiveness) and Afou (forgiveness by overlooking the error).

It is said in the Qur'an "Say : O my Servants 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." And turn in repentance to your Lord, and submit to Him before the Penalty comes upon you: after that you shall not be helped." (Surah 39, Zumar or The Crowds, Verse 53)

Repenting means that we are acknowledging that we are not perfect and that we make mistakes everyday, committing major and minor sins (i.e. missing salah, lying, backbiting and gossiping) , and we all have shortcomings. Repenting to Allah (subanahu wa ta'ala (SWT)) the Merciful Creator and the Master has been witnessed throughout Prophethood. The first repentance began with Prophet Adam (alayhi-salam) when he disobeyed Allah (SWT). After repenting to Allah (SWT), Prophet Adam was forgiven. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) used to seek Allah's forgiveness more than seventy times a day (Bukhari) or a hundred times a day (Muslim).

How to Repent: 1)Repenting with sincerity and devotion is very essential if we want Allah (SWT) to forgive us. We must feel deep regret and remorse for doing something bad such as lying, missing salah or backbiting. 2)We must then act and do good deeds such as performing salah. Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said "Whoever commits a sin and then performs two Rakahs salah after doing wudu, and then asks for Allah's forgiveness, Allah will forgive him. Other good deeds that we can do to receive Allah (SWT)' s mercy is to fast, pay alms and charities, perform Hajj, and many other types of purifications which can help us to remove our sins and elevate our status in the Hereafter.

3) Intention to never return: After repenting and taking action by praying and doing good deeds, we must intend not to go back and repeat the same sin. If we do find ourselves repeating the same sin, we must immediately turn to Allah (SWT) and repent. 4) In addition, if we have violated others' rights by hurting them, slandering them, or unlawfully taking their property, then we must ask them for forgiveness and return anything owed to them. It is important to apologize and ask for forgiveness as soon as possible.

Repenting is for everyone and not only for those who commit major sins. Allah (SWT) has asked all of us to turn unto Him in repentance by saying “ And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.” (Surah Nur: The Light, Verse: 31). Allah (SWT) is all Forgiving and Merciful to those who repent to Him sincerely and follow His guidance. Repenting sincerely purifies our heart and soul. Repentance is a gift from Allah (SWT) and we should use it wisely. Our world would be a better place if we all could look into our own heart and soul and repent daily.

Du'a (supplication) for Forgiveness: Sayyid-ul-istighfaar:

اللهم أنت ربي لا إله إلا أنت خلقتني وأنا عبدك وأنا على عهدك ووعدك ما استطعت اعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت أبوء لك بنعمتك علي وأبوء بذنبي فغفر لي فإنه لا يغفر الذنوب إلا أنت

“Allahumma anta Rabbi la ilaha illa anta, Anta Khalaqtani wa ana abduka, wa ana ala ahdika wa wa'dika mastata'tu, A'uthu bika min Sharri ma sana'tu, abu'u Laka bini'matika'alaiya, wa Aboo'u Laka bithanbi faghfirli innahu la yaghfiru athdhunuba illa ant.”

“O Allah, You are my Lord. There is no God except You. You have created me, and I am Your slave. And I keep my promise and my pledge (of worship) with You as best as I can. I seek Your protection from what I have committed. I acknowledge Your bounties upon me, and I confess (to You) my sin, so forgive me for no one can forgive sins except You.”