

3 ALLAH HAS PREPARED SALVATION

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Praise be to Allah—praise from him who has come to his senses, confessed his sin, repented of his disobedience, and turned to his Lord.

I witness that there is no god except Allah, the Living, the Mighty. Everything was created by Him and for Him. May He be glorified. He alone is omnipotent, rich, wise, forgiving, and merciful. His love is great, and Allah guides us in the right path.

IN THIS LESSON YOU WILL STUDY THE FOLLOWING:

- Is There Any Hope?
 - How can relationship with Allah be restored?
- The Sin Problem
 - How can relationship with Allah be restored?
- Allah the Merciful Maker
- The Messenger of Allah
 - Examples of Redemption

IS THERE ANY HOPE?

As for what follows, is there any hope that Allah would forgive our sins and pardon us for our disobedience? Does man have any hope for deliverance from hell, for assurance of eternal life? Yes, yes, my friend. So come with me to see how that is possible.

Allah, almighty and glorious, is the King of the Day of Judgment. He is the just Judge who will judge all people on the Last Day. In the second lesson we learned that everyone has fallen into sin and rebellion.

There is no one who is righteous, no one who is wise or who worships Allah. All have turned away from Allah; they have all gone wrong; no one does what is right, not even one.

There is no doubt that the sins and trespasses we commit will be judged sternly.

A rich landowner asked his steward to plant wheat in his fields. However, the manager planted corn. A little while later, the grain sprouted and began to produce fruit. The owner came to check his fields. He was surprised to find corn. He asked his steward: "Didn't I tell you to plant wheat?" "Yes sir, I planted corn, hoping that we would harvest wheat," answered the manager. When the rich man showed surprise, the wise manager said: "Master, in the same way, it is not possible to plant unkindness during one's life and then harvest happiness. People harvest what they plant." Therefore, Allah's Honorable book says:

Do not deceive yourselves; no one makes a fool of Allah. A person will reap exactly what he sows.

So on the Day of Judgment people are going to be punished. They will perish in eternal torment in the fire of hell.

THE SIN PROBLEM

Sin has caused all this. Sin has degraded humans and brought them down. They have become miserable slaves under the authority and power of Satan. Allah wants us to be His deputies (caliphs) on earth, the masters of His creation and obedient to His orders.

. . . Everyone who sins is a slave of sin.

As we said in the last lesson, sin is like a thick, high wall that separates humans from Allah Almighty. It is like a wide gulf that hinders people from approaching Allah. This wall, my friend, must be demolished so that the beautiful fellowship with Allah might be restored; so that we can be rescued from the torment of the Last Day. A bridge must be built over the wide gulf so that estranged people can approach Allah and enjoy His approval.

The peace, security, and well-being that humankind lost because of sin can be regained if the fellowship between people and Allah is restored. **But how can that relationship be restored?** On our part, we are blind; we are unable to recognize the right path. We are helpless. We

are not able to find the right path because we have fallen into a pit, and we have no strength to get ourselves out of it. So Allah Almighty in His power and glory and through His mercy and love has stretched out His hand to lift us up from the pit. He can guide us in the right path. He can deliver us from the torment of the Day of Judgment.

ALLAH THE MERCIFUL MAKER

Remember, my friend, Allah is righteous and good. He forgives sin and pardons disobedience. He is just, but merciful at the same time. He is strict and also loving. He loves people with a deep love. True, He hates our sins and hates the evil in our hearts and consciences. But He loves us. We are His creation; He is our Maker. He wants good relations to be restored—not because He needs us, but because He loves us. He wants a relationship with us.

Allah's justice demands that He punish us because we are sinners. The punishment that awaits sinners is eternal hell. However, Allah does not want us to perish, because He loves us and because He is merciful. Even so, Allah does not forgive people without punishing them for their sins. If He pardoned them without punishment, divine justice would not be satisfied. His rights would be trampled on and His honor violated, something that is impossible.

THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

So Allah decided to send a Messenger to redeem miserable man who was lost and perishing. This Messenger came to the world and bore the punishment of sin on behalf of humankind. He demolished the wall that separated people from their Creator. He built a bridge and brought them close to Allah. He rescued them from the pit into which they had fallen. He reconciled the Creator with the creature.

