



## ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON FORGIVENESS: DIVINE MERCY, INTERPERSONAL RECONCILIATION, AND SOCIAL HARMONY

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## **ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON FORGIVENESS: DIVINE MERCY, INTERPERSONAL RECONCILIATION, AND SOCIAL HARMONY**

### **ABSTRACT:**

This paper examines several different aspects of forgiveness in Islam, such as motivating factors, ethics, and more approaches. It is evident that the midpoint between Allah's love and mankind's ability to forgive should be considered as a formative principle in the character development of an individual and the social equilibrium of a society. Citing the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Prophet Isa, in politically, socially, and economically plural societies, the paper demonstrates the utility of forgiveness at both the individual and collective levels; both as an actionable measure and a practice within the Muslim religion, as well as a solution to altercations within the aforementioned community. Also, the findings analyse the impact of forgiveness on psychological well-being, social interaction, and the role of justice in conflict situations. In order to provide insight into other dimensions of forgiveness like personal and social, the study seeks to examine the importance of forgiveness considering Islamic teachings and social welfare.

**KEYWORDS:** Forgiveness, Divine Mercy, Islamic Ethics, Personal Growth, Social Harmony, Conflict Resolution

### **1. Introduction**

Muslim body of teaching classifies forgiveness as an essential spiritual feature while affirming its moral value. Christians view forgiveness simultaneously as a personal salve and as an essential rule for existing together harmoniously. Scriptures along with Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) teachings contain the complete concept of forgiveness since

"forgiveness" in Christian Arabic encompasses both acts of forgiveness and assistance in rebuilding. Through the Islamic perspective forgiveness acts as a powerful instrument to achieve peace together with relationship restoration and social consistency in chaotic societies.

**General Perspective of Forgiveness in Islam:**

On the Islamic spectrum forgiveness exists as one of Allah's SWT qualities of mercy so it can apply to any circumstance. The Islamic doctrine states that God is Al-Ghafoor meaning He shows maximum forgiveness and forgive any person of their transgressions. The religious practice of Muslims includes forgiveness beyond personal considerations due to these kinds of thinking. From a social perspective forgiveness functions as a transformation tool while also allowing people to return to a previous state. As outlined in the Quran:

“Surely, Allah is The Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful”<sup>1</sup> (Surah At-Tawbah 9:118)

Through various prophetic traditions the teachings describe important roles of forgiveness for human relationships in Muslim life. Through forgiveness humans learn to conquer intertribal conflicts and rebuild broken relationships while developing relationships based on mutual peace and respect. During the Conquest of Makkah in 630 CE history shines brightly with one of the most powerful acts of Islamic forgiveness. During years of persecution the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offered complete forgiveness to all people who persecuted his followers including himself. As narrated by Aisha (RA), the Prophet said:

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<sup>1</sup> Surah At-Tawbah 9:118

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“In freedom and forgiveness come to me today.”<sup>2</sup>

**Research Objectives:**

Efforts must be made to comprehend how Islam views the matter of forgiveness in order to encourage the development of personal encouragement as well as the development of people who encourage others. The Islamic thought this study will focus on is forgiveness which is understood as an act of virtue and self-improvement as well as a tool that can be weaponised to combat evil. The key research question for this study is:

1. How can forgiveness as a weapon aid in the resolution of conflicts between the people of Middle Eastern countries?
2. What effect does forgiveness have on mutual justice in Middle Eastern countries, especially in peace-making?
3. How can Islamic injunctions on forgiveness assist in building amity and love among the followers of Islam?

**Research Statement:**

The attempt by Islam to make forgiveness an ethical virtue has far-reaching effects on peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Certainly, due to forgiveness being a mark of divine mercy, the practice of Islam stipulates at every individual being a constructive Pakistan.

