

said, 'Yes, indeed, and I also bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah'. Upon this, the Prophet (S.A) said, 'Allah will forgive you for your shameless deeds and your disloyalties'.
(Tafseer Ibn Katheer vol.5 pg. 375 Dar Al Kitab Al Arabi Beirut 2013)

The blessed traditions of the Prophet (S.A) show that all sins are forgiven with repentance, and a servant must not despair of Allah's mercy even though his sins may be grave and many. Certainly the doors of repentance and mercy are vast and wide. Allah has mentioned about this and said, '**Know they not that Allah accepts repentance from His slaves and takes the Sadaqat (alms, charities) and that Allah Alone is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful?**' (Sura Tawba, Verse 104)

Allah has also said, '**And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah's Forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful**'. (Sura Nisaa, Verse 110)

Many Ahadith (traditions) speak of Allah's All-Encompassing and All-Embracing mercy which He extends to His servants. In a narration recorded by Imams Bukhari and Muslim, Abu Saeed Al Khudri (R.A) stated that the Messenger of Allah (S.A) once related an incident of the Bani Israel and said, 'Among the Bani Israel, there was a person who murdered 99 people. He then felt regretful about his action and wanted to make amends. He discussed his situation with a worshipper from the Bani Israel and asked if there was any chance for him to repent for his sins. Upon hearing the grave crimes he committed, the worshipper told him that there was no chance for him to repent. The man did not like what he heard from the worshipper and killed him also, making the total amount to be 100 murders. He then found a scholar with whom he consulted, and was told that there was no barrier between him and his repentance to Allah. However, he must undertake a journey to a certain far-off village where many people were worshipping Allah. He must go to that village and join the people in worshipping Allah, and must not return to the village in which he committed his crimes.

The man listened to this wise advice from the scholar, and embarked on his journey to the village for the sake of worshipping and repenting to Allah. However, after covering half

of the journey, he died on the way. At that time, the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment both appeared at the side of the body to take possession of the soul. Seeing that there was no direct order (as yet) as to who must take control of the soul, the angels started to dispute with each other. The angels of mercy pleaded, 'This man has come with a repenting heart to Allah', and the angels of punishment argued, 'He never did a virtuous deed in his life'. To solve this dispute, another angel changed its form and appeared before them as an arbiter. He then made the decision saying, 'Measure the distance between the two lands. He will be considered belonging to the land to which he is closer'. The angels measured the land and found him closer to the land where he intended to go (the land where he was going to worship Allah), and so, the angels of mercy took his soul'. It is narrated that Allah ordered the land of worship/piety to come closer, and He ordered the land which the man left to go further away'. (Bukhari, Muslim)

The above hadith shows how loving and kind Allah is to His servants. It does not matter how grave one's sins are, or how many they are, the door of repentance is always open for the servants of Allah.

Thus, those who have transgressed against themselves, and have spent their days and nights in sins and wrong-doings, should put their hopes in Allah and turn to him in repentance. Allah is always ready to forgive the sins of his servants when they turn to Him in sincerity. They should not lose hope or become despondent, but must look at the beautiful words of the Prophet (S.A.S) and build the courage to turn to Allah.

Anas (ra) narrates, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) saying, "**Allah the Almighty has said, ' O Son of Adam, so long as you call upon me and ask of me, I shall forgive you for what you have done and I shall not mind. O Son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O Son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you to face me ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it."**' (Tirmidhi, who said that it was a good and sound hadith.)

إِلَى الَّذِينَ اسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE TRANSGRESSED AGAINST THEMSELVES

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الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الكريم

There isn't a single human being who lives on the earth except that he commits sins. Besides the prophets of Allah, everyone sins. Mistakes, errors and slips all form part of the daily life of a person. For those who have been blessed with faith (Imaan), they recognise that sins are destructive, and they bring about the displeasure and wrath of Allah.

A believer who recognises his lord, does not like to commit sins. He loves to do that which is right and threads the earth with due caution, mindful of every step he takes. But no matter how much he tries, he falls into the trap of his worst enemy, Satan. He slips regularly through his tongue, feet, hands, ears and eyes. Even his heart becomes corrupt and stained with the darkness of ill-feelings, hatred, malice and enmity towards others. While these may seem to be 'no problem' for some, the true believer becomes worried. He knows that the angels record these deeds, and he also knows that his Creator sees him while committing these acts. The true believer thus, becomes scared. He worries about his life in the grave, his judgement and his standing before Allah. These thoughts haunt him. He becomes uneasy and restless, and cannot seem to enjoy life. He passes his days and nights absorbed in the thought, as to why he disobeyed Allah. He looks for answers in himself, but only finds his uneasiness increasing day after day. He then turns to his creator with his eyes filled with tears and a heart trembling with fear, seeking His pardon and forgiveness.

This is truly the trait of the true believers. Sins are bound to occur from servants, but Allah has opened the doors of repentance and forgiveness. The sign of a true believer is that he always turns to Allah in repentance. The Holy Prophet (S.A.S) said, **'Every son of Adam is a sinner, but the best of all sinners are those who repent to Allah'**. (Tirmizi)

The believers should never lose hope in the mercy of Allah. Notwithstanding the amount of sins they have committed, they must know that Allah forgives all sins and He loves to forgive.

Allah Himself calls out to the believers and says:

Say: **"O My servants who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful'**. (Surah Zumar, Verse 53)

This verse gives an announcement of Allah's All-Encompassing Mercy. It gives an invitation to all those who have sinned and transgressed their souls with every type of wrongdoing, to turn to Allah with repentance. They must not despair and become hopeless of achieving Allah's mercy and forgiveness, instead, they should turn to Allah with true belief and sincere repentance, and He will certainly forgive all their sins.

The verse also gives hope to those who have not yet believed in Allah that they also can gain Allah's mercy and forgiveness for all their sins and wrong doings. There is no need for them to despair and lose heart. Allah, who is the most Compassionate and Merciful will also shower His mercies upon them and wash away the sins and transgressions of their past. However, they must first accept Allah as the One and Only God and Muhammad (Upon whom be peace) as the last Messenger of Allah sent for the guidance of man. After, this they must sincerely repent to Allah seeking His pardon and forgiveness for their sins.

Regarding this, the Holy Quran states, **'Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with him, but He forgives all other sins besides that, to whom He pleases. And whoever sets up partners with Allah, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin'**. (Sura Nisa, Verse 48)

'Verily, those who disbelieved, and died while they were disbelievers, the (whole) earth full of gold will not be accepted from anyone of them even if they offered it as a ransom. For them is a painful torment and they will have no helpers'. (Sura Al Imran, Verse 91)

These verses show that disbelievers and polytheists will be granted forgiveness by Allah on the condition that they accept Islam and repent sincerely to Allah.

In connection to these verses, it is narrated from the great companion, Abdullah bin Abbas (R.A), that there were some people from among the polytheists who murdered many people

and committed many shameful acts like adultery. They came to the Prophet (S.A) and said, 'That which you say and invite to is good, but can you inform us if the actions we have done will be forgiven if we accept Islam?' Upon this, the following verses were revealed:

'And those who invoke not any other god along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit adultery. Whoever does this shall receive the punishment.

The torment will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;

Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.' (Sura Furqaan, Verses 68-70)

The following verse was also revealed:

'Say: "O my servants who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful'. (Sura Az Zumar, Verse 53) / (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, Vol.5, Pg.374, Dar Al Kitab Al Arabi, Beirut 2013)

In this verse, Allah addressed all His servants who have transgressed their souls by committing acts of disbelief and such major sins that they have crossed all limits of transgression, that they should not despair of His mercy and must not lose hope in His forgiveness. However, in order to achieve Allah's forgiveness, Imaan (faith) is required.

Together with true belief in Allah, they must sincerely turn to Him in repentance and beg for His forgiveness. He has promised them that He will forgive all the sins they have committed. In one tradition, Amr bin Abasa (R.A) narrates that a very old man who was leaning on a stick, came to the Prophet (S.A) and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I have committed many shameless deeds and I have many disloyalties.

Can I hope to be forgiven?' The Messenger of Allah (S.A) said, 'Have you not testified that there is no god but Allah?' The man