

## الإعتراف

### PLEA IN CONFESSION & AVOIDANCE BY REPENTANCE

Al-I'tirāf is a poem of supplication uttered by a slave of Allāh by the name of Abu Nawāz. Outwardly, he was a naive jester whose antics drew much laughter from gathered crowds. Inwardly though, he was a sincere and God-fearing believer who was ever-mindful of his tryst with destiny. It was this side of him that penned Al-I'tirāf in the following circumstances:

Once, he was sitting by himself watching the sun set. The atmosphere was quiet and peaceful. The serene blue sky was rent asunder by the dazzling colours spewed by the waltzing rays of the setting sun. As the tremendous beauty of nature's dance made way for the still darkness of the impending night, tears began rolling down his cheeks.

He felt his heart being pulled apart and his senses becoming spiritually impaired. He became so distressed and filled with sorrow that he started wailing. With a flurry of emotions running wild, coupled with an unintelligible mix of cries and sighs, all knots on his tongue were untied. He raised his hands towards the Heavens and lamented about his state of being. Those powerful words came to be known as Al-I'tirāf

This grief-stricken lament was uttered by a hopeful<sup>1</sup> and fearful<sup>2</sup> heart that was remorseful for a lifetime of heedlessness. Abu Nawāz realized that he was getting older and that his time to meet his Creator was drawing nearer. He was completely terrified about his lack of preparation for this Meeting with his Lord in the Hereafter.

He acknowledges his sinfulness, for which he admits that he does not deserve the Gardens of Paradise. He then recognizes his weakness to withstand the frightening Hellfire. He concedes that he is but a feeble servant who has no power over his looming fate, except through Allāh's Mercy brought about by entering the gates of repentance and attaining His forgiveness.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْخَلْفِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ  
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

*Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, - there are indeed Signs for men of understanding, - men who celebrate the praises of Allāh, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the chastisement of the Fire. (3:190-191)*

After the above verse was revealed, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ got up in the middle of the night to pray. When Bilāl ibn Rabah ؓ came to seek permission to call for the dawn prayers, he saw the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ crying with his beard soaked with tears.

So he asked, "Do you still cry, O Messenger of Allāh, when Allāh has wiped away all your past and future wrongdoings?" The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ replied, "Should I then not be a thankful slave! Allāh has descended on me this verse (3:191). Woe to him who reads it without pondering over it."

Seldom do we reflect on the Signs of Allāh. In the setting sun, Abu Nawāz found a metaphor of life. The beauty that adorns the horizon when the sun is setting is an intoxicating one. If one loses oneself to that fleeting moment forgetting to light the lamp, he will be ill-prepared for the imminent darkness of the night.

Similarly, if one gets deluded and hypnotized by the enticements and frivolous pleasures of this ephemeral world, then damned will be that wretched soul in the Hereafter. How ludicrous for one on a journey to Eternity to find satisfaction and comfort at a transit point called Earth?

Success and guidance is from Allāh alone, eminent is His Glory. Choicest salutations, immaculate peace, and infinite blessings be upon the Paragon of creation, his blessed family, noble companions, intimate inheritors, and all who have an atom of love for him in their hearts. Glory be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds.

<sup>1</sup> Hopeful for the mercy of Allāh and the delights of the Gardens of Paradise under which Rivers flow in abundance

<sup>2</sup> Fearful about the wrath of Allah and the severity of the Hellfire and the pain therein

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<p>God, I certainly do not deserve to enter Paradise (on account of my sins), and I definitely do not possess the ability to endure the fires of Hell.</p> <p>So allow me to repent (sincerely) and forgive all my sins (of the past, present and future), for You are surely the Forgiver of all sins – however minor or severe.</p>	<p>إِلَهِي كَسْتُ لِلْفِرِّ دَوْسٍ أَهْلًا وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى نَارِ الْجَحِيمِ فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَأَغْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ</p>
<p>My sins exceed in number the grains of sand that line the shores of the sea. So allow me to repent (sincerely), O Majestic Lord who possesses all Glory.</p> <p>My lifetime decreases every passing day, while my sins keep increasing helplessly.</p>	<p>ذُنُوبِي مِثْلُ أَعْدَادِ الرِّمَالِ فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَعُسْرِي نَاقِصٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَذَنْبِي زَائِدٌ كَيْفَ احْتِمَالِ</p>
<p>God, I certainly do not deserve to enter Paradise (on account of my sins), and I definitely do not possess the ability to endure the fires of Hell.</p> <p>So allow me to repent (sincerely) and forgive all my sins (of the past, present and future), for You are surely the Forgiver of all sins – however minor or severe.</p>	<p>إِلَهِي كَسْتُ لِلْفِرِّ دَوْسٍ أَهْلًا وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى نَارِ الْجَحِيمِ فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَأَغْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ</p>
<p>God, this sinful slave of Yours is turning to You (for salvation). Verily, I have sinned and so I implore You (for Your forgiveness). You forgive for You are the All-Forgiving. But if You refuse, to whom is our recourse?</p>	<p>إِلَهِي عَبْدُكَ الْعَاصِيُ أَتَاكَ مُقِرًّا بِالذُّنُوبِ وَقَدْ دَعَاكَ فَإِنْ تَغْفِرْ فَأَنْتَ لِدَاكِ أَهْلٌ وَإِنْ تَطْرُقْ دُفْعِنُ نَرْجُوا سِوَاكَ</p>
<p>God, I certainly do not deserve to enter Paradise (on account of my sins), and I definitely do not possess the ability to endure the fires of Hell.</p> <p>So allow me to repent (sincerely) and forgive all my sins (of the past, present and future), for You are surely the Forgiver of all sins – however minor or severe.</p>	<p>إِلَهِي كَسْتُ لِلْفِرِّ دَوْسٍ أَهْلًا وَلَا أَقْوَى عَلَى نَارِ الْجَحِيمِ فَهَبْ لِي تَوْبَةً وَأَغْفِرْ ذُنُوبِي فَإِنَّكَ غَافِرُ الذَّنْبِ الْعَظِيمِ</p>

Shaikhuna Taika Shu'aib relates in his Al-Munjiyāt as follows:

Imām 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb al-Sha'rānī ؒ has stated that if anyone recites the couplet (...إِلَهِي كَسْتُ...) 5 times after the Friday congregational prayer (Ṣalāt al-Jumu'a) every week, his faith (Īmān) will be protected till his death. It is also said that the couplet was composed by our liege-lord, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؒ.