

Source: Riyadu-s-Salihin (Gardens of the Righteous) by Yahyaa Ibn Sharaf An-Nawawi

Book of Repentance: Hadith # 20

Abu Sa' id Al-Khudri (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

"There was a man from among a nation before you who killed ninety-nine people and then made an inquiry about the most learned person on the earth. He was directed to a monk. He came to him and told him that he had killed ninety-nine people and asked him if there was any chance for his repentance to be accepted. He replied in the negative and the man killed him also completing one hundred. He then asked about the most learned man in the earth. He was directed to a scholar. He told him that he had killed one hundred people and asked him if there was any chance for his repentance to be accepted. He replied in the affirmative and asked, 'Who stands between you and repentance? Go to such and such land; there (you will find) people devoted to prayer and worship of Allah, join them in worship, and do not come back to your land because it is an evil place.' So he went away and hardly had he covered half the distance when death overtook him; and there was a dispute between the angels of mercy and the angels of torment. The angels of mercy pleaded, 'This man has come with a repenting heart to Allah,' and the angels of punishment argued, 'He never did a virtuous deed in his life.' Then there appeared another angel in the form of a human being and the contending angels agreed to make him arbiter between them. He said, 'Measure the distance between the two lands. He will be considered belonging to the land to which he is nearer.' They measured and found him closer to the land (land of piety) where he intended to go, and so the angels of mercy collected his soul".

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

In another version: "He was found to be nearer to the locality of the pious by a cubit and was thus included among them". Another version says: "Allah commanded (the land which he wanted to leave) to move away and commanded the other land (his destination) to draw nearer and then He said: "Now measure the distance between them.' It was found that he was nearer to his goal by a hand's span and was thus forgiven". It is also narrated that he drew closer by a slight movement on his chest.

- **Minor sins can be washed away by good deeds, but major sins can ONLY be forgiven through repentance.**

What is Repentance?

1. Umar's words (Allah be pleased with him) that it is, "To sin and then never to return to it."
2. To hate the sin, and the seek forgiveness for it every time it occurs to one, as Hasan al-Basri (Allah have mercy on him) said.
3. Qatada's words (Allah have mercy on him), "To be genuine and truthful in one's repentance," which is what Imam Bukhari chose as the definition of true repentance in his chapter heading.
4. To have sincerity in one's repentance.
5. To be concerned about one's repentance not being accepted.
6. To be such that it does not need another repentance after it.
7. To be made out of fear and hope, and be accompanied by consistency in worship.
8. Like the seventh, but with the added condition that one desert those who assisted one in sin.
9. That one's sin be between one's eyes. [f: That is, one does not forget it.]

[Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari]

Ahadith About Repentance:

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) saying, "I swear by Allah that I seek Allah's Pardon and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day."

[Al-Bukhari]

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "By the One in Whose Hand my soul is! If you do not commit sins, Allah would replace you with a people who would commit sins and seek forgiveness from Allah; and Allah will certainly forgive them."

[Muslim]

The Prophet (SAW) said, "One who repents from sin is like one who has no sin."

[Ibn Maja; Tabrani]

The Conditions for Repentance (Tawba)

The conditions for repentance are well known:

1. Leaving the sin;
2. Remorse over having committed the sin;
3. Resolve never to return to the sin;
4. (If it relates to the rights of another person, then to return the rights or property one wrongly took).

There is an interesting story related about Dinaar al-'Ayaar. Dinaar had a righteous mother who would constantly advise him to repent for his wayward, sinful existence, but as much as she tried, her words had no positive effect on him whatsoever. Then, one day, as he was walking by a graveyard, he stopped to pick up a bone. He was shocked to see how it crumbled and turned to dust in his hand. The sight of that bone had a profound effect on Dinaar. He began to think about his life and his past sins, and he then exclaimed, "Woe unto you, O Dinaar, you are going to end up like this crushed bone, and your body will turn into dust." All of his past sins then flashed before his eyes, and he made a firm resolve to repent. Turning his gaze towards the sky, he said, "My Lord, I now turn to you in complete submission, so accept me and have Mercy on me."

With a completely changed heart and state of mind, Dinaar went to his mother and said, "Mother, what does a master do when he captures his slave who had run away from him?" She said, "[To punish him] the master provides him with coarse clothing and low-quality food; and he ties his hands and feet so that he does not make another attempt to escape." Dinaar said, "Then I want a garment made of coarse wool, low-quality barley, and two chains. Mother, do with me that which is done with a runaway slave. Perhaps my Lord will, upon seeing my humiliation and humility, have mercy on me." Seeing that her son was adamant and resolute in his request, she complied.

At the beginning of every ensuing night, Dinaar would begin to cry and wail uncontrollably. And he would continue to repeat to himself the words, "Woe unto you, O Dinaar, do you have the power to withstand the Hell fire? How brazen you have been to have led a life that has made you deserving of the anger of the All-Mighty!" He would continue upon that state until the morning.

Turning wane and pale, Dinaar's body slowly wasted away. Not being able to bear seeing him in that pitiable state, his mother said, "My son, be easy on yourself." He answered, "My mother, let me remain tied for a short while, so that perhaps I can achieve long-term comfort later on. For tomorrow, I will be waiting a long time before my Majestic Lord, and I do not know whether He will order me to go to places of beautiful shade or to places of unspeakable horror."

She said, "My son, at least rest for a while." He said, "It is not present rest or comfort that I am seeking out. Mother, it is as if I see you and other people being led tomorrow towards Paradise, while I am being led towards the Hell-fire along with his inhabitants." She left him then, and he returned to crying, worshipping, and reciting the Quran. One night, as he was reciting the Quran, he came across these verses:

So, by your Lord [O Muhammad], We shall certainly call all of them to account, for all that they used to do.

[al-Hijr : 92-93]

As he contemplated the meanings and implications of these verses, he cried with such intensity that he fainted. His mother rushed to him and tried very hard to revive him, but he wouldn't respond. She thought he had died. Looking into the face of her son, she said, "O my beloved one, O the joy of my heart, where shall we meet again?" In fact, Dinaar still had some life left in him, and hearing his mother's words, he answered with a faint voice, "My mother, if you do not find me on the wide plains of the Day of Resurrection, then ask Maalik, the Custodian of Hell-fire about me." He then made a croaking sound and died.

After she finished washing his body, Dinaar's mother prepared him for his funeral. She then went out and made the announcement, "O people, come to the funeral prayer of one who has been killed by [fear of] the Hell-fire." People began to come from all directions. It is said that during that era, no greater gathering came together and no amount of tears were shed as much as on that day.

On the same night that his funeral was held, one of Dinaar's friends saw him in a dream, attired in a green robe. Dinaar was prancing around in Paradise, all the while reciting the verse:

So, by your Lord [O Muhammad], We shall certainly call all of them to account, for all that they used to do.

During the dream, his friend heard him say, "By His Might and Majesty, He asked me [about my deeds]. Having mercy on me, He forgave me and pardoned me [my sins.] Lo! Convey news of this to my mother."

4 U 2 DO

Write a story about a Muslim who oppressed his soul by committing sins and then repented.

1. Explain the sins committed, why they are bad, and the harms they caused.
2. Explain why he/she chose to repent. What made him/her want to change?
3. Explain what he/she **has to do** to be forgiven.
4. Write a detailed explanation of **how** he/she repented.
5. Write a heartfelt du'a that the sinner made when he/she repented to Allah.