

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat ash-Shams, 91:9-10

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

One who purifies it is successful, and one who betrays it fails.

Learning Objectives

- To explain the negative impact of sinning
- To explain how the soul can be purified
- To describe how to perform *tawbah* as taught by the Ahlul Bayt (a)

Key Words

قَلْب

Qalb
heart

سَلِيم

Salim
pure; sound

تَوْبَة

Tawbah
repentance

A baby is born with a pure soul, like a blank piece of paper. Allah has blessed us with a pure soul. Allah also taught us how to care of it through the Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (a). Whoever cares for it will be successful in this world and in the Hereafter. In this lesson we will learn how we can care for our souls.



ACTIVITY...

Have a look at the menus below for the body and soul and highlight what you think would be:

- The healthiest for your body and for your soul
- Most harmful items

You can select up to five items from each menu. Be careful to select the healthiest five items!

Menu for the body

A plate of fried chips
 A plate of rice with grilled chicken
 Broccoli, carrots, and potatoes
 A slice of banana cake
 A glass of fresh orange juice
 A large beef burger with three layers of cheese
 A can of fizzy drink
 A bar of chocolate
 Three beef samosas

Menu for the soul

Five daily *salahs*
 An Islamic book on the 14 *ma'sumin*
 A birthday party with music in the background
 Community sports festival
 A Saturday afternoon with grandparents
 A meal at a non-Muslim friend's house; wine will be served
 A movie at the cinema
 A game of football with cousins
 An afternoon just lazing around at home
Majlis
 Workshop on Qur'an at the *masjid*

How the soul darkens

The same way that eating unhealthy food can gradually lead to many diseases such as obesity, committing sins and doing actions that take us away from Allah can lead to an unhealthy soul. If a person continues to commit sins, dirt gathers on his heart. The darkening of the heart leads to further sins. A stage is then reached when the heart is permanently polluted and cannot be cleansed!

At this stage the heart has hardened. We learned in the previous lesson that the soul needs to be cared for to ensure it leads towards doing good.

Our soul is affected by whatever actions we do. If a person performs good deeds, has good *akhlaq*, and is obedient to Allah, then this all nourishes, trains, and builds his soul. However, if a person constantly lies, listens to music, disobeys his parents, and does not perform the *wajib* actions, then his soul will harden and become impure. Once the soul is hard, this means the person has lost the *greater jihad*.



Surat al-Jathiyah, 45:15

مَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ
وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ

Whoever does good it is for his own soul,
and whoever does evil it is to its own detriment;
then you will be brought back to your Lord.

The heart

The word 'heart' is used a lot in the Qur'an to mean the centre for the judgments, feelings and thoughts that a person has. For example, anger, jealousy, pride, mercy, and fear. Can you think of other good and bad traits?



A teacher once asked her pupils to bring a plastic bag containing a few potatoes to the class. Each child was to name each potato with the name of the person he/she disliked. Some pupils had two potatoes, some had three, and some five. The teacher then told them that they were to carry these potatoes with them wherever they went for one week. As days passed, the pupils started to complain as the potatoes were becoming rotten and smelly!

Those who had five or more potatoes complained that the bag was very heavy to carry around! After one week, the pupils were finally relieved as the game had ended. The teacher now explained the moral of the game. All the pupils were complaining that it was very hard to carry smelly and heavy potatoes everywhere. The teacher said these potatoes were similar to the hatred and bad characteristics we have in our hearts. If we carry them around in our hearts then they can give a bad stench from the heart, i.e. we tend to do unkind actions. It is always best to keep our heart free from any such hatred and bad characteristics!

It is very important to ensure that the soul does not permanently fall sick such that there is no cure for it! The hardness of the heart is a disease of the soul. Allah tells us in the Qur'an:



Surat az-Zumar, 39:22

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

So woe to those whose hearts have been hardened to the remembrance of Allah. They are in manifest error.

This *ayah* was referring to Abu Lahab. Do you remember who Abu Lahab was?

The grace and mercy of Allah will not penetrate a hardened heart. Rasulullah (s) has said: 'Seek help from those of my followers who have enlightened hearts, for Allah has bestowed His grace and mercy on them. Do not go near those whose hearts have grown hard, for their souls have been destroyed by the wrath of Allah.'

