

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ أَدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ

Allah azza wajal, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate, The Most Merciful
All Praise is due to Allah azza wajal, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon
His Beloved Messenger Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam

Riyaadus Saaliheen

Hadith #18

Obstacles in making Taubah

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
قَالَ: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ يَقْبَلُ تَوْبَةَ الْعَبْدِ مَا لَمْ يُغْرَغْ -" رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَقَالَ حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ

(ترمذی، کتاب الدعوات، باب فی فضل التوبة ک الخ، ۱/۲۷۸، حدیث: ۲۵۸۱)

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn 'Umar Radi Allahu 'Anhu narrates that the Holy Prophet Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam has stated that,

“Allah azza wajal continues to accept the Taubah of a person until he begins to gurgle (with death)”. (Tirmidhi Shareef)

Taubah is accepted until the last few breaths

Allama Mullah Ali Qari *Alaihir Rahmah* explains that, “Allah *azza wajaal* continues to accept the Taubah of a person until the soul does not reach the throat. In other words, until there is no solid and valid sign of death. When death is about to occur, at that time, no one’s Taubah is accepted”.

In Surah Nisaa, verse 18, Allah *azza wajaal* declares that,

وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ
قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْإِنِّ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۖ

“And that repentance is not for those who continue in doing evil until when death comes to anyone of them, he says, 'now I repent' neither for those who die as infidels.” In Tafseer ibn Abbas, it is mentioned that, “By impending death is meant when a person sees the Angel of Death and this is accepted by the great majority. The reason is that many people see him and many people see him before dying.” (Mirqaatul Mafaatih)

The departing of the soul commences from the feet!

Mufti Ahmed Yaar Khan Na’eemi *Alaihir Rahmah* explains that, “In the last moments when the Angel of Death appears, this is known as gurgle or “Ghar Gharah”. At that moment, Taubah made for (repentance) for Kufr is not accepted. The reason is that for Imaan (to be valid) one has to believe in the Unseen and now since this Unseen has become apparent, (there is no validity in accepting faith at that moment). This is the reason that the Taubah of Pharaoh was not accepted. However, one can still make Taubah for ones sins.”

The ‘Ulama have explained that the Angel of Death is visible to every person, both Muslim and non-Muslim. It should also be remembered that the soul starts to be taking away from the feet and that the person still has control over the tongue and heart. (Miraatul Manaajih)

Some of the obstacles in making Taubah and its Solutions

Obstacle (1)

A person is unaware or chooses to be unaware of the consequences!

Many people are unaware of the consequences of not making Taubah and this is a great obstacle. One of the reasons is that the punishment which people are aware of; is at that moment not in front of the person. However, anything that his Nafs desires appears in front of him. This is the nature of people in that they run after things which come quickly and do not concern themselves with the consequences that may occur later. A person who is used to performing shameful deeds is very quick to turn to these actions and this makes him oblivious of the punishment which would come later.

Solution:

If a person can only convince himself that even though the punishment is not in front of him at that moment but it is something of a certainty. One leaves aside many worldly things when one realizes that it could be harmful for them. How many people take precaution when they learn that they have a heart problem, or a sugar problem, or some other medical problem as the doctor has advised them to refrain from certain foods and they strive to refrain from these foods only because they fear a future medical problem? Is this not foolish? We do all of this because a certain doctor has told us. But we have no shame when we are breaking the rules of Allah *azza wajaal*.

If we are able to remember this simple message, the obstacle of making Taubah would be removed and we will certainly endeavour to make Taubah all the time.

Obstacle (2)

Sometimes a person is so immersed in things like adultery, mixing with the opposite sex and other shameful deeds that they feel that if they leave these things their lives would become very boring and useless.

