

MIFTAAH SEMINAR



REVIVING THE HEART

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SESSION 2

What Does it Mean To Be a Person of Character?

- One of the definitions of character is something that does not change due to circumstance.
 - For example, if being generous is a part of your character, you will be generous during times where you have a lot of money and times you do not have as much.
- As stated last session, the first part of Ibn Ata'illah's text reminds us to seek repentance in every moment.
- The Prophet SAW used to pray until his ankles became swollen.
 - Seeking God's forgiveness was a part of his character SAW.
 - It made no difference if he SAW was going to be forgiven or not because it was a part of his character to see forgiveness.
 - He was not focused on the outcome of his repentance, since he was already divinely protected from sin.

Seek Repentance

- Ibn Ata'illah said: Seek forgiveness from Allah at all times of the day. Allah SWT has commanded us to seek repentance.
 - Any time that Allah SWT inspires a person to seek forgiveness, it is because He wants to forgive that person.
 - He SWT is too accepting of our repentance for it to be denied.
- The Prophet SAW stated: If you do not have shame, do as you will.
 - This is not a statement for us to do whatever we'd like, but rather a means of us to stay mindful.
 - The Prophet SAW is saying that for a believer, their shame about a wrong act is an indication that their heart is alive.
- The Prophet SAW said: Every misdeed that a person commits, there is a stain on the spiritual heart. If repentance is sought immediately after, Allah will forgive. If the stain remains, it becomes harder to remove.
 - Ibn Ata'illah compares this to a cooking skillet with residue. If you remove it right away, it is easy to clean, but if you cook on it again and again, it becomes difficult to remove that stain.
- The Prophet SAW said: Fear Allah wherever you are and follow up a sin with a good deed and it will remove the effect of that sin.

- Just because we fall, does not mean we have to stay down.
 - Just because we sin, does not mean we can not seek forgiveness.
- Allah SWT said: Turn to Allah in repentance all together, O believers, so that you may be successful (24:31).
- The people closest to God seek His forgiveness more often.
 - They are always worried about their defects and checking themselves.
- We will never be able to guide people during the day, if we do not pray for them during the night.
- Allah SWT said: Truly, Allah loves those who abstain from evil and keep themselves pure (2:222)
- You cannot be a person of repentance unless you were a person who made a mistake.
- He SWT loves those who repent, and He loves sinners when they repent.
- Through Allah's forgiveness of our sin, His greatest quality of mercy is expressed.
- If it was not for our sins, we would not have any knowledge of God's Grace.
- Ibn Ata'illah then mentions a hadith of the Prophet SAW. The Prophet SAW said: I seek Allah's forgiveness 70 times a day.
- This means that he SAW seeks forgiveness numerous times in a day.

- Seeking repentance (tawbah) has three, sometimes four, conditions:
 - One must feel remorse/regret for doing that sin
 - One must stop doing that sin
 - One must make the promise to never return to that sin.
 - If you have harmed someone, you must repair the relationship and seek their forgiveness.
 - This is only if the sin involves another person.
- He continued: If you want repentance then it is appropriate for you to never be free of contemplation.
 - Tawba is not for the heedless.
 - Only those who are aware of their mistakes will make tawba.
 - Guilt is to the soul as pain is to the body.
 - When pain is felt in the body, the body is trying to tell you that something is wrong. Similarly, when guilt is felt, it tells the soul that something is wrong.
 - Today's culture tries to remove feelings of guilt by telling everyone that everything they do is allowed and accepted, however, this is not correct.
- The Quran tells us about 3 types of souls:
 - Al-Nafs Al-Amarata bil Soo' - The soul which is always commanding to evil.
 - Al-Nafs Al-Lawaama - The self reproaching soul
 - This is the soul that does something wrong but then it holds itself accountable.

- This is the soul which is alive.
- When a person makes a mistake, they feel and recognize that mistake.
 - Al-Nafs Al-Mutma'inah - The fulfilled soul
- When guilt is felt it should be investigated and never ignored.
- He continued: So contemplate, and if you find obedience, then thank Allah for that.
- Any good that we do is a product of the tawfeeq that Allah SWT gives us.
- No good act is solely from us.

