

Shirk

&

Tawbah (Repentance)

Avoiding Shirk and Repentance to Allah is the only salvation for Human beings.

This booklet contains two topics.

- 1) Shirk (Ascribing, associating a partner or rival to Allah), the Grave sin. What is Shirk, kinds of Shirk and how to avoid it.**
- 2) Tawbah (Repentance to Allah), What QURAN says about it and its condition, merits and rewards.**

Shirk

The Grave sin and the most sensitive issue in the sight of Allah.

Praise be to Allah.

One of the most important obligations is to know the meaning of Shirk, its seriousness and its different type, so that our Tawheed (belief in the oneness of Allah) and our Islam may be complete, and our faith may be sound. We say –And Allah is the source of strength and true guidance comes from Him:

Allah mentioned in Holy Quran:

- Do not attribute to Allah equals which you know (that there is nothing similar to Him) {al-Baqara 2:22}
- And they set up rivals to Allah, to mislead (men) from His path! Say: enjoy (your brief life)! But certainly, your destination is {Hell) Fire! {Ibraheem 14:30}
- And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah. {Al-Baqarah 2:165}

- “Oh my son, do not associate (Anything) with Allah. Indeed association (with him) is great injustice. {Luqman 21:13}
- Have you seen the one who takes as his god his own desire? {Furqan 24:43} {Jathiyah 45:43}
- Verily, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates other with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin. {an-Nisa 4:48}
- Indeed he, who associates others with Allah- Allah has forbidden him paradise, and his refuge is the Fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers. {al-Maidah 5:72}.
- O People of the scripture do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say, “Three/Trinity”; desist-it is better for you. Indeed Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. Everything in the heavens and earth belong to Him and He is the best one to trust. {An-Nisa 4:171}

- Those who say, “God is the Messiah, son of Mary,” have defied God. The Messiah himself said, Children of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord.” If anyone associates others with God, God will forbid him from the Garden, and Hell will be his home. Those people who say that God is the third of three are defying [the truth]: there is only one God. [al-Maida 5:72/73}
- And they say. “The Most merciful has taken [for Himself] a son”. You have done a most atrocious thing. The heavens almost rupture there from and the earth splits open and the mountains collapse in devastation. That they attribute the Most Merciful a son. And it is not appropriate for the Most Merciful that He should take a son. There is no one in the heavens and earth but that he comes to Most Merciful as a servant. {Maryam 19:88 to 93}

In the Hadeeth it is narrated that the Prophet (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever dies claiming that Allah has a rival, will enter Hell”. Bukhari/Muslim

WHAT IS SHIRK

Allah has said repeatedly in Quran and Prophet (SAW) has also said that Allah can forgive any sins (if He wants to) but He will never forgive people who commit major Shirk, Now since it is so severe a crime that Allah even with His infinite mercy will never forgive Shirk, then one should clearly try to understand what is Shirk.

Simple meaning of Shirk in Arabic is, ascribing, associating a partner or rival to Allah. But it is not as simplistic as it sounds, it has vast meaning and there are several kind of shirk.

Brief and simple definition is listed below, so one can at least get a basic idea. Anybody who commit shirk and died without sincere repentance from Allah is in serious trouble on the Day of Judgment. Committing shirk and dying without sincere repentance can easily wipes out one's life good deeds without him been aware of it.

Shirk can be classified as Major and Minor Shirk.

Major Shirk

- 1) Ascribing a partner or rival to Allah in Lordship, worship or in His names and attributes. This kind of shirk may sometimes be outward, such as shirk of those who worship idols and graves, or the dead and absent. Or it may sometimes be hidden, such as those who put their trust in other gods besides Allah. It may sometimes take the form of belief, such as there is someone else who creates, gives life and birth, reigns or controls the affairs of the universe along or other than Allah. It can also be a belief that there is someone else who must be obeyed absolutely besides Allah, so they follow him regarding as permissible or forbidden whatever he wants, even if that goes against the religion of the Messenger, our beloved prophet and Allah's commandments and Quran's teaching.

Remember the golden rule “Anybody’s Obedience is not acceptable in disobedience of Allah” Anybody could be even your parents, relatives, teachers, friends, or even your inner self desires and demands.

- 2) The belief that there are some who knows the unseen as well as Allah, is also a shirk. It is also shirk to believe that there is someone who bestows mercy in a manner that is benefiting only to Allah, so he shows mercy as Allah does and forgives sins and overlooks the bad deeds of his worshippers.
- 3) Shirk sometime takes the form of words, like such who makes Dua or pray to someone other than Allah, or seek his help or seek refuge with him regard to matters over which no one has control except Allah, whether the person called upon is Prophet, a saint, an angel or some other created being. Or say that there is another creator, provider or controller besides Allah.

- 4) Shirk may sometimes takes the form of action: Such as one who sacrifices, prays or prostrates to something other than Allah, or who promulgates laws to replace the rulings of Allah and makes that the law to which people are obliged to refer for judgment; or one who supports the non believers and help them against believers in the matters of religion. And other acts that go against the basic meaning of faith.
- 5) The doctrine of Trinity in Christianity is a major shirk Refer to Quran [4/171, 5/72,5/73, 19/88-93][Refer to pages 2 and 3 of this booklet]
- 6) Worship of Allah through an intermediary is also a major shirk.
Above mentioned major shirk takes a person beyond the pale of Islam.

Minor Shirk:

- 1) Never rely or belief on things like wearing “Taveez” (Amulets), strings or palmistry etc that these things will save you and protect you. Or you will know the future through palmistry. Ask Allah for protection directly and nobody else period.
- 2) If need of anything, Ask Allah only, He is closer than your heart and vein, He listen to every body’s Dua. Three things happen when you ask Allah alone, either He will accept that Dua, second He will not because in his infinite wisdom, He knows it is not good for you (Apparently it looks good to you) and thirdly He will not grant that request in this world but will keep it for you in hereafter, which is the best for you, because in day of judgment you need every bit of help from anywhere. So ask Him alone and alone, not through any prophet, Wali, an angel or Jinn etc, these are all Shirk. If you do Sadaqa, do only for the sake for Allah.

Note: One of the pre-condition of Dua’s acceptance is that your income is by legitimate means (earn your money by Halal way).

3) If something happens bad to you and if you do not have any control over it, then have patience and full trust In Allah. Believe in destiny, it may be a test from Allah on you so you have patience and trust in Him, do not cry, complain or sweat on it. Allah will give you the highest reward for it if your overcome that loss or calamity with patience and full trust in Him that anything good or bad comes from Allah's command.

4) Love Allah the most, because He is the one who created you and took care of you from conception to birth to now, without His help you cannot even breathe for a second.

For example, because of love for your kids or spouse you earn illegitimate money, or you miss your prayer because you are busy playing with your kid or watching movie with your friends or family and miss prayer because you love them and have good time with them, then it means you love them more then Allah, because you disobeyed his commandments, then it is also a form of shirk. Do not make this habit in your life and disobey Allah all the time because of love to worldly things. Always repent Allah and ask for forgiveness.

Bottom line: If our love of our families, our friends, or even our worldly obligation is not based on our love to Allah, then these relationship can become a form of shirk. Practically, this means that if you love someone and that loves takes you away from Allah, then you are committing Shirk.

Similarly Allah deserves most to be feared then human beings, for example, you fear your boss that if you are late for work every day, he will fire you. Even if you are not feeling well or sleepy, you will wake up early, get ready and leave for work. But for the sake of Allah, you do not wake up for Fajir prayer. It means you fear your boss more than Allah. Allah has mentioned in Quran also that some people fear people more then they ought to fear Allah.

- 5) Remember, your relationship with Allah is one sided, meaning He is your Master and you are his slave, when it comes to His obedience, you cannot negotiate that you will do such and such things as he ordered, but not do such and such, like you will pray all the prayer except Fajir prayer, or you will pray, observe fasting and Hajj, but you do not want to pay Zakat etc. Then it implies that you are trying to create a negotiating partnership with Allah. Total and unconditional obedience of Allah is required; if you ignore some commandments and follow some constantly, then it is a form of shirk.

- 6) Never do any worship, to show off people, like tell people you are praying, or fasting, go to mosque so people get impressed that you pray in mosque or tell even in this hot weather you are fasting or give charity in front of people so they think oh you are very generous etc. Any form of worship to show off people is shirk. All worship must be purely for Allah and there should be not an iota in your heart to show off people.

- 7) Never associate Allah's attributes with peoples, like Allah is "Razzaq" He provides sustenance, but if somebody gave you a job or help you find a job. Do not think that person is now also somehow little responsible for your earning/sustenance. No Allah is the one, He provided you the job, but he helped you in getting job through that person, Allah put in his heart to help you in getting the job. You must also thank that person too, but ultimate thanks belongs to Allah in your heart, that nothing can happen without the will of Allah. Nobody can benefit you or harm you unless Allah has decreed for you. Similarly it is also shirk to believe that there is someone who bestows mercy in a manner that is befitting only to Allah; actually same applies to all the attributes of Allah. (Associating Allah's attributes to other creators can also lead to major shirk).