Solution:

If this is how a person thinks? He should ponder that if he lives in this fashion for these few days in the world, what will happen to him when he misses out on the enjoyment of Jannah which is forever? He should think that if he cannot practise on patience, how he will be able to manage against the Fire of Hell? Even though these actions of his in the world may seem enjoyable for the moment, yet, the consequences and the sadness attached to it is for a long time. A wise person has stated that, “Do not commit sin because of a certain lust because this lust would finally disappear but the sin would remain forever. And do not refrain from performing a good deed because of hardship. The effects of hardship would disappear, however, the good deeds recorded in your Book of Deeds would remain.”

Prolonged hope!

Among the reasons that people take long to make Taubah is that their Nafs and the Shaytaan convinces them that they still have a long time to live and that they will make Taubah later in life.

Solution:

A person like this should understand that since death is something which he cannot run away from and that he has no idea when death would come, therefore, he should be wise enough to understand that to prolong Taubah is certainly foolish. At the same time, if a certain sin is such which he becomes habitual of it, how will he be able to eliminate this action from himself? What guarantee does he have that he will live until old age? This is the reason that Hadrat Sayyiduna Luqman Hakeem *Alaihir Rahmah* once advised his son, “O my son! Refrain from prolonging Taubah because death comes suddenly.” (Shuhubul Imaan)

Remember that death is not confined to age. Whatever your age, all are delivered to the grave. When death comes, no happiness, sadness or any other activity can stop it. If a person can remember this all the time, hopefully he would make Taubah all the time.

They give wrong meaning to the Divine Mercy of the Allah *azza wajaal*

There are many people who when they are told to make Taubah they brush it away by saying that Allah *azza wajal* is Most Gracious, Most Merciful and He will forgive them. They also claim that they trust completely in His Divine Mercy and that He will not punish them, hence they feel no need to make Taubah.

Solution:

Our advice for these people is simple. Just as Allah *azza wajal* is Most Merciful, in like manner He is also “Al Qahhaar” and “Al Jabbaar”. In the Hadith Shareef it is also mentioned that certain Muslims will also enter Hell. Therefore, what guarantee do they have that they may not be among these people? We should not test the Divine Mercy of Allah *azza wajal*. We should look at the examples of the eminent Muslims and take heed from this.

Ameerul Mo'mineen, Hadrat Sayyiduna 'Umar *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* has stated that, “If a call is given that except for one person, all others should enter Hell, then I have hope (that, the person not entering Hell) is me. If a call is given that all should enter Jannah except one, then I have extreme fear that perhaps that one person (not entering) is not me.” (Hulyatul Awliya)

Ameerul Mo'mineen, Hadrat Sayyiduna Ali *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* once advised his son, “O my son! Have fear for Allah *azza wajal* in such a manner that you begin to think that if everyone on earth presented all their good deeds to Him, He will not accept it. And have such hope in Allah *azza wajal* that you begin to think that if everyone on earth presented all their bad deeds to Him, still too, He will forgive you.” (Ihya ul Uloom)

If these people claim to have such hope in the Divine Mercy of Allah *azza wajal* will they be prepared to take all their wealth and belongings and immediately distribute it among the poor and needy and then wait for Allah *azza wajal* to reveal to them the hidden treasures under the earth? Do they also display the same behaviour when they realize that robbers will be coming any moment, and because Allah *azza wajal* is so great, therefore, they should leave all their wealth visible so that Allah *azza wajal* would turn away the attention of the robbers from them? No, these are the first people that would instantly hide their wealth and riches.

In the Hadith Shareef, a person has being considered as a foolish person who is fooled by his Nafs and Shaytaan and is deceived by the fact that he will be forgiven for his sins even without making Taubah.

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has explained that, “An intelligent person is that person who analyses himself (or someone who self-inspects himself) and for the sake of (betterment) for the Hereafter, he performs good deeds. A silly person is that person who follows his carnal desires and yet hopes for reward from Allah *azza wajaal* in the Hereafter”. (ibn Maja Shareef)

No consistency or reliance on making Taubah

Some people have this way of thinking that, we have no certainty whether we will refrain from sin in the future, hence what is the value of making Taubah right now.

Solution:

This is nothing but the evil whisperings of the Shaytaan. The reason is that what guarantee do you have that you will remain alive after making Taubah at that moment? There is a possibility that you might die at that moment and may not have the opportunity again to commit a sin. As a matter of fact, when one makes Taubah, he or she should have the intention of avoiding sin in the future. We have mentioned that this is one of the conditions of sincere Taubah. In this regard, we should solely trust in Allah *azza wajaal*. If one is not able to protect oneself from future sins, at least the past sins which one has committed would be forgiven. We should always continue to make Taubah thinking that this is the final moment we have to make Taubah.

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, “The Shaytaan once declared in the Divine Court of Allah *azza wajaal*, ‘O My Lord! I swear by Your Divine Dignity and Awe, as long as the soul remains in the body (of a person), I will continue to deceive them.’ Allah *azza wajaal* then declared, “By My Divine Respect, Awe and Greatness, I will continue to forgive them as long as they seek repentance from me.”” (Musnad Imam Ahmed)

One loses hope in making Taubah because of the amount of sin committed

There are many people who have spent years in illegal trade and bad habits such as stealing, murder, killing of innocent people in the name of terror, etc. Shaytaan convinces them that since they have performed such serious crimes against humanity, there is no way that their Taubah would even be accepted and that they will never be forgiven. Since most of these people have no Islamic knowledge, they believe this and continue to live in this sinful manner.

Solution:

We should advice such people never to lose hope in the Divine Mercy of Allah *azza wajal*.

In Surah Zumar, verse 53, th Allah *azza wajal* declares:

لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ

“Despair not of the mercy of Allah.”

The Divine Mercy of Allah *azza wajal* encircles all things

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, “Allah *azza wajal* is even more Merciful on His slaves than a mother is merciful on her child”. (Musim Shareef)

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has explained that, “Allah *azza wajal* possesses a hundred Mercy (this is just as an example) and ninety nine parts of this Mercy He has kept aside for Qiyamah. He has only revealed one part of this Mercy on earth. The mercy displayed in the heart of the entire creation is only through this one part of Mercy. The mercy displayed in the heart of a mother and the mercy displayed by an animal for its offspring is because of this (one part) of Mercy. On the Day of Judgement, this one part of Mercy will be added to the other ninety nine parts of Mercy and will be distributed among creation. Each Mercy is equal to the expansiveness of the entire earth and heavens.” (Muslim Shareef)

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah *Radi Allahu ‘Anhu* explains that on the Day of Judgement, two people would be taken out of Hell and Allah *azza wajal* would declare to them, “Whatever punishment you have seen has been because of your actions. I do not oppress My slaves.”

They will again be commanded to enter Hell. One person will hastily run towards Hell and say, “I have become so fearful of sinning that I cannot afford not to obey and fulfil His command”. The other person will declare, “O Allah! I had this thought and this sincere hope that after being taken out of Hell, Your Divine Mercy will not allow me to re-enter Hell.” The Mercy of the Allah *azza wajal* will then become apparent and both of them will be allowed to enter Jannah. (Tirmidhi Shareef)

No matter how much of sin and transgression a person may have performed, as long as he humbly makes Taubah, his Taubah would be accepted. There are numerous commands in this regard and many Ahadith which highlight this fact.

Bad company

There are such people who spend their time in the company of those who are evil and bad by nature and also encourage others to become evil and bad. In this way, they also make others suffer from ultimate loss and damnation. Such people do not make an attempt to make Taubah and also do not encourage others to make Taubah. In fact, when someone among them decides to attend a religious gathering, the next day, that person becomes a target of their joke and ridicule.

Solution:

All types of company creates an impression on a person. The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has said, “The example of good and bad company is like the one who carries fragrance and the one who fans the furnace. From the person who carries fragrance, you would either purchase fragrance or you will receive a sweet scent. As for the one who fans the furnace, either your clothes would be burnt or you would get a foul odour.” (Muslim Shareef)

Hence, we should endeavour to stay away from bad company from the very first instance. If we stay in the company of people who feel no shame in committing bad deeds and their ultimate objective is only to achieve the pleasures of this world, it would be impossible to make Taubah in this case. On the other hand, the effects of good company can be seen all around as well as the rewards.

