



# New Muslims Class

LESSON 11

## Major Sins and Tawbah

# Today's Agenda

- Review of Last Week's Lesson (Lesson 11 – Intro to Qur'an)
- Part 3: Lesson Twelve – Major Sins and Tawbah
  - What is sin and what are the consequences of committing sins
  - Define and differentiate between major sins and minor sins
  - Discussion of major sins
  - Discussion of minor sins
  - Repentance in Islam: Define and discuss importance
  - Conditions of repentance in Islam
  - Look at the “master of repentance”

# Sin and Consequences of Sin

*“Righteousness is good morality and sin is that which causes discomfort (or pinches) within your soul and which you dislike people to become informed of.” [Sahih Muslim]*

- Sin is the aspect in a Muslim’s life which he or she makes efforts to abstain from at all costs.
- Allah (swt) warns mankind that the ones whose bad deeds (sins) are heavy will be in Hell.
- Striving to live the life of a believer (*mu’min*) and separate from the likeness of the sinner (*fasiq*)
- Allah (swt), in His Mercy, has made the number of things that are sins very small, and has made this life easy for someone to avoid sins or to seek repentance for them.

# Major Sins and Minor Sins

## There are two types of sins in Islam

- *Major Sins* (*kaba'ir* or “enormities”): Any sin entailing either a threat of punishment in the Hereafter explicitly mentioned by the Qur'an or Hadeeth, a prescribed legal penalty (Hadd), or being accursed by Allah or His Messenger.
- *Minor Sins* (*sayi'aat*) smaller sins and daily activities where we have to be aware of our behavior and conduct. (ex. losing temper, saying bad words, making fun of people, bad behavior, bad treatment of people).

# Discussion of Minor Sins

- **Minor Sins will not be forgiven until and unless we refrain from major sins.**

*“If ye avoid the great (things) which ye are forbidden, We will remit from you your evil deeds and make you enter at a noble gate”*  
An-Nisa (The Women) 4:31

- **Prayer expiates minor sins, if major sins are avoided.**
- **Continuous minor sins become major sins if not stopped.**

# Discussion of Major Sins

- **Shirk**— associating partners with Allah
- Murder
- **Not performing the Prayer**
- Not paying Zakat
- **Showing disrespect to one's parents**
- **Severing ties of kinship**
- **Accepting usury (riba)**
- Consuming the property of an orphan
- **Lying about the Prophet**
- Breaking one's fast on purpose during Ramadan
- Fleeing from jihad
- Adultery
- Tyranny
- **Drinking intoxicants**
- Showing arrogance to others
- Bearing false witness
- Misappropriating Muslim funds or Zakat
- Theft
- Highway robbery
- Suicide
- **Not freeing oneself of all traces of urine (before prayer)**
- **Showing off in good works**
- Eavesdropping, spying on Muslims, revealing their weaknesses
- **Despairing of the Mercy of Allah and loss of hope**
- Gambling
- Forgoing the Friday prayer to pray alone (for men)

# *Tawbah* (Repentance) in Islam

- *Tawbah* is an obligation on every Muslim
- Allah (swt) forgives sins whether serious/grave or numerous with sincere *tawbah*
- Only through Allah's mercy will anyone enter paradise
- Forgiveness is not automatic, must be sought sincerely and with consciousness

*"O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance: In the hope that your Lord will remove from you your ills and admit you to Gardens beneath which Rivers flow,- the Day that Allah will not permit to be humiliated the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands, while they say, "Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us, and grant us Forgiveness: for Thou hast power over all things" At-Tahrem (The Banning); 66:8*

# Exercise on *Tawbah*

*Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri (ra):*

The Prophet said, "Amongst the men of Bani Israel there was a man who had murdered ninety-nine persons. Then he set out asking (whether his repentance could be accepted or not). He came upon a monk and asked him if his repentance could be accepted. The monk replied in the negative and so the man killed him. He kept on asking till a man advised to go to such and such village. (So he left for it) but death overtook him on the way. While dying, he turned his chest towards that village (where he had hoped his repentance would be accepted), and so the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment quarreled amongst themselves regarding him. Allah ordered the village (towards which he was going) to come closer to him, and ordered the village (whence he had come), to go far away, and then He ordered the angels to measure the distances between his body and the two villages. So he was found to be one span closer to the village (he was going to). So he was forgiven." [Sahih Bukhari 4/676]



# Lessons Learned

1. We see that the man was trying to repent and change his ways.
2. The man was moving in that direction.
3. The man was a great sinner.
4. The man had an intention (*niyya*) of goodness and his intention was followed by a corresponding act.
5. Allah saw and recognized his intention and the action which followed that intention.
6. Allah, in all His Love and Mercy, created forgiveness for the man.

# Conditions of *Tawbah*

**3 conditions of repentance if the offense involves the Right of Allah:**

1. To desist from committing it.
2. To feel sorry for committing it
3. To decide not to ever recommit it again.

**If the sin involves a human's right, a 4<sup>th</sup> condition is required:**

4. To absolve oneself from such right by making it up to the individual who was wronged by your action.

*It is important that we never despair of Allah's Mercy -  
no sin is too great to repent for... or too little for that matter.*

# *Du'a (supplication) for Repentance*

## *Sayyid ul Istighfar (Master of Repentance)*

### Transliteration:

Allahumma 'Anta Rabbi La 'Ilaaha 'Illa 'Anta  
 Khalaqtani Wa 'Ana `Abduka  
 Wa 'Ana `Alaa `Ahdika Wa Wa `dika Ma Astata`tu  
 'A`udhu Bika Min Sharri Ma sana`tu  
 'Abu'u Laka Bini`matika `Alayya Wa 'Abu'u Laka Bidhanbi  
 Faghfir Li, 'Innahu La Yaghfiru Adh-Dhunuba 'Illa 'Anta

سید الاستغفار  
 اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِي  
 وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ  
 مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ  
 أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ بِذَنْبِي  
 فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

### Translation:

"O Allah! You are my Lord. There is no God except You. You created me and I am Your slave. To the best of my ability, I will abide by my covenant and pledge to You. I seek Your protection from the evil of my own creation. I acknowledge Your favors to me and I admit my sins. So please forgive me for no one can forgive sins except You."

# New Muslims Class

## LESSON 11 Appendix



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# Glossary

**Du'a:** Prayer of supplication. May take the form of a spontaneous address to God, or of particular formulas.

**Hadith:** A report verifying how the Holy Prophet performed an action, dealt with an incident or reacted to a situation together with any dialogue which took place at the time.

**Mu'min:** A believer.

**Fasiq:** A sinner.

**Shirk:** The conscious or unconscious ascription of ultimate authority to someone or something other than Allah.

**Kaba'ir:** A major sin, often called an enormity. Any sin entailing either a threat of punishment in the Hereafter explicitly mentioned by the Qur'an or Hadeeth, a prescribed legal penalty (Hadd), or being accursed by Allah or His Messenger

**Sayyi'aat:** Minor sins.

**Jannah:** Heaven

**Hadd:** A prescribed legal penalty for a major sin. Often requires some expiation of the sin.

# Glossary

**Zakat:** The obligatory annual alms given from property and wealth. This becomes due only when a person has kept wealth above a certain limit for one year. The proportion (nisaab) for cash and highly liquid assets is usually set at 2.5%

**Riba:** Usury

**Tawbah:** Repentance

**Niyya:** Conscious intention. It is the part of an action which affects the heart and is counted by Allah. Without sincere intention no act, and particularly no act of worship, has any value.

**Salaf:** Pious Predecessors

**Tawhid:** The doctrine of the absolute unity and indivisibility of Allah.

**Sunnah:** The example of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in character and behavior. As what he did was not from his own will but from his Lord he is both the exponent of the Qur'an in practical human life and the model of perfect humanity. When Muslims follow the example of the Prophet, even in one simple act they are making a link not only with the Prophet but also with Allah.

It is the second source of the Shariah, after the Qur'an.

**Nabi:** A Prophet. Several are listed in the Qur'an. Not always a Rasul.

# FAQs

- *What about the sins that I committed before I was Muslim?*

All the sins that one commits before Islam are wiped clean. When someone states their shahada, it is as if they are a new born. All sins are wiped away. If you wronged a person, however, then it you should do what you can to make amends or to right that wrong.

- *Is there hope for someone who commits major sins?*

Definitely. Two of Allah's names are the Most Merciful (Al-Rahman) and the All Forgiving (al-Ghafoor). As mentioned above, all sins can be forgiven except associating partners with Allah. It is important to remember this and not get discouraged when we make mistakes. After all, we are human! Take heart in the fact that the door of forgiveness is always open and in fact forgiveness can be seen as a means to come closer to Allah by thinking about Him and improving oneself after having committed a sin. The most important thing is to be sincere in one's repentance and to make a promise to oneself to try to the utmost of one's ability to never repeat the sin again.

# FAQs

- *Are there any sins that are unforgivable?*

All sins can be forgiven except the sin of associating partners with Allah (shirk). This does not only relate to associating other gods with Allah. The concept of shirk is much more extensive. If someone “lives for the dollar” then their intention is to do something for the love of money, instead of for the sake of Allah. We should all be careful in this and make sure that we are not worshipping worldly things with Allah.

- *What if I commit a major sin and I don't know that it is a sin?*

We are held accountable only for the knowledge we have. It is never too late to make repentance for a sin you have committed. Allah swt is most merciful and is the most forgiving. However, it is incumbent on all believers to learn.



# References

1. Based on text from Chapter 2: Tawbah [Repentance] , of The famous collection of Ahadith Riyad us Salihin by Imam ul Islam Abu Zakariya Yahya Ibn Sharaf An Nawawi
2. Phillips, Abu Ameenah Bilal; Salvation Through Repentance; Tawheed Publications, Riyadh 1990.