8) In Quran Allah says that some people worship their “NAFS” inner desires, meaning they follow their own desires regardless it is against the commandments of Allah. This is also shirk, because your “Rabb” (master) is now your NAFS, you follow him like you should be following Allah’s commandments.

The minor shirk does not put a person beyond the pale of Islam, rather it may be done by a Muslim but he still remains in Islam; but the one who does that is in great danger because minor shirk is a major sin and it may eventually lead to major Shirk.

So these are the few basic concept about Shirk, if you follow and ponder these basic concept, Insha’Allah you will avoid Shirk, the grave sin in the sight of Allah. Please take this subject of Shirk very seriously; it may be a difference between Paradise and hell fire.

Always ask Dua as over Prophet advised us “O Allah, I seek refuge with you from associating anything with you knowingly, and I seek your forgiveness for that of which I am unaware”

NOTE: As there are major and minor shirk, to be on the safe side, goal should be to avoid all regardless.

Allah may save all of us from committing Shirk (AMEEN).

TAWBAH

(Repentance to Allah)

“Say: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Do not despair from the mercy of Allah. Verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, he is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” **Quran (Surah Az-Zumar, Verse 53)**

Prophet (Peace be upon him) said that “Door of Tawbah (repentance) closes at the time of either death, or death –rattle has reached some one’s throat or when sun rises from the west.

Does anyone know the time of his death? So what are we waiting for?

Ask Allah’s forgiveness right now before it is too late.

Before we discuss merits, rewards and conditions for Tawbah (Repentance to Allah), let's see what Allah says about Tawbah himself in Holy Quran. Allah has mentioned 66 times about Repentance in different verses of Quran. We are going to list some of them here:

- “Verily, Allah loves those who repent and those who purify themselves”. [Baqara 2:222]
- “O You who believe! Turn to Allah in sincere Repentance!” [At-Tahreem 66:8]
- “And O believers, all of you, repent to Allah in order that you may be successful.” [An-Noor 24:31]
- “Will they not repent to Allah and seek His forgiveness? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” [Al- Maidah 5:74]
- “But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance.” [Taha 20:82]
- “And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful.” [An-Nisa4:110]
- “And He it is who accepts repentance from his slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you do.’ [Al-Shoora 42:25]
- “Do they not know that Allah accepts repentance from His slaves and takes the Sadaqat (alms, charity), and that Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful?” [at-Tawbah 9:104]

- “The repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance (or carelessness) and then repent soon after. It is those whom Allah will turn in forgiveness and Allah is ever knowing and wise. But repentance is not (accepted) of those who (continue to) do evil deeds up until, when death comes to one of them, he says,” Indeed, I have repented now.” Or of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared painful punishment.” [An-Nisa 4:17,18]
- “But whoever repents after his wrongdoing and reforms, indeed, Allah will turn to him in forgiveness. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. [Al-Maidah 5:39]
- “And ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn to him in Repentance. Verily, my Lord is most Merciful, Most Loving”. [Hud 11:90]
- “And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you (He would have hastened the punishment upon you)! And that Allah is the one who accepts Repentance, the All WISE.” [An-Noor 24:10]
- “Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful. And he who repents and does righteousness does indeed turn to Allah with (accepted) repentance.”
[Al-Furqan 25:70,71]
- “The forgiver of sin, acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment, owner of abundance. There is no deity except Him; to Him is the destination.” [Ghafir 40:3]

- “So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the Repentance and forgives.”
[An-Nasr 110:3].

Two famous Hadith of our beloved Prophet (SAW)

- 1) Every son of Adam sins and the best of those who sin are those who repent. [Al Tirmidhi]
- 2) By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you did not commit sin Allah would do away with you and bring people who would commit sin then pray for forgiveness [Muslim]

Conditions, Merits and Rewards of Tawbah (Repentance)

Our faith sometimes weakens and we become overwhelmed by our desires. The Shaytaan makes sin attractive to us, so we fall into things that Allah has forbidden. Now the question is not whether or not we will sin, because mistakes are in fact part of our nature. The question is: What will we do after we have sinned?

It is time to learn the secrets of an effective repentance!

Tawbah refers to asking repentance (forgiveness) from Allah for the sins that we commit. Making sincere repentance raises a Muslim stature with Allah because the process of making Tawbah involves the following four steps.

