

## At-Tawba: Repentance

bismi'llah ir-rahman ir-rahim  
In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

I would like to speak about the way in which the human being is able to reach the station where he will be sitting in the Presence of Allah; how he can bring himself out of the life of the kathif to the life of the latif; and how he can remove the clothes of the human being to garb himself in the clothes of Reality. I first want to say that the way he can leave behind the house of disobedience to live in the house of obedience is to listen to the order of his Beloved Allah; that is, to become a Muhammadan slave to God, and in this way to become a slave to God.

To be a Muhammadan slave, first you come to the Warith al-Muhammadi, to the heir of the Muhammadan Presence, and then surrender yourself to him. Listen and obey, and do what he says about what God has put in the Holy Book so that you will then be a slave to Allah. You must take this knowledge from the Warith al-Muhammadi. If you want to be like this, all you have to do is be one of his children, so that you will become a picture of him, so that he will give you the bay'a, the covenant which is the covenant of God because now that you have come to him, you are from him. And also know that if you break this covenant which you took from your shaykh, the Warith al-Muhammadi, who is the representative and the picture of the Muhammadan presence in his time, and whose orders are the orders of God's Prophet, and whose promise is the covenant of God's messenger, you are actually breaking yourself off from Allah. Allah has said, "Those who give you the promise are actually giving the promise to Me. When you put your hand with his hand, it is My hand." The hand of God is over the hand of the warith, and those who break this covenant are actually breaking themselves off from Allah. So be careful not to break this promise of your Lord, Who has chosen you. And after that, you can walk in the way of the fuqara, the poor, the Family of God. If you want to be one of them, you have to show repentance (at-tawba). As you are standing at the gates and you want to enter, so you must be repentant.

Linguistically, repentance (at-tawba) means that you return to something. The generally agreed upon meaning is the leaving of bad things and the bringing on of all that is good. By doing this, the person is really responding to the order of God when He says, "All of you who are believers, repent to Allah." Also know that the one who repents has actually cleaned himself of bad deeds, and he is not asked about them. Thus the repentance is the sign of Allah's love for His slave because when He loves him, no bad deed can harm him. There are three conditions of repentance. The first condition is that you should feel grieved by what you have done, the second is that you must leave the bad deeds immediately, and the third is that you must be determined not to do these bad deeds again. Understand that repentance is the first step on the path, and the first station of the seekers. The inspiration to repent comes because God has chosen you and given you His Mercy. If Allah wanted something bad to happen to you, He would not have inspired unity, and this is a symbol of His loving kindness to you. To be perfect in your repentance, first be ready to do what God has ordered and do not look back to your past. Do not think of the wrong things or the errors you made previously. Don't let these things create a wall forbidding your return to Allah. Escape to God alone with the rest of your life, with every moment. Speaking from this point of view, you should not be unconscious or unaware, you need to be awake all the time, accustoming the ear to hear all that is good and to disregard the bad, and to remember the Lord without turning right or left. Here you stand between the fear of Allah and supplication. This is the station of the people who are looking upon the gates of repentance. They are patient and ask for God's mercy. And if they are truthful, God will give His orders to their hearts, and they will begin to hear the Reality of the divine presence. Then the heart will become the preacher. As the Prophet, Sayyidina Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, has said, "In the body, there is a piece of meat. If this is right, the whole body will be right, and if this is bad, the whole body will be bad. This piece of meat is the heart." The heart, as is known, is either the mosque of Allah or the house of the shaitan and the nafs. It will be the abode of the shaitan and the nafs when there are heart diseases, such as jealousy, hatred, malice and other diseases of the heart, which do not appear on the body but which go much deeper. The disease of the heart is something far worse than the disease of the body because bodily infirmities can be treated by medicine and take only a little time to heal, but disease of the heart is far more difficult to treat. The one who has this heart distress needs to travel on the path of the family of God, to do what they do, to be a picture of them. Of their characteristics are at-tawba, adh-dhikr of their Lord, and az-zuhd or asceticism.

