

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid

14289 - Repentance

the question

I have committed many sins which no one knows of except Allaah. What do I have to do so that Allaah will accept my repentance?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

A Muslim's faith may become weak and he may be overwhelmed by his desires. The Shaytaan may make sin attractive to him, so he wrongs himself (commits sin) and falls into that which Allaah has forbidden. But Allaah is Kind to His slaves, and His mercy encompasses all things. Whoever repents after doing wrong, Allaah will accept his repentance, for Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful.

"But whosoever repents after his crime and does righteous good deeds (by obeying Allaah), then verily, Allaah will pardon him (accept his repentance). Verily, Allaah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful [al-Maa'idah 5:39 - interpretation of the meaning]

Allaah is Forgiving and Generous. He commands all His slaves to repent sincerely so that they may gain the mercy of Allaah and His Paradise. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"O you who believe! Turn to Allaah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)" [al-Tahreem 66:8]

The gate of repentance is open to His slaves, until the sun rises from the west. The Prophet (peace

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and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Allaah spreads out His Hand at night to accept the repentance of those who did wrong during the day, and He spreads out His Hand during the day to accept the repentance of those who did wrong during the night. (This will continue) until the sun rises from the west.” (Narrated by Muslim, no. 2759)

Sincere repentance is not merely the matter of words spoken on the tongue. Rather, the acceptance of repentance is subject to the condition that the person gives up the sin straight away, that he regrets what has happened in the past, that he resolves not to go back to the thing he has repented from, that he restores people’s rights or property if his sin involved wrongdoing towards others, and that he repents before the agony of death is upon him. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they whom Allaah will forgive and Allaah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.

And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: ‘Now I repent;’ nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment” [al-Nisaa’ 4:17-18]

Allaah accepts repentance and is Merciful. He calls sinners to repent, so that He might forgive them:

“...your Lord has written (prescribed) Mercy for Himself, so that if any of you does evil in ignorance, and thereafter repents and does righteous good deeds (by obeying Allaah), then surely, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” [al-An’aam 6:54 - interpretation of the meaning]

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

“And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you

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do”[al-Shooraa 42:25]

“Truly, Allaah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves”[al-Baqarah 2:222]

When a kaafir becomes a Muslim, Allaah turns his bad deeds (sayi’aat) into good deeds (hasanaat), and forgives him all his previous sins, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“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. He commands them to repent so that He might forgive them. But the devils among mankind and the jinn want to turn people away from the truth and make them incline towards falsehood, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away (from the Right Path) [al-Nisaa’4:27]

The mercy of Allaah encompasses all things. If a person’s sins are very great and he has wronged himself very much, but he then repents, Allaah will accept his repentance and will forgive his sins no matter how great they are. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: O ‘Ibaadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allaah, verily, Allaah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”[al-Zumar 39:53]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Our Lord comes down to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains, and says, ‘Who will call upon Me so that I may answer him? Who will ask Me so that I may give to him? Who will seek My forgiveness so that I

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may forgive him?" (Narrated by Muslim, no. 758)

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 (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) 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)