- 1) Recognizing ones mistakes and sins.
- 2) Feeling ashamed of violating Allah's trust of complete submission to his commandments.
- 3) Making a promise never to repeat such behavior
- 4) If the sin has to do with the rights of another person, that right must be restored. For example, if violating rights involves money or property, etc, it must be returned to him/her; if it had to do with slandering etc then forgiveness must be asked and so on.

If one of these conditions is missing, then according to many scholars repentance is not sincere.

Some practical steps to take when we commit sin.

- 1) Meet the 4 conditions mentioned above.
- 2) Don't worry about Waswasa (whisper from shaytaan) that our repentance is not accepted by Allah.
- 3) Follow up repentance with good deeds. Like giving charity, helping someone, focus on reading Quran-anything good to please Allah.
- 4) Pray the repentance prayer. If following up a bad deed with a good one can change our sins into good deeds, what deed is better than prayer? According to Messenger of Allah "There is no servant who commits a sin and then purifies himself (Wadoo) and then prays two rakaahs and then seeks forgiveness of Allah except that Allah forgives him. This is a forgotten sunnah! We can pray anytime in

the day or night and one should pray it as soon as possible after his bad deed.

Note: Tell others about this prayer and earn the reward of reviving a sunnah, Inshah'Allah!

- 5) Make the use of the six hours! Prophet said "The Scribe on the left delays registering the sin of a believer for six hours. If he repents (within six hours), and seek Allah's forgiveness, they drop it off. If he doesn't, they write down as a single sin [Al-Tabarani] , so evaluate your deeds every six hours, four times a day and benefit from this amazing mercy of Allah!

Merits of Repentance

Repentance---an Opportunity

The concept of Tawbah is amazingly beautiful and unique in Islam. We don't confess to any intermediary; we turn to our creator directly. Allah opened the gate of repentance to Himself and commanded us to turn to Him. This is an amazing combination! The fact that we can repent at any time and the fact that Allah and our prophet gave us the knowledge of how to repent is a great mercy. Tawbah is an opportunity!

The wisdom behind Repentance

Do we recognize this pattern? We commit a sin and then we feel bad afterwards, so bad that our guilt makes us feel down and so low that we feel we can't be forgiven-----so why repent? If we have done something so wrong, we must be a terrible person, right? Wrong! There is a major difference between being a bad person and doing something bad. Allah (swt) gave us the chance to repent and Inshah' Allah our sins will even be transformed into a good deed! Isn't that amazing?

The most amazing thing about Tawbah is that it doesn't mean we sit down feeling sad and guilty, dwelling on our sins. It means that whatever our sin, we grab the chance to get back up and strive for better.

Rewards of Repentance

Repentance brings success.

If we go on a path forbidden by Allah (swt), we choose to miss out on Allah's mercy, rewards, help, and protection. But at the moment that we sincerely repent, we can be assured of His help in our life.

Allah tells us *"And beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you be successful"* [Surah Noor, 31]

Examples of success are: wealth, children, and increased productivity and blessing etc.

Repentance keeps us away from hardship.

The more we sin, the more we can be deprived of Allah's blessings and the more trial we might have to endure. Tawbah can give us a way out of our troubles in life, as Allah says *"See they not that they are put in trial once or twice every year (With different kinds of calamities, disease, and famine)? Yet they turn not in repentance, nor do they learn a lesson (from it)". [Quran, 9:126]*

Repentance earns us Allah's love.

Do we know that repentance is one of the most beloved acts of worship to Him? Allah says *"Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves"* [Quran, 2:22]

Repentance makes us feel happy.

Tawbah cleans our heart. It makes us feel lighter, just as the burden of sin makes us feel heavy. Just say to yourself: "who is there to stop me from turning back to Allah?"

Repentance Lead to forgiveness.

Isn't this what we wanted? Can we imagine Allah forgiving all our sins? Do we think this is unreachable goal? The rewards of repentance are: purity of heart, erasing of sins, and increasing of Hasanat (good deeds). Both the Quran and the ahadeeth are clear that those who repent sincerely to Allah, acknowledging their sins, and commit not to return again to those sins will have their sins forgiven.

Our beloved Prophet (SAW) who never committed any sin still asked forgiveness from Allah 70 or 100 times a day, and then who are we?

It is still time that we ask Allah's forgiveness sincerely before our times comes without any warning and benefit from Allah's infinite mercy.

May Allah Give us Taufeeq (ability) and accept our Repentance and shortcomings.

Ameen.