One is over taken by one's own self conceit

Some people claim that they have made Taubah many times in the past and hence, there is no need now to make Taubah.

Solution:

Our advise to such people is to study carefully the pre-conditions of Taubah and do introspection. They should ask themselves whether in fact they have actually made Taubah and that in future they would not commit any sin. It is hoped that when they do self-introspection, they will soon realize that this way of thinking is incorrect and this will encourage them to make further Taubah.

A person is busy in some evil deed

There are certain people who even though it seems that they have no obstacle in making Taubah, yet they choose not to make Taubah. In most cases, this could include a person who is privately involved with a female and they feel that once they make Taubah this (private enjoyment) will be over. Therefore, even if they wish to make Taubah, there is always that one percent within them which restricts them from making Taubah.

Solution:

Such people should be encouraged to look at the long term effects of this behaviour. They are losing money, time is being wasted, their health will be affected, their families would be disgraced and they are robbing themselves of doing good. They should also be made aware that Allah *azza wajal* and the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* would become angry with this behaviour of theirs and as a follower of Islam, this is unacceptable. They should be encouraged to lead lives that makes a person a

successful in this world as well as the Hereafter. Such a person should be made aware that as he would not like this to happen to his daughter or sister and, in like manner, he should not do this to someone else's sister or daughter.

The following Hadith Shareef is an eye opener in this regard

It is said that a young man once approached the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* and asked, "O Prophet of Allah! Please give me permission to commit adultery!"

When the blessed companions heard this, they became extremely angry and wanted to immediately give him a severe beating, however the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* advised them not to. The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* then called the young man closer to him and in a very soft and kind manner he asked him. "Young man! Would you like it if someone (performed this same act) with your mother?"

He replied, "How will I be able to bear such a thing?"

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* then asked him, "(If that is the case) how will others allow and bear this action of yours?"

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* then asked him, "If someone does this to your daughter, will you bear this?"

He replied in the negative.

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* then asked, "If someone did this to your sister or with your aunt?"

In this way the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* continued to ask him about other relatives and he kept replying that he would not be happy with it. The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* then placed his blessed hand on the chest of this young man and prayed to Allah *azza wajaal*, "O Allah! Purify his heart and protect his

private area and forgive his sins.” It is reported that after this incident, this young man never ever committed adultery again. (Musnad Imam Ahmed)

It is hoped that after reading this Hadith Shareef, a person would not unduly delay in making Taubah.

A person feels that he would be left behind in the world

Some people actually do not make Taubah believing and fearing that this would prevent them from increasing in their worldly status and position.

Solution:

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, “Love for the Dunya is the root of all evil.” (Ibn abi Dunya)

Therefore, such people should be made to understand that to give up the Hereafter for the sake of this Dunya is achieving nothing but damnation and loss. In the Hadith Shareef, it is mentioned that, “A person who loves his world, damages his Hereafter and he who loves the Hereafter hurts his world. Therefore, (O Muslims!) leave that which will be destroyed and choose that which will be forever. (Musnad Imam Ahmed)

What is the actual worth of the Dunya?

The Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, “I swear by Allah! The similarity of the Hereafter against the world is like when you place your finger into the ocean and then see how much of water the finger has brought back”. (Muslim Shareef) In other words, the wealth, the treasures, etc. of this world is hardly anything compared to the Hereafter.

Insults made to a person by his friends and family

It is seen that when a person intends to make Taubah, his family and friends become his instant enemies. Some of them even tell him that he is still young and not that old where he should even keep a beard, etc. They even tell him that if he adopts this behaviour people may not even allow him to marry their daughters!