Cleansing the soul

Allah tells us that on the Day of Judgement, the only thing that will help us is *qalb salim* – a heart at peace because it is free from evil:

To refrain from committing sins is the best way to achieve *qalb salim*. However, we may find that we commit sins in our daily life. It is therefore necessary to cleanse these sins off as soon as possible through *tawbah*.

Tawbah is one of the greatest blessings that Allah has given us. In the same way that we rush to the doctor's when our body is injured, we must rush towards *tawbah* when our soul is hurt. Can you imagine what our state would be on the Day of Judgement if we did not have a chance to say sorry to Allah? Rasulullah (s) tells us: 'There is a medicine for each pain; and the medicine for sins is repentance.'



Once during a journey, Rasulullah (s) camped at a place which was absolutely bereft of any vegetation. He told the companions to collect sticks. All of them said that they were in such a desolate place that it was not possible to find any sticks. Rasulullah (s) ordered each of them to collect as many twigs as he could. In due course each companion brought some sticks and put them before Rasulullah (s). When all of them had made a pile of sticks, Rasulullah (s) said, "Sins also accumulate in this way."

Rasulullah (s) wanted to show by this example that even though we may be unaware of our sins, when they accumulate they could make a big heap. It may be a small lie to our parents or an amusing gossip about a classmate or a selfish mood with a friend.



Surat ash-Shu'ara, 26:88-89

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ
إِلَّا مَن أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

The day when neither wealth nor children will avail, except him who comes to Allah with a sound heart.

Tawbah

When you do something that your parents are not happy with, how do you apologise for your actions? Do you laugh whilst saying sorry? Do you say sorry whilst watching TV? Or do you repeat the naughty action even after you have apologised?

Tawbah must come from a feeling of being ashamed, sorry, and regretful for past sins.

DID YOU KNOW?

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) said that Rasulullah (s) used to repent 70 times a day even though he did not commit a sin!

“

Imam Ali (a) said:

‘Continuation of *du'a* is the nourishment of human souls.’

”



HIGHER LEVEL

There are many other benefits of doing *tawbah*, including:

- Evil deeds are turned into good deeds.
- Angels pray for the person who asks for forgiveness.
- The repentant will go to paradise.
- *Tawbah* gives happiness in life.
- Any number of sins will be pardoned through *tawbah*.

All of these merits are mentioned in the Qur'an. Analyse the following *ayat* and match them to the correct merit:

- 11:3
- 25:70-71
- 3:135-136

- 39:53-54
- 40:7



Consider the two apologies below. Which one would you accept and why?

Apology 1: 'Sorry for hurting you. Please forgive me.'

Apology 2: 'I feel really guilty that I hurt your feelings and I am really sorry for this. I promise it won't happen again and I hope we can be friends again. Would you like to come home for a play date on Saturday?'

When asking Allah for forgiveness we have to realise that we have disobeyed our creator and have to sincerely promise that the sin will not be repeated. We can also perform extra *mustahabb* actions like giving *sadaqah* or performing *salah* in addition to the *tawbah*. This will show Allah that we are sincerely sorry for our actions.

Our *a'immah* (a) have taught us special *du'as* and ways in which we can ask Allah for forgiveness:

1 *Du'a Kumayl*

We usually recite this *du'a* every Thursday. It is a *du'a* taught by Imam Ali (a) and it teaches us how to speak to Allah. Have a look at the extract below which talks about *tawbah*:

O Allah forgive me those sins, which bring down misfortune
O Allah forgive me those sins, which alter blessings
O Allah forgive me those sins which hold back *du'as*
O Allah forgive me those sins which cut down hopes
O Allah forgive every sin that I have committed and every mistake that I have made

With such beautiful words, be sure not to miss *Du'a Kumayl* every week!

2 *Du'a by Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a)*

You may already recite this *du'a* or have heard it at the *masjid*. This *du'a* is usually recited after every *wajib salah*:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

I seek forgiveness from Allah, there is no God but He;
He is the living and the everlasting,
and I turn to Him in repentance.

Now that you know the meaning of this *du'a*, make sure you recite it with complete understanding after *salah*.

Faith in Action

Let us work on keeping our souls pure! Make a health chart for the soul.