**The Healing Practice of the Qur'an and Divine Forgiveness**

There are numerous verses in the Qur'an that speak about the infinite mercy and forgiveness of Allah, and His readiness to forgive those who

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<sup>2</sup>Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 761

truly repent. For instance, Allah (swt) says in Surah Az-Zumar (39:53): “Say, ‘O My servants who have believed, fear your lord. Allah forgives all sins. He is indeed the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.’”<sup>3</sup>

This verse conveys that in Islam, forgiveness is based on the eternal mercy of Allah, giving hope to all who seek His forgiveness.

## **2. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Forgiveness:**

The life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is a prime example of how to forgive. A prime example is the Conquest of Makkah in 630 CE when he forgave his erstwhile persecutors. The Prophet (PBUH) also said in a hadith narrated by Aisha (RA): “Go, for you are free (forgiven).”<sup>4</sup> What this moment of pardon following so much antipathy teaches us is mercy can change many of us.

## **3. The Role of Forgiveness from the Ethics of Islam:**

Signs of forgiveness in Islamic ethics and advocacy for thus conflict resolution Allah the Exalted said in Surah Ash-Shura, 42:40: And the recompense of an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree); but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah.” Indeed, He likes not the wrongdoers.”<sup>5</sup>

This verse helps us remember here that forgiveness is never just an individual act of grace, but that the peace which it brings us collectively can also be a peace for the world.

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<sup>3</sup> *Qur'an* 39:53

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book 56, Hadith 761.

<sup>5</sup> *Qur'an* 42:40

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## **2. The Concept of Forgiveness in Islam:**

### **Definition and Significance:**

In Islam, Maghfirah (forgiveness) is a kind of forgiveness that is an act of mercy and compassion on the part of Allah, and also on the part of one person towards another. It said to come from the good trait of forgiving someone for what they did wrong and is thought to cleanse the heart, strengthen the faith and achieve peace. Forgiveness in Islam is closely linked to mercy, which is one of the principal ethical values in Islam. It emphasizes the significance of forgiveness as an avenue to heal spiritual injuries and reinstate harmony into personal and social relations. Allah commands in the Qur'an:

“And if you pardon and overlook and forgive – then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”<sup>6</sup>

This is a clear indication that forgiveness is not only a matter of personal choice but something that associates a believer with the mercy of Allah. It emphasizes the importance of forgiveness in the teachings of Islam, and how it can change the dynamics of society.

### **The Attribute of Forgiveness:**

Forgiveness in Islam: One of the most important attributes of Allah (SWT) is His forgiving nature. These qualities of Allah are often present in the names "Al-Ghafoor" (The Most Forgiving) and "Ar-Rahman" (The Most Merciful) as He will forgive His creatures when they repent and seek

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<sup>6</sup> Surah At-Taghabun 64:14).

forgiveness from Allah. This divine quality encourages believers to ponder Allah's absolute perfection in overlooking human weaknesses. The Qur'an emphasizes again and again that Allah is merciful:

“Say, ‘O My servants who have wronged yourselves by your own hands, do not despair of Allah’s mercy. Allah forgives all sins. He is indeed the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”<sup>7</sup>

This verse conveys an immense hope that no sin is irredeemable, and that God’s mercy is large enough to stretch over anyone who truly asks Him for forgiveness. Thus, the divine gift of forgiveness is not only a divine attribute of Allah but also acts as an ethical guide for Muslims in their life.

#### **The Definitions of Forgiveness and Repentance (Tawbah):**

In Islam, forgiveness is inherently linked with repentance (Tawbah). Sincere repentance is needed in order for Allah to forgive our sins. Repentance is defined as an honest regret for doing wrong or sinning in life, a resolution not to take part in sinful actions in the future, and a renewal to not commit the same sin in the future. Those who fulfill these conditions, Allah promises forgiveness to them:

“And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins — and who can forgive sins except Allah? — and who do not persist in what they have

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<sup>7</sup> Surah Az-Zumar 39:53

done while they know.”<sup>8</sup>

This verse makes clear that forgiveness is predicated on repentance and genuine attempts to change one's ways. It is a practice that involves self-awareness, accountability, and humility.

