

## Making light of small sins

Reminder (26th October 2007) delivered by Shaykh Muhammad Taher

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Just as...

... an ordinary person would fear taking poison. He would be cautious that not even a tiny amount should enter his body whether it be through his food, his drink. He would be careful not to get any trace of it on his hands and would be cautious against getting into contact with any tiny microbes that could harm or destroy him.

In the same way, you see ...

... one who submits to God (literally in Arabic - a 'Muslim') is cautious against the major sins and fears to commit them and yearns to avoid them,

YET when it comes to smaller sins, he thinks nothing of them, as though they were insignificant.

The Prophet Muhammad (may God's peace and blessings be upon him) warned us against committing small sins just as he warned against committing big sins as he said:

"Satan despairs that he should ever be worshipped (or obeyed by means of leading people to associate partners in obedience with Allah) in this land (at the time and place of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)), but he is pleased that he is able to (lead astray) through your small misdeeds, so be aware of him for the sake of your religion"

The Prophet also said: "Beware of small sins. For they accumulate until they destroy man."

He (pbuh) gave the following example of the small sins- "it is like that of a group of travellers who broke their journey in a valley. Then one of them brought in a single piece of straw. Another came up with another piece (and a third with one more) until they were able to gather enough to cook their food with their collection of straw. Remember! If a man is held for questioning (on the day of Judgment) for his small sins, surely (just like each piece of straw) they will (gather to) destroy him"

Sa'd Ibn Junadah said that 'when the Prophet (pbuh) had finished from the battle of Hunain, we descended upon an empty wasteland, the Prophet said "Gather together! Whoever finds something should bring it forward, whoever finds even a bone or a spike should bring it forward". Sa'd went on to say: 'in an hour we had gathered a great heap! The Prophet then said; "Have you seen this!? The sins of person are too gathered in such a way, so have consciousness of Allah, as all major and small sins are to be accounted for.'"

So whosoever belittles small sins should take heed! The majority of those in hell are there on account of their small sins piling up- A mountain is but an accumulation of smaller stones piled one on top of the other until it becomes a towering mount and the source of every fire can be as little as a single piece of straw [this khutba was delivered at a time when 300,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes due to fires!]

It is related in Sahih Bukhari that Anas Ibn Malik may God be pleased with him (to one of the followers of God): "You imagine certain sins to be more insignificant than a straw. But, at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) we used to count them among those that can destroy a man."

It is an error to belittle wrongdoing. A person should not look at his sin as small but should look towards the greatness of Whom he has wronged, as it is said "Do not look at the sins if they are small or big. Look at Him [God Almighty] in Whose defiance you are committing them."

It is also said: Have awareness of God so that you do not give degrade the importance of God watching you as compared with other onlookers (from people).

Belittling sins is a sign of ignorance and a lack of dignity in the heart of God the most High.

Ibn Mas'ud says: "A believer treats a sin as if it is a mountain over his head that may fall on him any moment. Whereas a regular violator looks at them as a fly that perked on his nose and he waived it away with his hand." (Bukhari)

And remember the story of the woman who entered the hell fire on account of locking up a cat until it died. Small sins can become major sins when compared to the:

- lack of shame,
- lack of fear and
- lack of consideration of God [the All Seeing, the All Hearing].

May God forgive us our sins, and let us be of those who repent for even the smallest of sins. Amen.