

How to pray for Forgiveness?

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The Prophet (PBUH) said¹: *"The chief of prayers for forgiveness is: O' Allah, You are my Lord, there is no God but You. You created me, and I am your servant, and I will keep my covenant and promise [of faith and sincere obedience] to You, as much as I can. I seek refuge with You from all the evil I have done, I admit, before You, your blessings upon me, and I admit to You, all my sins. So forgive me, for certainly none can forgive sins except You."*

ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar said: We counted in a single sitting the Messenger of Allah, (PBUH), saying one hundred times: **"Rabbi-ghfir-lee wa tub ʿalayya innaka anta-t-tawwabu-l-ghafoor."** [My Lord, forgive me and accept my repentance, verily you are Acceptor of Repentance, Oft-Forgiving.] (Ahmad, Abu Dawood, Ibn Maajah).

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "None of you should say: 'O Allah! Forgive me if You wish,' or 'Bestow Your Mercy on me if You wish,' or 'Provide me with means of subsistence if You wish,' but he should be firm in his request, for Allah does what He will and nobody can force Him (to do anything)." (Bukhari).

Repentance:

Dr. Ahmad Kutty, a senior lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, provides the following guidance with regards to seeking repentance for sins²:

"If you committed evil but have repented sincerely, and changed your life around for better, then Allah has certainly promised to grant you mercy and forgiveness. It is one of the basic principles of belief in Islam that Allah is All-Relenting, All-Forgiving and All-Merciful.

"Here are a few verses which clearly convey this crucial concept:

"Do they not know that it is Allah Who accepts the repentance of His servants and receives (approves) their charity, and that Allah is the Relenting, the Compassionate?" (At-Tawbah: 104)

"Say: 'O My servants who wronged against their souls, do not despair of Allah's mercy! For Allah forgives all sins; for He is indeed Forgiving, Compassionate.'" (Az-Zumar: 53)

"So do not put off repentance; take the necessary steps immediately, for no one can tell when the death will overtake us. The door of repentance is open so long as we are not in the throes of death, for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Allah accepts the repentance of His servant so long as death has not reached his collar bone."** But since we have no way of knowing when death will overtake us, we must never be complacent or slack in hastening to taking steps towards repentance.

"While speaking of repentance, I must rush to add, that it cannot be considered as valid unless one takes the following steps:

Firstly, one must feel deep remorse for the sins one has committed.

Secondly, one must refrain from it totally while also abstaining from all those leads or circumstances that led him to such a sin in the first place.

Thirdly, he must be firmly resolved never to sin again, and immediately becoming occupied in whatever good deeds that he can in order to wipe out his past sins.

Fourthly, all of the above involve sins involving the rights of Allah; if, however, your sins involve the rights of human beings, then you must also do whatever it takes to return or compensate or redress the grievances of the person you have wronged. Paying him his dues or compensating him in whatever ways possible becomes an essential condition of valid repentance.

“Repentance, as stated above once accomplished, will undoubtedly wipe out one’s sins, and guarantee him a clean record. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **“One who has repented of a sin (sincerely) is like one who has never sinned at all.”**”

¹ Source: Yusuf Islam

² The door of repentance is wide open – Islamonline – 4/8/03