### **Examples of Forgiveness in the Qur'an**

If one breaks open the pages of The Qur'an, there are numerous examples of people who were granted Allah's forgiveness upon sincere repentance. Two important examples are the stories of Prophet Adam (AS) and Prophet Yunus (AS) where it showcases the mercy of Allah in accepting repentance.

#### **1-The Repentance Prophet Adam:**

When Adam and Eve disobeyed Allah in the Garden of Eden. In His infinite mercy, Allah accepted Adam's repentance, and forgave him:

“Then Adam received words from his Lord, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.”<sup>9</sup>

#### **2-Prophet Yunus's (Jonah) Story:**

It is the story of Prophet Yunus (AS) (Jonah), who left his people in a huff, then got swallowed by a fish, but after he repented and cried for mercy, did Allah (SWT) respond. Allah then answered his repentance, forgiving him and extracting him from the belly of the fish:

“And had he not been of those who glorify Allah, he would have

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<sup>8</sup> Surah Al-Imran 3:135

<sup>9</sup> Surah Al-Baqarah 2:37



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remained in its belly until the Day they are resurrected.”<sup>10</sup>

The above-mentioned points highlight the fact that regardless of how big the sin there is always a path for repentance and seeking Allah in a state of humility could lead to forgiveness. The accounts also evoke the mercy and compassion of Allah, which underpin the Islamic worldview.

### **3-Forgiveness in Relationships with Others**

#### **The moral significance of forgiveness:**

Forgiveness is not simply a generous pardon in Islam rather it is an important ethical and moral value that nurtures peace within one self and in the society. Forgiveness is recognized as the first step in the way of purifying heart and soul. It sets someone free from negative feelings: anger, resentment, allowing them crushed and treating others in a healthy manner. In addition, forgiveness is essential to the resolving of conflicts that inevitably arise in human relationships. Allah advises the believers to make peace with each other and keep harmony:

“And if two factions among the believers fight, make peace between them. And if one of them oppresses the other, let them fight what has done the oppression until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if they return, make peace between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.”<sup>11</sup>

Devils cannot be divided against each other, but dispute must be resolved through patience and forgiveness at each level, making forgiveness

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<sup>10</sup> Surah As-Saffat 37:143–144

<sup>11</sup> Surah Al-Hujurat 49:9

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effectual for harmony, justice.

Forgiveness also doesn't just help the individual; it strengthens the fabric of society. It fosters a healthy feeling of solidarity, trust and willingness to cooperate that are necessary to have a civil society and peaceful world.

### **Forgiveness in Personal and Family Relationships:**

Forgiveness is almost essential to maintain love, respect, and mutual understanding between members of a family or partners. Family disputesAre you witnessing the likely vestiges of misunderstandings and disagreements between spouses, parents, and children? Nevertheless, the Qur'an underscores the necessity of forgiveness to strengthen family bonds and reconcile differences:

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones...”<sup>12</sup>

It calls on believers to protect not only themselves, but also those closest to them, which means practicing things as diverse as forgiveness to prevent catastrophic confrontations. In family life, it is necessary to love and forgive each other for mutual deliverance.

In addition, forgiveness among spouses is of utmost importance in Islam. The Qur'an advises on ways of keeping the marriage relationship harmonious with consciousness and forgiveness:

“And it may be that you dislike something in your wives, and Allah causes

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<sup>12</sup> Surah At-Tahrim 66:6

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through it much good.”<sup>13</sup>

This verse encourages couples to be patient and forgiving, realizing that disagreements can be worked through and sometimes even strengthen the relationship. As such, the purpose of forgiveness then becomes a method of fortifying family and interpersonal relations.

### **Forgiveness in the Community:**

Forgiveness is not only a family affair but also a community affair in the larger umbrella of the Muslim ummah. [4:40] In Islam, it is reported that the communities are advised to forgive each other in order to grow together as one, having respect for one another and acting with cooperation between the two. As a bridge to socio-political reconciliation. Believers are called in the Qur'an to put aside grudges and pursue unity:

“The believers are but brothers, so make peace between your brothers. And be conscious of Allah; perhaps you will receive mercy.”<sup>14</sup>

This verse shows that Muslims are one brotherhood, and keeping peace and reconciliation is a matter of ethics. It also helps create a ripple effect within the community, as forgiving behaviors can spread and discourage the cycle of hatred and division.

Moreover, forgiveness is a vital component in reducing social frictions. That way, it promotes reconciliation, which is healing, and prevents conflict between them, so that cooperation is better, and respect for each

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<sup>13</sup> Surah An-Nisa 4:19

<sup>14</sup> Surah Al-Hujurat 49:10

other is more. Anubhuchan — In scenic, truly beautiful, fanatical, dispersed, gregarious me — an entreated with the Liberty dancing world plan till early crackling Liberty thrust Godzillus to the emerge as as botched musibet zero as a placard flies — an affectionate message evokes its air air castes, breaking mainly beautiful — burning a couple of random north Attika hills, of course, as soi-disant carrained air, among others.

### **Practical Guidelines for Forgiveness in Islam:**

It promotes unity and reconstruction through forgiveness as a means to achieve peace, harmony, and fellowship among the human race. However, due to the importance and broader implications of this concept in our personal lives and as a legal and social endeavor, there is plenty of guidance from the Qur'an and the Hadith on how forgiveness can be achieved.

وسعت رحمتك كل شيء (Ghafir 40:7)

### **Qur'anic Guidance:**

In Quran, forgiveness is highly emphasized and those who forgive are rewarded. These two instances remind us just how special Allah is, thus the height of supremacy that believers must fulfill, if you cannot forgive then ask Allah to forgive you, which is a means of gaining the mercy of Allah SWT. Some key verses about forgiveness are:

"Hold to forgiveness and enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant."<sup>15</sup>

This verse enables believers in God to be patient, forgiving and refrain

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<sup>15</sup> Surah Al-A'raf (7:199)

from retaliation against the wrong of others.

• Surah Ash-Shura (42:40): “And the retribution for an injury is an injury equal thereto [to the extent of one’s harm], but whoever gives up his right as charity, then it is an expiation for him. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed — then it is those who are the wrongdoers.”<sup>16</sup> It shows that forgiveness earns reward from Allah the Exalted and is a superseding form of justice more than retaliating.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said in a Hadith:

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also taught us about forgiveness and highlighted how important it is for an individual spiritually and socially. One notable Hadith is:

“He who does not forgive, will not be forgiven, Allah says. (Sahih Muslim, no. 2564)

The message is potent and must linger that forgiveness is reciprocal and that Allah's forgiveness is granted in the forgiving of others. It urges the faithful to overcome individual grudges and to forgive others, as they seek Allah’s compassion.

### **Steps to Forgive:**

#### **How 'Forgiveness works in Islam:**

Islam views forgiveness not just as an emotion, but a purposeful process requiring reflection, repentance, and the work to mend relationships with

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<sup>16</sup> Surah Ash-Shura 42:40

others. These steps include:

**1-Repentance:** The first step in forgiveness is sincere repentance; this includes feeling regret about the wrongdoing and a firm intention not to do it again.

**2-Seeking Reconciliation:** This means that Islam here is not telling you wait for the other part to take action and that means you should take action immediately.

**3-Forgive Others:** The act of forgiveness is noble, particularly if someone has wronged you, and is expected to engender spiritual reward and peace of mind.

#### **Real Life examples from the Life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):**

One profound example of forgiveness in Islamic history is the forgiveness of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) after the conquest of Makkah. In spite of all the persecution suffered by the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions, the Prophet (PBUH) pardoned the people of Makkah and granted them amnesty. He said:

"Go, for you are free."<sup>17</sup>

It demonstrated the nobility of his character in forgiving such an affront and that even in retribution, mercy transcends; thus Muslims were given a model in how to take the high road in putting down conflict with compassion.

