



THE GREATEST RETURN

There are many great “returns” that people experience in their lives. The returning of a missing child, finding a very valuable lost item or a close family member returning home after spending many years overseas are some instances of a great return. These are moments of immense joy and happiness. The greatest “Return,” however, is when a sinful servant who had abandoned Allah Ta'ala and fallen into sin makes sincere *taubah* (which literally means “to return”) and returns to his Creator. There can never be a happier moment for such a person.

Retuning to Allah Ta'ala in sincere repentance brings down the showers of the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Due to his repentance, the one who was previously known in the court of Allah Ta'ala as a *faasiq* (sinner) earns the title of *Habibullah* (the beloved of Allah). His crying and sobbing while begging for forgiveness is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala than the recitation of *tasbeeh* of those who are busy glorifying Allah Ta'ala. Can there be a greater *return*?

YARDSTICK OF PIETY

The object of the auspicious month of Ramadhaan is to truly return to Allah Ta'ala by repenting from all sin and adopting piety. The Qur'an-al-Kareem declares: **“O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you, just as it was prescribed upon those before you, so that you may acquire *taqwa* (piety)”** (S2:183). *Taqwa*, in simple terms, refers to giving up every sin. The one who forsakes all sin is the greatest worshipper and the most pious person, even though he may not be performing *nafil* (optional) Haj and Umrah every year, giving thousands in charity or standing the entire night in *tahajjud salaah*. Indeed, these great acts of worship should be performed as much as possible. However, the yardstick of piety is *taqwa* – abstaining from sin. *Taqwa* cannot be acquired without first making sincere *taubah*. It thus follows that the one who does not make *taubah* has to a degree defeated the purpose of Ramadhaan, even though he may have performed many other good deeds in the blessed month.

MENTAL NOTE

It is thus evident that in order to acquire the object of Ramadhaan, one must start with sincere *taubah*

(repentance). One should sit in solitude and list down, or make a mental note, of all the laws of one's beloved Master and Creator which are being disobeyed. Think: Have I performed all my Salaah, Zakaah, Qurbaani, etc? Have I taken anyone's property wrongfully? Did I lie, backbite, slander? Do I have pride, harbour jealousy and do actions for name and fame? What about the laws of hijab? Am I obeying my most beloved *Rabb* in this regard or do I disobey Him? Am I involved in any illicit relationship? Have I sinned with my eyes, ears, tongue and heart? Have I fulfilled the rights of my neighbours and relatives? Do I take intoxicants? Am I shaving or trimming my beard to less than a fist length? ... After having carefully taken note of all the sins in one's life, sincerely repent from each one. Beg Allah Ta'ala's forgiveness. For one's *taubah* to be accepted, the following pre-conditions apply:

- * Give up the sin immediately.
- * Regret having sinned. Feel the pain in your heart, just as you would be pained if you lost a million rands.
- * Resolve never to commit the sin again.
- * The unfulfilled rights of Allah Ta'ala (*salaah, zakaah, etc.*) and the rights of people (debts, etc.) must be discharged.

NO TAUBAH

Often many people stop committing various sins in Ramadhaan. Gambling comes to a halt. The T.V. is switched off. Intoxicants are given up. Lying, vulgar languages, zina and a host of other evils are forsaken. Similarly, many actions that were previously neglected are performed in Ramadhaan. Salaah is performed regularly. The Musjid is full even for Fajr Salaah. Many other good deeds are performed. It is indeed a great gift from Allah Ta'ala that one respects the month of Ramadhaan by refraining from sins and engaging in good deeds. However, the tragedy is that as soon as Ramadhaan leaves, it is as if Deen has left. The day after Eid the Musjid is crying out for those who were regularly there for the entire month. The gambling dens are once again frequented by those who were frequenting the Musjid. Numerous other evils which

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were given up during Ramadhan are once again perpetrated. One of the fundamental reasons for this speedy slide into a life of disobedience is that, while we respected Ramadhan, we did not sincerely return to Allah Ta'ala and repent from our sins. Thus this is our need of the moment: To undertake the Greatest Return.

Having repented sincerely, one should also closely link oneself to a pious personality who one feels comfortable with. Take his guidance in all aspects and one will be saved from the many hazards, Insha Allah.

ENCOURAGE

Furthermore, actively encourage others to undertake the Greatest Return. While your encouragement will insha Allah benefit them, it will also greatly help you to remain steadfast.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the ability to repent sincerely, forgive us and enable us to refrain from every sin in future. Aameen.

CLOSEST

Hazrath Abdullah bin Mas'ud (R.A.) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: **"The person who will be nearest to me on the Day of Judgement is the one who recited the most duood upon me."** (Tirmizi)

BONUS TIME

A company promises its employees a triple bonus, based on the production. Undoubtedly every employee will eagerly work overtime to meet the production target so that he may receive the triple bonus. Whatever he earns for the month, he will want to receive an extra cheque for three times that amount at the end of the year. For this he will slog as hard as he can.

The month of Ramadhan is super bonus time. Every *fardh* (compulsory) action performed is rewarded with a bonus of 70 times the normal reward. For every *nafil* (optional) action, one is granted a reward equivalent to a *fardh* action. The latter reward must be understood in context. For instance, *tahajjud* Salaah (performed in the last part of the night) is an extremely great *nafil ibadah*. The rewards are tremendous. However, a lifetime of *tahajjud* cannot equal the reward of one day's *fajr Salaah*. Yet in the month of *Ramadhan* Allah Ta'ala grants a reward equivalent to a *fardh* action for every *nafil* action performed. It could therefore be safely said that one *tahajjud Salaah* in the month of Ramadhan is worth more than a lifetime of *tahajjud* at other times!!! The same applies for every other *nafil* action such as recitation of the Qur'an, *zikr*, recitation of *Durood Shareef*, etc. Therefore, maximum effort should be made in this *Mubaarak* month to acquire these multiplied rewards.

Hereunder are the virtues for some *nafil Salaah* which one should endeavour to perform, especially in Ramadhan..

Ishraaq: It is performed approximately 15 minutes after sunrise. The one who performs two rakaats of *ishraaq salaah* gets the reward of performing one Haj and Umrah.

Salaatud Duha (chasht): This Salaah is performed when the sun has risen high (approximately midway between sunrise and *zawaal*). Among its virtues is that it is *sadaqah* for all the 360 joints in the body. One's (minor) sins are also forgiven. A minimum of 2 rakaats and a maximum of 8 rakaats can be performed.

Awwabeen: Six rakaats of *nafil* performed after *Maghrib* are known as *awwabeen*. One's (minor) sins are forgiven, even if they are equal to the foam on the sea. According to a narration of *Sahih ibn Khuzaymah*, one is granted a reward of 12 years of *ibadah*.

Tahajjud: This *Salaah* is performed in the last part of the night. This is the most virtuous of all the *salaahs* after the *fardh Salaah*. It is a means of one's forgiveness and a means of safety against committing sins. The time of *tahajjud* is also a special time for the acceptance of *duas*. It is very easy to perform this *salaah* in Ramadhan due to waking up for *sehri*. However if one cannot wake up at *tahajjud* time, the virtues will still be attained (though to a little lesser degree), by performing at least two rakaats *nafil* after the *Esha salaah* with the intention of *tahajjud*.

GOING FOR UMRAH

Those who are in the *Haramain Shareefain* during Ramadhan must take full advantage of the time in those *Mubarak* lands. The rewards already mentioned are further multiplied in Makkah Mukarramah by a hundred thousand!! This applies for every *salaah*, *zikr*, *tasbeeh*, etc. The calculators cannot compute the reward to be earned. Thus one should spend the maximum time in *ibadah* in the *Haram Shareef*. Wasting one's time in the bazaars should be strictly avoided. May Allah Ta'ala grant us the ability to fully engage ourselves in good deeds in Ramadhan. Aameen.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ADDICTED TO DRUGS & Mxit

Q *My life has become a misery. I perform most of my Salaah but I am also hopelessly addicted to drugs, alcohol, Mxit and other evils. Please advise me as to how I can overcome my problems. (Summary of question).*

A Before dealing with your problem, understand the following well: Be absolutely certain that Allah Ta'ala loves you. He has blessed you with Imaan which is the greatest bounty, as well as showered countless other favours upon you. You should therefore be grateful to Allah Ta'ala for all that He has blessed you with. Allah Ta'ala also wishes to engulf you in His mercy. Hence He has inspired your heart with the desire to repent.

Nevertheless, generally in this world the principle of cause and effect applies in all aspects. Fire is a cause and its effect is to burn. Likewise, it is the faith of a *Mu'min* (Believer) that his actions directly impact on his condition. Obedience to Allah Ta'ala brings joy, contentment, serenity and peace. Likewise, the fire of disobedience and sin burns directly in one's heart, thus destroying one's peace and tranquillity. Thus a person becomes miserable and dejected even in the lap of luxury and comfort. It is therefore necessary to give up sin and return to Allah Ta'ala. This will guarantee you happiness.

In order to overcome your addiction, diligently implement what has been mentioned hereunder. Insha Allah you will benefit from it.

☛ Sincerely make *tauba* (repent). (The details of repentance have been mentioned in the article on page 1)

☛ Seek a spiritual guide. He should be somebody who is pious, learned and experienced. You should also be able to easily communicate with him. Explain your problems to him and follow his advice.

☛ Remove all the means of sin from your life. If the cell phone involves you in *haram*, do not keep a phone. While this may sound unthinkable to you, if you are sincere in trying to protect your *Imaan*, give up the means of the evil. A person who is severely diabetic gives up sugar, which is *halaal*, in order to save his body from harm. You need to save your soul and *Imaan* from harm. (If it is *extremely* necessary to keep a phone, buy the most basic phone, which does not have internet or the "chat" feature.)

☛ Totally distance yourself from bad company. Those who invite you or encourage you to harm yourself are not your friends. They are your enemies in disguise. People who help you to commit sin are "helping" you to make your life a misery. They appear to invite you to fun and excitement. In reality, they are

offering you poison in a beautifully wrapped package. Therefore, do not be in the company of people who are inclined towards sin. Make *dua* for such people, wish the best for them, but do not join them.