Solution:

In this regard, if a person has certainty and trust in Allah *azza wajaal* every difficulty becomes easy to handle. He should not be embarrassed about his family torments and insults nor should he fear the consequences of their actions. He should continue to do good and become involved in noble acts and deeds without concerning himself with peoples comments.

Points to be remembered!

1. When one enters one house, one should make Salaam loudly.
2. When a person sees his parents approaching, he should stand up with respect.
3. At least once a day, a person should kiss the hands of his parents.
4. One should keep one's voice as soft as possible in front of one's parent. Try to avoid looking them straight in the eye and when speaking to them, one should lower one's gaze.
5. Whatever task and duty they command you to perform, as long it does not transgress Islamic law, try and perform that task as quickly as possible.
6. Adopt simplicity in your environment and home. Avoid arguing all the time without reason. Avoid picking out faults in the food and drink you consume and make an effort to create a harmonious environment in your home. If there are people that you feel you have transgressed upon, you should immediately ask for forgiveness.
7. By adopting simplicity outside the home environment, this would also create Barakah within the home.
8. When addressing people within the home, address them with respect and show humility.
9. Try and sleep at least two hours after attending the local Masjid for 'Isha Salaah. In this manner, you are also able to awake for the Tahajjud Salaah and for the Fajr Salaah quiet easily. This manner of sleeping also eliminates all forms of laziness.
10. If you are not the head of the family and family members are performing un-Islamic acts within the home like watching un-Islamic films, etc. you should advise them in a humble and decent manner.

11. Try and inculcate the practise of at least reading one Islamic incident or relating one Islamic event to members of the household every day. This creates an Islamic atmosphere and also encourages other members to be more interested in Islam.
12. Continue to make Du'a for members of your household because the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, "Du'a is a weapon of a Muslim." (Mustadrak; Haakim)
13. When one visits one's in-laws, the same decorum and respect should be displayed which one displays in one's house.
14. After every Salaah, one should read the Du'a which appears in Surah Furqan, verse 74, by adding the word "Allahuma" before it. One should also recite the Durood Shareef before and after. In Sha Allah *azza wajal* it is hoped that through this Du'a, an Islamic environment would be created within the home and one's children would also become more obedient.
15. If one has a disobedient child or even an adult, one should read for eleven or twenty one days the 21st and 22nd verse of Surah Buruj at the head side of this person when he or she is sleeping. One should read in such a low voice that the person is not disturbed.
16. If one has a disobedient child and wishes to make that child obedient, then one should read "Ya Shaheedu" twenty one times before and after Durood Shareef after the Fajr Salah until this individual becomes obedient. One should read this while looking above.

Obstacle

Some people refrain from making Taubah because they actually believe that people would think of them as being strange and that people would look at them like there is something wrong with them.

Solution:

Our advice to such brothers is that this is also a whispering of the Shaytaan. If on the Day of Judgement, the actions of people are presented and there is only bad deeds on your record, will you not be even more embarrassed? It is better that people scorn you today for adopting Islamic clothing than for you to face embarrassment in the Hereafter. Hence, you should make Taubah immediately and do not bother what people say.

Points to remember

1. Allah *azza wajal* is the Most Merciful, Most Kind and He is ever ready to accept the Taubah of a person, therefore, we should endeavour to make Taubah all the time and never give up hope on the Mercy of Allah *azza wajal*.
2. The Shaytaan is ever present to mislead and turn people away from the Straight Path and is always trying to make people not to make Taubah, therefore, be aware and do not fall into his trap.
3. The Taubah of a non-Muslim is not accepted at the moment of death. Therefore, he or she should strive to make Taubah before this moment.
4. If one continues to make introspection of oneself and remembers one's sins and transgression, it becomes easier to make Taubah and Istighfaar in the long term.
5. Such is the Divine Mercy of Allah *azza wajal* that until the last moment of his life, Allah *azza wajal* gives people the opportunity to seek pardon for their sins. There is no guarantee on life. Every day we see people who seem fit and strong suddenly die in front of us. This should be a great lesson to us.