So this person travels on the road of al-jihad, the inner war. In this, he only sees himself in surrender to God; the nafs is surrendered. If you travel in these qualities, then in one second there is reconciliation between you and your Lord. As you arrive at this place, it is important to leave behind the evil thoughts and mischievous friends you had before, and to ignore what they do because at this time you are in the state of needing God's help. If you return to them, you can be easily detoured from the path. For this reason, you must walk straight on the path to God. This is done by continuing in the remembrance of Allah and in the mujahada. I mean by this that when you do a small thing or a big thing, be careful because Allah is ever-watching you. This feeling that Allah sees everything will strengthen your wish to repent. Every day you must be ready to repent, by your tongue, by your heart, by your spirit, by your senses; and by all of your body, heart, and soul, to ask for forgiveness. And know, my sons and daughters, my beloveds, that God accepts the repentance of the slave at any time before his spirit leaves his body. Also know that God has said, "My slaves, if you didn't sin, I would have created others who sin, so that when they sin, they will ask forgiveness. And I will give them forgiveness because I am the Forgiver and the Merciful." This does not mean that God is asking people to sin, but actually He is asking people to stop sinning and to ask for forgiveness. He created His creatures and put in them all the ninety-nine divine attributes (as-sifat), and through this, He is revealed to His people. If it were not for the sin, there would be no forgiveness, and this forgiveness emanates from Allah, the Forgiver.

In this, there is a great wisdom – the great wisdom because of which you were created. Through these attributes, you come to know yourself and to know your God. The person who travels like this through these stations of repentance will be opening the doors from station to station. The first of these stations is the repayment of debts and the reconciliation of wrongs. The substance of this station is the repentance of the ordinary people for their sins. The repentance of the special people is for their unconsciousness or unawareness, and the repentance of the special of the special is the repenting from everything which is not Allah.

Repentance has a beginning and an end; it has a return. So any person who has repented due to fear of punishment is the ordinary repentor. The second is he who repents for the wish to return to the garden. The third is the one who repents because he wants to obey the order of God, not thinking of the punishment or of the garden. The first type is the characteristic of the believers, the second group is the characteristic of the people who are near to God, the saints (al-awliya), and the third is the characteristic of the prophets and messengers of Allah. Certain people say that repentance means that you don't forget your sins, because when you don't forget them, you will always feel regretful, and this regretfulness keeps you on the road to God. Others say that repentance means that you forget your sins, because if you don't forget them, it means that you don't trust or have good faith in your God. But I say, repentance takes you out of your sins and out of your self. Don't let your sin become a wall standing between you and your Lord because He created you for Him and He is for you. Nothing can hold the Beloved from His lover. You should not be afraid of your God because He created you and He loves you. Due to their misunderstanding of God, some people have looked at God as a jailer, when really He is not like this; truly He is ar-Rahman, ar-Rahim, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

My beloved, can you hear what I have spoken to your heart? If you have heard, then know that the Prophet loves you more than you love yourself. To reach, you need to clean your clothes to remove the veils of the dunya, of this world and the next, of past, present, and future, and to wash yourself in the water of the unseen reality. When you are living in this station of at-tawba, by arriving here you have deserved Allah's bestowal of the gardens of knowing. These gardens are the garden of the ordinary, the garden of the special, and the garden of the special of the special. This doesn't mean that God makes a separation, but He is the Lord of all the worlds (rabbi 'l-'alamin), and He puts everything in its place. From His wisdom comes the characteristic of fire, which is that it burns things, and the characteristic of water, which is that it gives life. He is the Wise, and He is not asked what He is doing, but the people are asked. I pray to God to make us slaves for Him, so that He may be pleased with us, and He will bring us through the entrance of His garden with the tawba of the people whom He loves and who love Him, their beloved Allah, and so we will be able to journey on the path to Him, from station to station, without beginning and without end. amin.

