

# MIFTAAH SEMINAR

## DISEASES AND CURES OF THE HEART



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### The Path of Self-Reform

- The journey of self-reform and purification of the heart is lengthy but rewarding, leading to personal betterment, salvation, and well-being.
- Material possessions stay behind when we leave this world, while the soul continues its journey.

### The Journey of the Ruh (Soul)

#### • Creation of the Ruh

- Allah created all *arwah* (souls) and asked them, "Am I not your Lord?" (أألسـت بربكم؟)

قالوا بلى شهدنا

*"They said, 'Yes, we testify.'" (Surah Al-A'raf: 7:172)*

- This covenant instilled the natural ability to recognize and navigate towards Allah.

#### • Life in the Body

- The ruh was infused into the body, marking the second phase of the soul's journey.
- The ruh remains as the essence of life but is often overshadowed by the physical body.
- It subtly influences and is affected by our actions, though it stays hidden.

- **Death and Separation**

- At death, the ruh is extracted, the body is buried, and the ruh ascends.
- The ruh's destination depends on the individual's beliefs and deeds:
  - **عليين (Illiyin):** A place of honor and comfort.
  - **سجين (Sijin):** A place of torment.
- The "grave" symbolizes the intermediary world (عالم البرزخ) where the ruh faces its deeds' consequences.

- **The Day of Judgment**

- On the Day of Judgment, the ruh and body are reunited.
- Souls from *Illiyin* and *Sijin* return to resurrected bodies.
- In the Akhirah, the ruh and body reach their full potential:
  - **Jannah:** Requires stronger bodies to enjoy immense bounties.
  - **Jahannam:** Requires massive bodies to endure severe punishments.
    - Hadith: Certain body parts in Jahannam will be the size of Mount Uhud.

### **Responsibilities Towards the Body and Ruh**

- Our bodies are an amanah (trust) from Allah, and we must care for them without compromising the needs of the ruh.
- Strengthening the ruh requires turning to Allah's commandments and giving preference to His commands over personal desires.
  - Each act of obedience strengthens the ruh, while indulging in worldly desires strengthens the body but weakens the ruh.
- **Ramadan** illustrates this balance:
  - The body is deliberately weakened through fasting, allowing the ruh to prevail.
  - Acts like dhikr, qiyam, taraweeh, Quran recitation, istighfar, and charity nourish and strengthen the ruh.

## The Goal of Tazkiya (Purification)

- Tazkiya involves sustainable growth in spirituality, building habits gradually and consistently.
  - Example: Avoid extremes like staying up all night for worship but missing Fajr.
  - Focus on building a stable foundation and adding to it steadily.
- The aim is to meet Allah at the highest spiritual state possible, closer to Him at that moment than ever before.

## The Reality and Impact of Jealousy

- **Definition of Jealousy**
  - *Hasad* (jealousy) in Arabic literally means the rough texture of a scouring pad used to scrape stubborn residue from pots and pans.
  - This metaphor illustrates how jealousy scrapes away the peace and comfort of the heart, leaving it restless.
- **Effects of Jealousy**
  - Jealousy strips a person of peace, contentment, and mental rest.
  - Scholars describe jealousy as its own punishment, as it creates inner turmoil for the jealous person.
  - Islamic jealousy differs from envy; jealousy is when one wishes that another person did not have something they possess.
  - Jealousy may target anything: physical attributes, possessions, careers, popularity, family, skills, or even religious accomplishments.
- **Objection to Allah's Decree**
  - Jealousy is fundamentally an objection to Allah's divine will and distribution of blessings.

نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ

*"It is We who have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of this world, and We have raised some of them above others in rank."*

*(Surah Al-Zukhruf 43:32)*

- A jealous person challenges Allah's wisdom and decisions, which distances them from Allah.
- **Jealousy's Impact on Others**
  - Generally, jealousy primarily harms the jealous person by depriving them of contentment.
  - A jealous person remains discontent, focused on what they lack rather than appreciating what they have.
- **When Jealousy Hurts Others**
  - Jealousy can harm others when it manifests in actions or words, such as:
    - **Backbiting:** Often fueled by jealousy, backbiting is a damaging way jealousy is expressed.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

*"And from the evil of an envier when he envies." (Surah Al-Falaq 113:5)*

- **Islamic Perspective on Jealousy**
  - Islam seeks to eradicate jealousy from the heart, regardless of whether the target is Muslim or non-Muslim.
  - Contentment and gratitude for Allah's decree are the antidotes to jealousy.