- Use the template below
- Fill in the blanks and design and colour it as you wish
- Cut out and keep a copy on your bedroom door or in your wallet
- And to earn more *thawab* you can make copies to share with friends and siblings

Healthy tips for our Soul

Source: The Qur'an and Ahlulbayt (a)

1. Keep away from sins as much as you can!
2. The soul can be nourished by continuous _____
3. The medicine for sins is _____
4. *Du'a* _____ shows us how to ask Allah (SWT) for repentance.

Do ALL the above for a *Qalb Salim*
(a heart free from evil)!



During the time of Rasulullah (s), there was a man called Abu Lubabah who was a follower of Rasulullah (s). However, once he exposed Rasulullah's (s) plan to some of his enemies. He immediately felt ashamed, and went to the *masjid* where he tied himself to a pillar, and said he would not release himself from the pillar until he died or until Allah forgave him. He used to fast during the day, and his daughter used to bring him food and untie him so that he could use the bathroom, do his *wudhu* and offer his *salah*. This continued for some time until one day Rasulullah (s) received a revelation from Allah that Abu Lubabah had been forgiven. Abu Lubabah was informed about this but he did not allow anyone to untie him except Rasulullah (s). When Rasulullah (s) went to untie him he told him: 'Allah has accepted your repentance. Now you are free of sins like a newborn child.' Abu Lubabah said he would give away a third of his wealth as *sadaqah*. Rasulullah (s) then recited *ayat* 102-104 of *Surat at-Tawbah*.

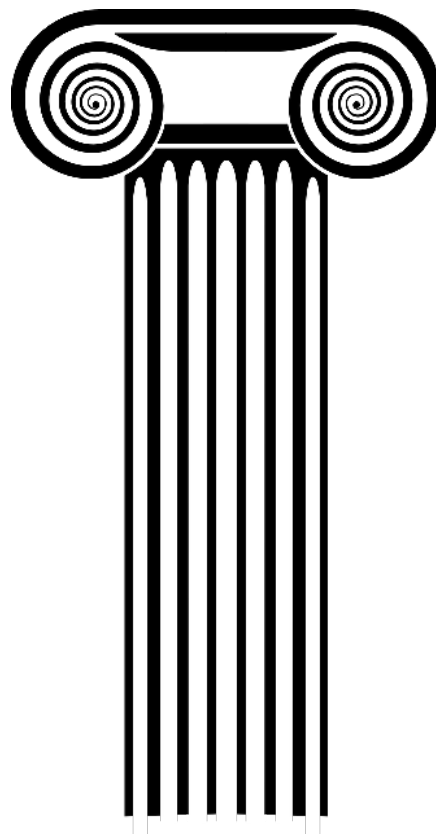
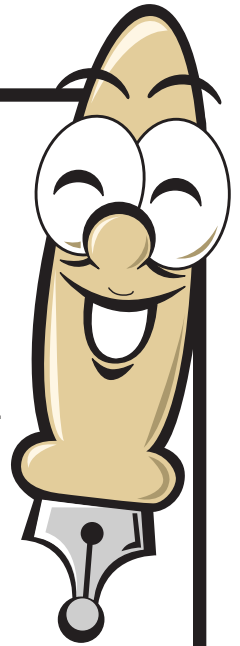
Look up these *ayat* in the Qur'an and write the translation in the space below.

This pillar still stands in *Masjid an-Nabawi* and is known as the pillar of *tawbah*.

We learn from this story that when we say sorry to Allah we must be really regretful for the sin that we have committed and we must promise never to repeat it.

KEYPOINTS

- 1 Sinning causes the soul to become impure. Continuous sinning leads to a hard heart.
- 2 *Tawbah* is the cure for an impure soul. However, this must be done sincerely and with a promise not to repeat the sin.
- 3 The Ahlul Bayt (a) have taught us various *du'as* which show us how to ask Allah for forgiveness.
- 4 There are many other benefits of doing *tawbah*.



NOTES

- 1 Committing sins makes one's soul impure.
- 2 Continuously committing sins means one's heart has hardened.
- 3 It is OK to commit small sins every week because we then go to the *masjid* every Thursday for *Du'a Kumayl*.
- 4 As soon as we realise we have committed a sin we should immediately apologise to Allah without delay.
- 5 There is no need to ask for forgiveness while we are young. We can do that when we are older.
- 6 We can use the *du'as* taught by the Ahlul Bayt (a) to ask for forgiveness.