

Friday Sermon

Astaghfar

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ -

أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ه بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ه الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ه
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ه إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ه إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ه صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ه
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ه
وَأَنْ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى وَ يُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِي فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ كَبِيرٍ ه

[11:4] *And that you seek forgiveness of your Lord, and then turn to Him. He will provide for you a goodly provision until an appointed term. And He will grant His grace to everyone possessed of merit. And if you turn away, then surely, I fear for you the punishment of a dreadful day.*

The verse just recited in front of you mentions that Tauba (Repentance) and Astaghfar are two very important aspect of worshipping Allah, and if anyone follows these will have a reward and change in their life. This reward which is mentioned is known as the 'Fazl of Allah', and whoever does Tauba and Astaghfar from their hearts will see the fruits of this promise made by Allah. The 'Fazl of Allah' can be in many different forms for example Allah's blessing spiritually, financially, health wise etc.

Hadrat Masih Ma'ud explained what Tauba and Astaghfar are on many different places throughout his books and Malfoozat. It is very important that we understand what these two most fundamental concepts are, in order to strive towards Allah.

Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} once talking to his companions and mentioned the philosophy of Taubah and Bait, he was explaining the reason of doing his Bait and why Taubah is part of it. Hazur^{AS} said;

Tauba means a state of human, in which his sins with whom he has deep relations and consider it his land. In other words he is living in that land. To leave that land and come back to purity. Now leaving ones on land in which he has to cut off his relations with his friends and his loved ones, things, streets, markets and house which he loved, has to be cut off and this is very hard and so much pain he has to put upon himself and then migrate to new land, and then never go back to his old land is called TAUBAH. Friends of Sins are different then friends of Taqwa. Sufiyah called this change a DEATH which one has to put himself through. True Taubah causes a great pain which he suffers, but Allah is Most Gracious and ever Merciful, until he gives the replacement he will not cause one to die.

(Malfozat Vol.1, Page 2)

In another place Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} talks about the reality of Sin and Taubah, Hazur^{AS} said;

“The reality of sin is not this that Allah creates Sin and then thousands of years later he would start to think about forgiving them also. Like flee has two wings, one has poison and other one has the anti-poison; exactly like that humans have two wings, sin and blaming himself, Taubah. This is a rule that when someone injures the slave then he also feels bad about hitting him. Which means that both wings move together. Anti-poison is with the poison. So question is why even create this Poison in the first place? The Answer is that by using curing poison it has the order of purity/cure. If Sin does not exist then the poison of pride would increase so much that it would have killed mankind. Taubah keeps it under control, it keeps humans safe from the problems of Kibr (considering yourself better than everyone) and Ujab (all good deeds one does is from his own power and not from Allah). When the Holy Prophet^{SA} did Astaghfar 70 times a day then how much should you do? One who is happy with the sin does not leave it; the only one who leaves the sin is the one who considers the sin as a sin.” (Malfozat Vol.1, Page 3)

One of the very hidden sins which Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} talked about in this quotation is Ujab and Kibr, both of these poisons start to show up after Taubah and when someone starts to do good deeds to please Allah. It's very important to know the trend of these two problems. Both of these above mentioned problems are also mentioned in same order as Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} stated, and this is the very reason Iblis was thrown out of Heavens and got rejected. May Allah bless our Hazur^{AS} for his guidance that, the cure for both of these diseases is also mentioned in last phrase, where he mentioned that Astaghfar is the key and Holy Prophet^{SA} did Astaghfar 70 times a day and he was pure beyond our imaginations then how much repenting should we do in front of Allah?

In another place Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} talked about the importance of Astaghfar and the purpose of this great anti-poison solution.

Hadrat Masih Ma'ud^{AS} said that, “*Astaghfar* and *Taubah* (repentance) are two separate matters. From one point of view, *Astaghfar* has priority over repentance, inasmuch as *Astaghfar* is the help and strength which are obtained from God and repentance means standing on one's own feet. It is the way of God that when a person seeks help from Him, He bestows strength and with that strength the supplicant stands on his own feet and thus possesses the faculty to do good, which is called 'turning to God'. This is the natural sequence of it. It is appointed for seekers that they should seek help from God in every condition. Till a seeker obtains strength from God, he can do nothing. The strength for repentance is acquired after *Astaghfar*. If there is no *Astaghfar*, the faculty of repentance dies. If you will thus follow up *Astaghfar* with repentance, the result will be as set out in the verse: *يُمْتَنِعْكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى*. This is the way of God, that those who follow up *Astaghfar* with repentance will achieve their cherished grades. Every sense has its limits within which it achieves its high grades.”

[Malfozat, vol. II, pp. 68-69]

May Allah help us to understand the true meaning of Taubah, give strength to do a lot of Astaghfar for rest of our lives, as this is the only way, we can strive to overcome the poison of Sins and achieve the love of Allah, the Most Loving One.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ - وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مِنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَالَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّهُ فَالَا هَادِيَ لَهُ - وَ نَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ - عِبَادَ اللَّهِ - رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ أَنْ اللَّهُ يَا مُرُ
بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَابْتِئَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَبِيْهِي عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ - يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ - أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَادْعُوهُ يَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ وَ لَذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ -