

## Giving up Sins: An Easy Prescription

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Many Muslim brothers and sisters throughout the world who due to various negative influences and bad elements, find themselves 'de-railed' from Deen. Many others sit on the fence, wanting to enjoy or benefit from both sides of the fence – engaging in sins as well as being practical on certain teachings of Deen. However, deep in their hearts is the desire to get back on track, and once again become good, practical Muslims; to jump off the fence and enjoy the green pastures of Islam. So they write, e-mail, phone, fax seeking guidance and direction.

The main weakness is indulgence in sins; sometimes many sins and excessive indulgence in those sins. A standard prescription that I give as a reply, is as follows. Alhamdulillah, many who followed through with the prescription have found a whole new life – of peace, happiness, blessings and mercy. On tasting the sweetness that comes with obedience, there is no desire to return to any form of disobedience.

- The ideal is that we abstain from sins, out of love for Allah Ta'ala. He has granted us so much – He has granted us everything and it is the nature of human beings that we love the person that is kind and generous to us. Then what of Allah Ta'ala who has provided us with plentiful – with everything? The sight, hearing, speech, the organs that are functioning in such an amazing manner, the limbs - all in our service – for eating, drinking, walking, sitting, etc. The gifts of wealth : the clothing, shelter, transport, food, drink, and so many other comforts. ...We use them all, but do we keep in mind, the Generous Benefactor ? Do we give thanks for these bounties or show any appreciation to the Giver ?
- Developing the conscious awareness that Allah Ta'ala is with us : He is watching us, He is hearing us, He knows all and everything about us; We cannot hide from Him; We cannot conceal our actions from Him. Then should we not feel ashamed that in His Presence, we are disobeying Him? Are we not showing ingratitude to the Benefactor, when engaging in sins in His very Presence ?
- Keep in mind that the angels too are witness to all our actions; that the earth is recording our behaviour and that all of it is also noted in our books of deeds – that we are accountable to Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Judgement. Added to this, our actions are also presented to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), so we should give thought to whether our actions are a source of joy or grief to him. ...In this manner, we will develop that shame and modesty which will make it easy to restrain from Haraam.
- Muraqabah is meditating on the actions engaged in during the day : We should reflect over our deeds for the day and seek forgiveness for shortcomings and resolve not to return to those bad deeds. We should also express gratitude on good deeds and make dua for an increase in them.
- Ponder over the fact that the Angel of Death does not give respite. It must not be that whilst obeying the nafs in sinful pleasure, the Angel of death visits; and departure is in disgrace, and return to Allah Ta'ala is at a time when He is angry, and that death is an embarrassment to the person, family and community who find out that death came in sin. May Allah Ta'ala protect us all from death in a state of transgression, but this is very much a reality.

...Death visits – more often, very unexpectedly, and no true Muslim would want to be seized by the Angel of death when Allah Ta'ala is displeased. I often say : We now have instant tea, and instant coffee, and instant cereal and instant pudding and so many other things on the market are instant – we are also living in times when death is just as instant. So any sin is too much of a risk in the face of the reality of death. ...The Hadith is explicit : That we will be resurrected on the day of Judgement as we have died and we will die as we have lived. ...Would any Muslim want to rise up on the Day of Judgement in sin, for all of mankind to witness what kind of life he led?

- Ponder over the fact that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with the gift of sight, hearing, health, wealth, and so much else – and has also granted us the gift of respect. However, what He gives, He can also take away. He has explicitly stated that ingratitude for His Gifts will draw very severe punishment. So is sin not abuse and ingratitude for the gifts of sight, of heart, of mind, of limbs ?

A little contemplation on the consequences of such behaviour and a little bit of mujahada – which entails 'not doing' and Alhamdulillah, the sicknesses are cured.

Together with this :

- Attend the talks of the learned Scholars of Islam whenever possible, or listen to recordings of their talks and read their books to gain benefit of pious, righteous company. Join and participate in the Deeni activities with those who follow the Qur'aan and Sunnah. One will, Insha-Allah, find a great improvement in one's condition by keeping the right company.
- Make the effort to read Salaah punctually. Men should make every effort to read their Salaah in Jamaat.
- Read good, Islamic literature. Abstain from magazines or books that have filthy and indecent contents and pictures.
- Give up television viewing. ...90% of the content is Haraam. If a person offers a full glass of clean and pure water, and mentions that there is just one drop of urine, would any sensible person, drink it ?
- ...Then when the major content of television is Haraam, what would we then say ? When the gaze, heart and mind are consuming and digesting so much of Haraam viewing, what else would be the end result except indulgence in the same Haraam.
- Lower the gaze from the opposite sex.
- Dress as a Muslim should – Wearing the pants above the ankle and keeping the beard, one fist in length must not be considered as insignificant actions. These are teachings of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) which he has emphasized. Although it is permissible to wear the shirt and pants, the dressing of the righteous (i.e. the kurta) has a speciality which benefits in different ways. A person with this appearance will think a hundred times before engaging in an open sin, when he is being recognized as someone who must be very pious. So this attire and appearance will offer a protection, Insha-Allah. Women too should dress modestly as is prescribed by Shariah.
- By doing these few things, you have won more than half the battle. And it is not as difficult as Shaytaan and nafs will whisper. A little courage, a little effort and a little sacrifice are all that is required.

Of course, these are just basic aspects of Deen, which everyone can implement immediately and easily. There is a need to fulfill the Obligatory Injunctions such as Salaah, Zakaat, Fasting in the month of Ramadaan, etc. and to fulfill the rights of family, neighbours and others. There is a need to read the Qur'aan Sharief regularly, together with some authentic commentary – a little at a time, as well as giving time to studying some book on Islamic Jurisprudence and reading the life and teachings of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) , etc. A reading of the books of virtues of actions such as Salaah, Fasting, Haj, Sadaqaat, Zikr, etc. by Shaykh Zakariyyah Saheb (Rahmatullah 'alayh) will create enthusiasm in the heart for action.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us His Love and the Love of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) , such that it becomes easy to give up all sins and submit to His Obedience. May He protect us all from the mischief of nafs and Shaytaan. May He fill our hearts with Love for this beautiful Deen and inspire us in being a practical and good Muslims and be true role-models to our community.