

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 10 – August 21

Topic: (F) Forgiveness

Allah’s forgiveness towards human beings:

- “Say: O My servants who have been reckless against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; *surely Allah forgives sins altogether*. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.” — 39:53

Stress is laid on the mercy and love of Allah in all religions, but these great Divine attributes find their true and final expression in Islam. This verse discloses the all-comprehensive mercy of Allah, before which the sins of people become quite insignificant.

- “The heavens may almost be torn apart above them, while the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and *ask forgiveness for those on earth*. Now surely Allah is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” — 42:5

The meaning is that the wickedness of man calls for immediate punishment, but the mercy of Allah withholds it. The Divine displeasure at the wickedness of man is very great, but His mercy supercedes all. The angels’ prayer for forgiveness for man shows that Allah Himself desires to forgive man. People’s deeds do not merit forgiveness, but forgiveness is the attribute of the Divine Being, and that Divine attribute is exercised through the concern of the angels.

- “And hasten *to forgiveness from your Lord* and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty: Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon people. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others).” — 3:133-134.

Restraining of anger, pardoning, and doing good to others, besides being great moral qualities, strengthen the bond of union which is so necessary for success. The verse has on many occasions inspired Muslims with the noblest thoughts of toleration and charitableness.

- [Continuation of above quote] “And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins. *And who forgives sins but Allah?* And they do not persist knowingly in what they do. Their reward is protection from their Lord, and Gardens in which rivers flow, to abide in them. And excellent is the reward of the workers!” 3:135-136
- “And do not be one pleading the cause of the dishonest, *and ask the forgiveness of Allah*. Surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.” — 4:105-106

Muslims, including Holy Prophet Muhammad, urged to forgive:

- “Thus it is by Allah’s mercy that you (Prophet Muhammad) are gentle to them (his followers). And if you had been rough, hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you. *So pardon them and ask protection for them*, and consult them in (important) matters. But when you have determined, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust (in Him).” — 3:159
- “And you will always discover treachery in them (some of your enemies) excepting a few of them — *so pardon them and forgive*. Surely Allah loves those who do good (to others).” — 5:13
- “And if you invite them (the deniers of Islam) to guidance, they do not hear; and you see them looking towards you, yet they do not see. *Take to forgiveness* and enjoin good and turn away from the ignorant.” — 7:198-199
- “And the possessors of grace and abundance among you should not swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allah’s way; and *pardon and overlook*. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. — 24:22

It is Hazrat Abu Bakr who is spoken of here as *one possessing grace and abundance*. This verse was revealed in connection with the action of Hazrat Abu Bakr, who had sworn not to continue providing maintenance to one of poor his relatives named Mistah, as he had taken part in spreading false reports against Hazrat Aishah, the daughter of Abu Bakr and wife of the Holy Prophet.

After inflicting the legal punishment on the culprits for slander, the Prophet was required to bear them no ill-will and to hide no rancour in his heart even towards the slanderers of his wife. Revelation even required his companions to be kind and forgiving to them. Upon hearing this revelation, Hazrat Abu Bakr exclaimed: “I certainly love that Allah should forgive me”, and then he resumed providing assistance to Mistah. This verse shows also that it is entirely baseless and false to assert that Islam prescribes the death penalty for those who commit “blasphemy” against its sacred personalities.

- “And We did not create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them but with truth. And the Hour is surely coming, *so turn away with kindly forgiveness*. — 15:85

“Turn away” from your enemies with forgiveness, is what is meant. Just one of many instances of the Holy Prophet’s forgiveness was at the conquest of Makkah, when, having captured the city which had most tyrannically driven him out with his followers, and whose people were guilty of shedding the innocent blood of the Muslims, he forgave all.
