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## **Question 68: Are Greater And Smaller Relative Terms?**

**Question:** Some people say that the greater and smaller sins are comparable (ratio) that is it is possible a sin is greater but in comparison to another sin it would be considered small. For example, theft is a greater sin but in comparison to intentional murder it is considered small. From the aspect of their comparability all the sins are eligible for forgiveness and remission. Because the Holy Qur'an says:

## "If you shun the greater sins we shall do away with your small sins."

Thus every sin that is shunned keeping in view a greater one will be forgiven but there is no sin greater than polytheism that if one shuns it one could be forgiven his polytheism.

On the basis of this one who has not made a partner to Allah will have all his in forgiven.

**Answer**: In the reply to the previous the reply to this question has also become clear. Because as mentioned above the classification of sins into small and great is an absolute clarification which is divided into two on the basis that some are those which are promised divine punishment or prohibited emphatically and some are not.

They have not been classified due to their magnitude or on the basis of conjecture. And the captioned ayat discusses this point and the conclusion derived from it is that if a Muslim refrains from one class of sins that is the greater sins, the Almighty Allah will forgive their sins of the second class, that are called Sayyat or Saghaer – that is smaller.

And there are two separate limits of the two different classes of sins and none of them can overlap. Therefore, shunning the greater sins cannot cause the other greater sins to be forgiven. It can only help in forgiveness of smaller sins, (In the background we should also remember that repeating smaller sins make them into greater sins).

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