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<sup>17</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 5, Book 59, Hadith 713

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## **Morality of Forgiveness in Law and Society:**

### **Forgiveness and Justice:**

Islam urges forgiveness but also stresses that justice must factor in. And when it comes to serious threats like murder or theft, forgiveness does not cancel out legal accountability. On the other hand, Islam provides a balanced system of justice that exists with the opportunity for mercy. The Qur'an notes that those who forgive others and follow the Qur'an are promised divine approval but dooses the loss of one's honour as a justification for seeking a legal redress.

### **The Role of Courts and Judges:**

This is when judges come into the picture — they need to decide how to balance forgiveness and justice. Forgiveness is preferred in Islam for reconciliation and dispute resolution but when the harm is severe, appropriate legal measures must be taken to concede justice and sustain societal order. Judges must make sure to maintain both forgiveness and accountability as per Shariah.

### **The principle of Retributive Justice (Qisas):**

Qisas is an Islamic principle that refers to the retribution or retaliation that a victim or his/her family can seek for their suffering or injury, especially in relation to murder or serious injury. Yet there is a provision in the Qur'an to allow the victim's family to forgive the perpetrator in return for compensation (diya) — or merely to forgive without demanding anything in return. This is illustrated in verse from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:178):

“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is legal retribution for the murdered — the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female

for the female. “But whoever pardons his brother, let there be a reward for him.”<sup>18</sup>

Forgiveness, in such cases, is viewed as an extraordinary act of virtue and spiritual development, in which the family of the victim shows mercy instead of seeking revenge.

The different aspects of forgiveness in Islam make it a way towards improving oneself, cleansing spiritually and ensuring peace among all. Through forgiveness of others, Muslims not conceding to the example of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but also a guarantee of themselves as a recipient of Allah’s mercy. While Islam encourages forgiving, it also instructs that justice should be maintained, particularly in severe instances of harm. mercy: the balance between forgiveness and justice is a fundamental tenet of maintaining us as humans, not beasts, that we have mercy, that we note justice and forgiveness in the face of (righteous) wrong.

### **5-Conflict Resolution through Forgiveness:**

#### **The Role of Forgiveness in Conflict Resolution**

In Islam, forgiveness can become one of the key resolutions of a conflict where one party strives to prevent further confrontation and brings other members, families and communities closer together. However, forgiveness is the key to restoring peace and harmony in society.

Forgiveness is an excellent tool for preventing the cycle of iceberg and

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<sup>18</sup> Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah 2:178



escalation from appearing in the future, and, open-ness, and honesty. Individual acts of forgiveness can help bring wrongdoers to justice and stop the cycle of vengeance and hostility, often leading to long-term reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. The Qur'an calls on believers to respond with patience and forbearance, knowing that forgiveness can pave the way to reconciliation and healing:

“And if you excuse, and overlook and pardon, then surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.”<sup>19</sup>

This verse highlights how forgiveness is an important means of conflict resolution because it allows for the repair of a broken relationship. Forgiveness can break the cycle of retribution, lower tensions, and create space for dialogue and peaceful resolution.

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he practiced this as a mediator between the tribes of Medina. The Prophet (PBUH) who some might say had cause for revenge when tribal conflicts arose, always sought peaceful resolutions, reconciliation rather than revenge. Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.

One key example to note is between of the Aws and Khazraj tribes in Medina wherein they were what you would call reconciled. Although a rivalry had long existed between the two tribes, the Prophet (PBUH) diligently strived to unite them, highlighting forgiveness of past grievances and the interests of the greater Muslim community. This clearly demonstrates how he brought all the tribes back under the banner of the

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<sup>19</sup> Surah At-Taghabun 64:14

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beloved Islam, how git forgiveness can lead their heart to unite.

### **Social Harmony and Cohesion**

Islam also places great emphasis on social forgiveness, highlighting the importance of reconciliation and forgiveness, not only on an individual level but also at the societal level, particularly in situations of collective injustice or oppression. Forgiveness is seen as a tool, particularly after wars or under conditions of discrimination, to heal societal wounds.