☛ Always be in pious company. Together with strictly avoiding bad company, avoid being alone as far as possible. Keep yourself in the gatherings of Deen. Associate with those who are engaged in the effort of Deen. As a first step, leave your environment entirely for a period of time and be continuously in an environment of Deen. The month of Ramadhaan presents many ideal opportunities for this. Grab these opportunities with both hands.

☛ Daily speak to as many people as possible about the harms of sin. Warn them of its dangers and tell them never to indulge in it. Encourage people to repent and return to Allah Ta'ala. You do not necessarily have to expose your own condition. Daily continue to invite others towards the complete obedience of Allah Ta'ala and His beloved Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallim). Do not underestimate the power of inviting others towards good. It is an extremely great weapon against *nafs* (evil desires) and *shaitaan*.

☛ Spend at least 15 minutes daily making the *zikr* of Allah Ta'ala. Clear your mind and heart of everything else and completely focus on the *zikr* you are engaged in. Also recite some portion of the Qur'an *Shareef* daily.

☛ Do the following with utmost regularity. Apart from the performance of your compulsory duties, make this the greatest priority of your day. Sit in solitude, and for a few minutes meditate over the evil of the sins you are involved in. Think of the harm you are bringing upon yourself in this world and the Hereafter. Consider how others around you are suffering due to your evil habits.

Thereafter, for a few minutes, close your eyes and meditate over death. Visualise each scene for at least ten seconds.

Imagine... that you are about to pass away ... you can feel your soul being extracted from your body ... you have now passed away ... your body is being washed ... you have been wrapped in the kafn (shroud) ... your loved one's are crying around your enshrouded body ... your janaza Salaah is being performed ... you are being carried on the shoulders

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ADDICTED

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of people to the graveyard ... you are being lowered into your grave ... the planks have been put in place ... and you can hear the sand crashing upon it ... you are now ALONE ... in your DARK grave.

While meditating upon death also consider how tragic it will be if death came suddenly at a time when there is a drug in your hand and your breath is smelling of alcohol, or while you were engaged in a haraam "chat," or you died clutching a phone which at that moment had filthy pictures on the screen??? **May Allah Ta'ala save us from living a sinful life — and save us from a bad death!!!**

BEG AND PLEAD

Having meditated over death in the above manner, open your eyes and ponder over how you can brighten your grave while you still have life. Hence resolve to do good actions, which will be a source of light in the grave, and resolve to refrain from all sin. Thereafter, beseech Allah Ta'ala with utmost humility in the following manner: **"O Allah, I am Your most sinful and weakest servant. I cannot give up anything. You are the Most Powerful and the Most Merciful. Only You can help me give up these sins. O Allah, I beg Your forgiveness and plead with You to enable me to give up these sins."** Continue to beg of Allah Ta'ala in this manner for at least five minutes.

Commence with the above aspects immediately. Do not lose hope. Immediately start walking towards Allah Ta'ala's obedience and His mercy will rush towards you. May Allah Ta'ala help us all to become His true slaves and save us from the traps of *nafs* and *shaitaan*. Aameen.

From the advices of ...



FAQIHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of *Faqihul Ummah* Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Rahmatullahi Alaihi*) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties — especially in the line of *Islahun Nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is an answer to a question posed to him.

Reality of Taubah

Summary of letter

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalamu Alaikum

My heart has become very hard. It just would not melt with the remembrance or the fear of Allah Ta'ala. Please advise as to how I should soften my heart.

Furthermore, with the grace of Allah Ta'ala and through the *barkat* (blessing) of being linked to yourself, I have been blessed with the *tawfeeq* (ability) of quickly repenting from my sins. The problem is that to remain steadfast on *tauba* (and not repeat the sin) is among the most difficult things for me. Please help me to overcome these maladies.

Reply:

Respected Brother

Assalamu Alaikum

It is necessary to always keep in mind the reality of *tauba*. The reality of *tauba* is that one should sincerely regret having committed the sin, as well as firmly resolve to refrain from the sin. The resolve should be such that even if you are thrown into the fire, you will not commit that sin again. One should also constantly make dua to Allah Ta'ala to grant one *istiqamat* (steadfastness) on one's *tauba*. If any rights (of people) have not been discharged, make an effort to fulfil the same. In this way one will Insha-Allah be blessed with *istiqamat*.

Keeping contact with the poor, being compassionate to them and sharing their pain and grief will Insha-Allah help to soften the heart.

Payment for Taraweeh

Summary of letter

By the Grace of Allah Ta'ala I am constant on my zikr. Besides this I am not managing to do anything else. Al-Hamdulillah, with your blessings whatever I was given this year for performing Taraweeh was promptly returned.

Reply

I was greatly pleased to hear that whatever you were given for Taraweeh was returned. May Allah Ta'ala make you independent of such wealth.

One's *ma'moolaat* (daily practices) must be punctually completed. This is the ladder to progress. It is extremely detrimental to drift off from the path (of *zikr*, *islaah*, etc.) after having been granted the ability to start on this journey. May Allah Ta'ala save us. Aameen. (*Maktoobaat*, vol 5, pg 35)