## Jealousy and the Evil Eye: Insights and Lessons

- **The Evil Eye**
  - Not everything that happens is caused by the evil eye (*'ayn*), though it can impact a person in certain circumstances.
  - Protection against the evil eye:
    - Observing *masnoon* acts, *du'as*, and *adhkar* taught by the Prophet ﷺ.
    - Being punctual with *Salah*.

- If one feels affected, there is a process to follow for alleviation.
- Avoid attributing everything to the evil eye; doing so fosters unnecessary suspicion and presumptions.
- The balanced approach is to protect oneself through prophetic guidance and address issues if they arise.
- **Jealousy and the Evil Eye**
  - When a jealous person harbors extreme envy and looks at someone with resentment or malice, their gaze can harm the person they envy.
  - It's crucial to regularly check our intentions to ensure our actions stem from sincerity and not hidden jealousy or ulterior motives.
- **Sincerity and Intentions**
  - Acts that appear pious or righteous on the surface may be driven by jealousy, retaliation, or competition, which Allah knows and will judge accordingly.
  - Imam Malik's example of sincerity (*ikhlas*):
    - He spent 15-16 years compiling the *Muwatta*.
    - During this time, another scholar completed and published a similar book, also called *Muwatta*.
    - When advised to stop his work, Imam Malik responded, "The work that was done for the sake of Allah will remain in this world."
    - The competing *Muwatta* faded into obscurity, while Imam Malik's *Muwatta* became a timeless standard for Islamic scholarship.
    - This enduring success was due to his profound sincerity and devotion to Allah.
- **The Danger of Jealous Motives**
  - Undertaking actions out of jealousy or the spirit of competition

- results in non-acceptance of deeds.
- Allah dislikes sentiments such as envy and rivalry when they drive actions.
- A person must continuously reflect on their intentions and purify their motives to ensure they align with the pleasure of Allah.

## The Importance of Tawbah (Repentance) and Istighfar (Seeking Forgiveness)

### The Need for Self-Reform

- Every believer, regardless of their stage in Deen, requires self-reform and improvement.
- The first step towards Allah begins with **Tawbah** (repentance) and **Istighfar** (seeking forgiveness).
  - These actions cleanse the slate, allowing one to approach Allah without the burden of past sins.

### The Door of Tawbah and Istighfar

- Allah has kept the door of repentance wide open for His servants.
- The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), despite being sinless, constantly engaged in istighfar:
  - Over 100 times in one sitting, sajdah, or ruku.
- Tawbah is obligatory for major sins, as highlighted by Imam Nawawi and other scholars.

### Steps of Tawbah

1. **Cease the sin** – Stop committing the sin immediately.
  2. **Resolve not to repeat it** – Make a firm intention to avoid it in the future.
  3. **Feel regret** – Deeply feel remorse for having committed the sin.
  4. **Seek forgiveness** – Ask Allah for pardon.
- Tawbah transforms a person into the beloved of Allah,

- starting their journey from a point of divine love and mercy.

### Sins and Their Broader Scope

- Sins are not limited to missing obligations like Salah, Zakat, or Hajj but extend to:
  - **Eyes** – Viewing what is prohibited.
  - **Tongue** – Backbiting, lying.
  - **Ears** – Listening to forbidden things.
  - **Earnings** – Acquiring wealth through impermissible means.
  - **Family roles** – Failing in responsibilities as a parent, sibling, or child.
- Self-improvement begins with self-awareness, not pointing out others' flaws.

### Upholding Obligations

- After tawbah, the focus should shift to:
  - **Fulfilling obligations** – Uphold the faraidh (obligations), especially acts of worship and duties towards others.
  - **Avoiding haram** – Steer clear of what Allah has prohibited, including major sins.

### The Boundaries Set by Allah

- Allah's limits are clear and inviolable:
  - "These are the limits of Allah, so do not approach them" (تلك حدود الله فلا تقربوها).
  - Modern society often challenges these boundaries under the guise of progressiveness or cultural adaptation.
- The Shariah remains constant, irrespective of time and place, and cannot be diluted.

### Preserving the Original Teachings of Islam

- Deviating from the original teachings leads to the erosion of faith, as seen in previous religious communities.

- The Prophet (peace be upon him) warned of this imitation: “You will follow the ways of those before you as closely as one shoe resembles its pair.”

### **The Role of Tazkiyah (Purification of the Heart)**

- True tazkiyah entails adhering to Allah’s commandments and abstaining from haram.
- The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:
  - “Verily, in the body, there is a piece of flesh. If it is sound, the whole body is sound; and if it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted. Verily, it is the heart.”
- Sins darken the heart, but tawbah and istighfar cleanse and restore its purity.