EXAMPLES OF REDEMPTION

Indeed, the principle of redemption is known, accepted, and used by Allah and by people. For example, when a driver commits an offence against the traffic laws, he must pay a fine. This is actually like a redemption or a substitute for the driver himself who committed the

offence. And what do you think of a courageous soldier who sacrifices his life for the sake of his country? He dies in war to combat the enemy's aggression so that his countrymen might live with honor and pride. This is great redemption.

Therefore, with Allah, we know that the ram He sent to Abraham was intended to take the place of Abraham's son who was about to be sacrificed. The ram illustrates redemption for Abraham's son.

A policeman stopped a young man who had driven through a red light. He said to him: "The courthouse is just in front of us. Either pay a fine right now or go directly to the courthouse where they may put you in jail." Since the young man did not have the money to pay the fine, he made his way to the courthouse. The judge asked him if he admitted that he had run a red light. He said yes. Then the judge asked him why he had not paid the fine. The young man was ashamed and answered: "I don't have the money." So the judge told him the same thing the policeman had said: "Either you pay the fine, or you'll go to jail." The disappointed young man was surprised at the sentence because he had a special relation with the judge: the judge was the young man's father. His father had decided to put him in jail. How is that possible? Where is mercy? The policeman put the young man in jail. Immediately the judge left the court and found his son. He then gave him the money for the fine, saying: "My son, since I'm the judge, I must protect the law and apply it. And since I'm your father, I'm making this sacrifice for you and getting you out of jail."

My friend, that is what Allah has done for us. He enforces the law and makes us respect it because He is just. He is also loving and merciful, so He saves and delivers us.

Now, let me tell you the story of our master Noah. People of that time were so corrupt that Allah justly sentenced them to perish. But Allah Almighty prepared redemption and deliverance for those who would repent and obey Him.

So Allah instructed our master Noah to build a ship (or an ark). It was the means of salvation for whoever would take refuge in it from the terrible flood that was coming to cover the earth. Through this, Allah showed that He is just and strict and hates sin. He sent the flood to punish the wicked. At the same time He loves people and wants to bless them. He prepared deliverance for those who would choose it.

My friend, do you remember what we said in lesson one? When Adam and Eve fell into disobedience Allah made them garments of animal skin to use as a covering instead of the fig leaves. Where did the animal skin come from? Of course an animal had to be killed and skinned to provide that kind of garment. This is another picture of redemption. That animal died so that humans could be covered.

Could the Messenger who would redeem people be found among ordinary human beings like you and me? The answer is no because all people have fallen into sin. All are to be punished for their transgressions. It is not possible for a sinner to redeem sinners, for a criminal to mediate on behalf of criminals. The Messenger Allah sent to redeem humankind had to be sinless. He had to be pure, never having committed evil, rebellion, transgression, or wickedness. He never made a mistake. He was pure, clean, righteous, and perfect. Therefore, He was able to be the Redeemer.

My dear friend, this Messenger was not born like all other human beings. He came as a sign from Allah, almighty and glorious. He was conceived by a miracle. His mother was a virgin who had no marital relations with a man. Therefore, He had no earthly father like other people. So, who is this noble, honorable Messenger? I would like you, my friend, to think about this in preparation for lesson 4.

In the keeping of Allah.

Your friend,

Sheikh Abdullah

To HELP YOU LEARN

Please complete the following statements in Part A. Then answer the questions in Part B. You may write in your book or on separate paper. After you complete this assignment you may compare your answers with the correct answers provided in the section called *To Help You Learn – Answers* toward the back of this book.

Completing this part of lesson three called *To help You Learn* will help you remember the important truths of this lesson.

A. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

1. On the Day of Judgment, all people are to be punished because all have _____.
2. Because of sin, I am in a deep pit, and I cannot _____.
3. Allah wants the good relations between himself and me to be restored because He _____.
4. The person able to redeem man had to be _____ and _____.
5. Go back to the lesson; study this statement; memorize it, and then write it here from memory:
“Do not deceive yourselves; _____

_____.”

B. ANSWER BRIEFLY

1. According to the story of Noah, who is the One to provide deliverance and redemption?

THE RIGHT PATH

2. Does Allah love you? _____ Why?_____

3. What did the ram that Abraham found illustrate?

4. What would Allah's Messenger do for all humankind?

5. Why couldn't just an ordinary man redeem us?
