

Major Sins in Islam (part 2 of 2): Major Sins and How to Repent from Them

Description: Continuing our list of major sins in Islam. In addition we discuss ways to avoid sins and repent to Allah.

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Objectives:

- To extend our knowledge of major sins.
- To learn how to avoid major sins.
- To understand how to repent from major sins.

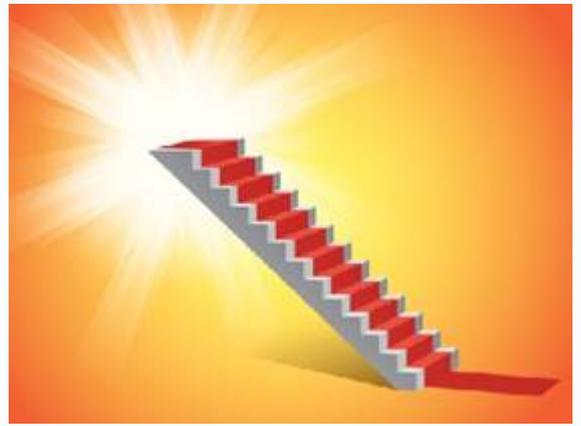
Arabic Terms:

- *Sunnah* - The word *Sunnah* has several meanings depending on the area of study however the meaning is generally accepted to be, whatever was reported that the Prophet said, did, or approved.
- *Hadith* - (plural " *ahadith* ") is a piece of information or a story. In Islam it is a narrative record of the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad and his companions.
- *Zakah* " an obligatory charity.
- *Ramadan* - The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. It is the month in which the obligatory fasting has been prescribed.
- *Hajj* - A pilgrimage to Mecca where the pilgrim performs a set of rituals. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam, which every adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their life if they can afford it and are physically able.

6. Turning one's back and running away from the battle is one of the major sins. It is an action that can demoralize other soldiers and can expose the whole community to the merciless assault of the enemy.

7. Those who slander chaste and believing women are cursed in this life and in the hereafter: for them is a grievous chastisement (Quran 24:23). Allah the Almighty makes it clear that whosoever unjustly accuses a chaste free woman of committing adultery is cursed both in this world and in the hereafter.

The major sins we have been examining are from an authentic *hadith* and are often referred to as the seven major sins. This *hadith* does not limit the major sins to those mentioned in it. However there are many more major sins perhaps up to seventy and below we list some of the more serious:



- Not performing the prayer
- Not paying *zakah*
- Breaking one's fast during *Ramadan* without an excuse
- Not performing the *Hajj* when able to

These serious major sins are concerned with maintaining the faith and practicing Islam as it is meant to be practiced. Neglecting one's religious duties can have disastrous consequences. Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, **oelIslam is built upon five pillars: testifying that there is no true deity except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, performing the prayers, paying the *Zakah*, making the *Hajj* - pilgrimage to the house, and fasting the month of *Ramadan*.**"[\[1\]](#)

Other major sins are more concerned with the harm caused to families and communities. For example, Prophet Muhammad said in an authentic hadith, "oeA person who is not safe from his neighbour's mischief will not enter Paradise".[\[2\]](#) It is for this reason many actions are forbidden by Allah and considered to be major sins. These include the following major sins:

- showing disrespect to one's parents
- Severing ties with one's relatives
- Drinking alcohol
- Gambling
- Theft
- Bribery
- Adultery
- Sodomy

Major sins also include sins that go against the basic Islamic ideals of honesty and

trustworthiness. Being trustworthy implies being honest, fair in dealings and punctual, as well as honouring trusts and keeping promises and commitments. Prophet Muhammad was known, even before his Prophethood to be Al-Amin (the trustworthy one). Thus the following must be included in the list of major sins:

- Bearing false witness
- Lying
- Backbiting

Avoiding Major Sins

The Prophet Muhammad said, "oe... wrongdoing is that which wavers in your soul, and which you dislike people finding out about."^[3] He also said, "oeConsult your heart. Righteousness is that which the soul feels at ease and the heart feels tranquil with. And wrongdoing is that which wavers in the soul and causes uneasiness in the chest..."

A person is able to avoid many sins by praying five times a day, reading or reciting the Quran, observing the five pillars of Islam and by keeping ourselves busy remembering Allah. By doing this we leave very little spare time in which sinful behaviour can occur. As humans we do fall into errors and sins, none the less we should try our best to avoid all sins, especially the major ones because they are very displeasing to Allah and, as we know, they jeopardise our contentment in this life and the hereafter. And when we fall into a sin, we should repent from it and beg for Allah's mercy and forgiveness.

Many people believe that their sins are too big and too frequent for Allah to ever forgive them. Islam however is the religion of forgiveness and Allah loves to forgive. Although the sins of humankind may reach as high as the clouds in the sky, Allah will forgive and go on forgiving until the Final Hour is almost upon us.

**oeExcept those who repent and believe and do good deeds. Such will enter Paradise, and they will not be wronged in any way."
(Quran 19:60)**

Repentance is essential for a person to lead a contented life. The reward of repentance is peace of mind and the forgiveness and pleasure of the Almighty. However, there are three conditions to repentance. They are, giving up the sin, feeling regret of committing it and resolving never to go back to that sin. If these three conditions are fulfilled with sincerity then Allah will forgive. If the sin was concerned with the rights of another person then there is a fourth condition. That is to restore, if possible, the rights taken away.

This concludes our lessons on major sins in Islam.

Endnotes:

[1] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*

[2] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[3] *Saheeh Muslim*

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