### **Avoiding Doubtful Matters**

- The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught:
  - “Halal is clear, and haram is clear, but between them are doubtful matters.”
  - Avoiding doubtful matters preserves one’s deen and reputation.
- Example: A shepherd grazing near restricted land risks trespassing. Similarly, staying close to haram increases the likelihood of crossing boundaries.

### **Seeking Knowledge**

- Gaining knowledge is essential to understand and apply Allah’s commandments.
- Use sound religious guidance to navigate modern challenges and doubts.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

*"The best form of seeking forgiveness (Istighfar) is to say:*



اللهم أنت ربي لا إله إلا أنت خلقتني وأنا عبدك وأنا على عهدك ووعدك ما استطعت، أعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت، أبوء لك بنعمتك علي وأبوء بذنبي فاغفر لي فإنه لا يغفر الذنوب إلا أنت

*"O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no deity but You. You created me and I am Your servant, and I am bound by Your pledge to the best of my ability. I seek refuge with You from the evil of my deeds. I acknowledge Your favor upon me, and my sins. So forgive me, for none forgives sins except You."*  
(Sahih al-Bukhari)

### Summary:

- **Acknowledgment of Allah's Mastery:** "You are my Lord, I am Your servant."
- **Commitment:** "I am bound by Your promises to the best of my ability."
- **Seeking Protection:** "I seek refuge from the evil of my own deeds."
- **Admission of Sins:** "I admit Your favors upon me and my mistakes."
- **Plea for Forgiveness:** "Forgive me, for only You can forgive sins."

### Reflection

This dua emphasizes humility, recognizing Allah as the sole source of forgiveness. It should be recited with reflection and sincerity, not just as words, but as a heartfelt plea for Allah's mercy.

### The Importance of Istighfar, Dhikr, and Salah

- **Tawab – The Forgiver**
  - Allah's attribute of Tawab means He forgives repeatedly and endlessly. Even if our sins pile up to the heavens, Allah will forgive if we turn back to Him.

- **Hadith (Sahih Muslim):**  
*"If your sins were to reach the clouds in the sky, then you sought forgiveness from Me, I would forgive you, and I would not mind."*
  - Mistakes will happen, but we must keep turning back to Allah.
- **The Importance of Daily Istighfar**
  - **Dua for Forgiveness:**  
*"O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no deity but You. You created me and I am Your servant..."(Sahih Bukhari*
    - Istighfar should be a part of our daily routine as it purifies our hearts, minds, and bodies from the effects of sins.
  - **Allah's Command (Quran 33:41):**  
*"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance."  
 (Quran 33:41):*
- **The Power of Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah)**
  - Dhikr should be done throughout the day: while standing, sitting, lying down, and working. It is an easy and bountiful act of worship.  
*"Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest." (13:28):*
    - Seclude yourself to remember Allah, away from distractions, for peace and contentment.
- **The Importance of Reading Quran**
  - **Imam Qurtubi:** The recitation of the Quran is the highest form of Dhikr.
  - The Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized his commitment to reading the Quran even when others needed his time. He prioritized his recitation.
  - **Hadith (Sahih Bukhari):**  
*"I will not give anyone preference over my recitation of the Quran."*
- **Enhancing the Quality of Salah**
  - Dhikr feeds into the quality of Salah. If we walk into Salah distracted, our attention will wander.

- We should create a buffer before Salah to transition mentally and spiritually.
- **Sunnah practices before Fardh Salah:** Help prepare and purify the heart before standing before Allah.
- **Sahabah:** The Prophet (ﷺ) turned to Salah in difficult times, finding refuge and peace through it.
- **The Root of Sin – Ghafrah (Neglect)**
  - Unawareness of Allah leads to sin. We must remain mindful of Allah to prevent sin and keep our actions in check.
  - **Hadith (Sahih Muslim):**  
*"Every one of you will stand in front of Allah, and He will speak to you directly."*
- In the face of our deeds, there will be no escape except through Allah's mercy.
- **The Spiritual Journey (Tazkiyah)**
  - Tazkiyah is the process of purifying the soul. We all have flaws, but this journey is a continuous process of improvement.
  - **Action:** Start today and bring others along with you in the pursuit of purity and closeness to Allah.

### Conclusion:

- **Focus:** Establish consistent Dhikr, regular Salah, and Quran recitation in your life to draw closer to Allah. Find peace in your relationship with Him, remembering that He is the ultimate source of forgiveness, guidance, and refuge.