A well-known an established example of forgiveness in Islam is the act of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) after the conquest of Makkah. The Prophet (PBUH), even after suffering years of persecution, violence and humiliation at the hands of the Makkans, had forgiven the Makkans:

“Go, for you are free.”<sup>20</sup>

It was not only an act of forgiveness but a calculated decision that aimed to prevent more bloodshed and to create waves of peace and unity between the early Muslims and the people of Makkah who were previously in opposition to them. The Prophet (PBUH) sought to forgive the people of Makkah so they could become part of Muslim society once more.

This is a strong lesson on the restoration of social intimacy and harmony through forgiveness seen during the post-conquest era in Makkah. The Prophet (PBUH) did not take revenge and he accepted people to surrender so that they could work together as friends, brothers and help each other to build a better society. The act also set a paradigm for the next generations

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<sup>20</sup> Sahih Muslim 4395

of Muslims to follow that forgiveness is the only way to Allah and social stability.

It will teach forgiveness, which is not only important for settling personal conflicts, but is also essential to a community where people work together. Before he died, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) showed how forgiveness is not but weakness, rather it is strength that could help societies heal and bond together.

## **6-Encouraging Forgiveness and Social Justice**

### **The Relationship Between Forgiveness and Social Justice**

The concept of forgiveness in Islam is not separate from justice. Justice is a central tenet of Islamic faith yet fundamental to the message is that of proffering forgiveness, which is also seen a mechanism through which social cohesion can be fostered and individuals can heal. So, this shows the need for justice and forgiveness which both should operate, but if we know that it is injustice then justice should be established.

“And if you punish, then let it be in proportion to that by which you were harmed. But if you pardon, it is good for the forgiver.”<sup>21</sup>

This verse explains the Islamic teaching of proportional retaliation. But it also points to the sin qua non of forgiveness as a better way forward, because it does lead to healing and reconciliation, particularly when dealing with a personal injury of some type. As Muslims, we are taught that forgiveness is not based on placating injustice; it is a choice between

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<sup>21</sup> Surah Ash-Shura 42:40

taking the path of mercy instead of retaliation, creating space for both the oppressed and the oppressor to amend for and transgress and receive forgiveness from Allah.

Justice in Islam is also about fighting for the vulnerable. Islam does not promote forgiving at the cost of justice. Those who inflict serious harm or oppression on others are recognized and decreed by social laws as being responsible for their actions. But forgiveness is a crucial principle — particularly when it fosters reconciliation without sacrificing justice. It preserves social order and provides a means of healing for both the person wronged and for those around them.

Thus both Justice and Forgiveness can not be the opposers of each other, in the light of incidents from the life of our beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). For example, for those who have committed serious wrong doings but repented, the Prophet (PBUH) created spaces for reconciliation while recognizing accountability. For example, following the victory at Makkah, the Prophet (SAW) forgave a significant number of his enemies but also pointed out that everyone still had to meet their moral and rights-related obligations.

### **Forgiveness in Modern Society**

Islamic Teachings of Forgiveness — Relevance in Modern World  
imaginable conflicts— personal or societal. The Muslim perspective on forgiveness can serve as a source of guidance, particularly as hatred, social fragmentation, and extremism plagues modern society.

In most contemporary conflicts, whether between warring families, suspect communities or angry nations, forgiveness appears as an avenue toward breaking the cycle of rage and retribution. As the Qur'an instructs:

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And if someone is forbearing and forgives, that is of the matters requiring resolution.”<sup>22</sup>

It teaches us about patience and forgiveness, which are both important virtues in building peace and resolving conflicts in any community. Forgiveness has always been there, a bridge against hatred, between divides of race, politics, ideology even, in an often bitter world.

Islamic forgiveness is also the antidote to extremism and social disintegration. Forgiveness sets a standard for individuals and communities to transcend their aggrievances and emphasizes the values that bind them. Forgiveness promotes mutual respect and works to heal the divisions that lead to enmity and the growth of extremism. When people or parties are willing to forgive and reconcile, they make a step towards a more peaceful and inclusive society.

Islam also emphasizes forgiveness, which can be beneficial for societies recovering from conflict as communities work to restore trust and cohesion post-violence or oppression. The era of Makkah after its conquest, during which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) forgave people even for the greatest of offenses, remains timeless in demonstrating that forgiveness can patch together even the deepest wounds and establish social cohesion.

Also, when combating challenges like terrorism, radicalization, and extremism, forgiveness can counter the revenge and vengeance narratives that fuel it. Then Islamic education encourages forgiveness and mercy,

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<sup>22</sup> Surah Ash-Shura 42:43

making it clear to mankind that they should refrain from hate and violence and allow peace and understanding to prosper.

## **7-Challenges to Forgiveness:**

### **The Difficulty of Forgiveness:**

Forgiveness in Islam, though encouraged and praised, can be a tall order, particularly when one finds oneself grievously wronged. The psychological and emotional obstacles of forgiveness should not be minimized. For others, betrayal, injury or injustice has inflicted damage so natmuchension that it leaves permanent emotional scars and engendering forgiveness impossible. However, Islam makes the case that forgiveness is the act not only of mercy toward the wrongdoer, but also of release from the shackles of anger, resentment and vengeance.

“But if you pardon and overlook and forgive – then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”<sup>23</sup>

This verse is to remind the Muslims that forgiveness is a Godly trait and brings them much closer to the mercy of Allah thousands of times more than the divine decree of punishment. Islam recognizes that forgiving is an arduous emotional and mental process and makes all efforts to ensure that the believer feels at ease with the process of forgiveness. But this doesn’t mean that forgiveness is effortless or automatic. It takes deep self-reflection, patience, and enough strength to let go of the desire for revenge.

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<sup>23</sup> Surah At-Taghabun 64:14

In addition, the urge for justice, for compensation, tends to make the quest for forgiveness even harder. Especially with our loved ones, but even with others -- when irreparable harm or injustice has been done, the torments of conscience often come into play when one feels torn between the need for forgiveness and the right to redress. However, justice is the cornerstone of the religion, even in a world where forgiveness is strongly advocated. The balance between forgiving the wrongdoer and seeking justice is key for understanding Islamic teaching on reconciliation.

“Indeed, Allah tells you to make justice, the best of what is right.”<sup>24</sup>

Forgiveness is a value that needs to be practiced but also with the need to pursue legal action if required.

#### **Forgiveness After the System Failure:**

From the perspective of systemic injustice, like political, human rights, and institutionalized injustices, forgiveness could thus be an impediment to justice. When an entire community is viewed as a victim of injustice or oppression, the advocate for forgiveness may come to seem to them like an enemy to justice and accountability. This is particularly complicated when the people doing the most systemic wrongs beg for the forgiveness they know we consider essentially divine because we instinctively think, if we forgive them, and if the wounds are thus rendered healed, then are they off the hook, and don't we have less cause to push for change?

Rather, Islam speaks to this arduous tension between forgiveness and

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<sup>24</sup> Surah An-Nisa 4:58

justice by asserting that both paths are not just compatible, but mutually necessary. This does not come at the expense of justice and the need of holding others accountable which should and must be pursued through the law, but it is about people making a personal choice not to dwell on resentment and bitterness as well as choosing to forgive. Islam holds that forgiveness is not a pursuit of justice but rather a private act of compassion that can lead to healing and reconciliation in the community.

“And if you punish, then punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you may pardon, it is better for the one who pardons.”<sup>25</sup>

This verse shows justice should be sought, but forgiveness is still a greater moral vision. Forgiveness helps people manage their grievances in restorative and constructive ways where there is an opportunity to rebuild their lives and communities without over-reliance on revenge and retribution, while at the same time establishing mechanisms for collective accountability and justice.

Even the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was subject yourself to oppression, abuse and hardship in life. Nevertheless, he did find ways to forgive others, particularly when the injury was personal. Muslims facing systemic injustice can look to the forgiving spirit of the Prophet (PBUH) during his persecution as a strong example of how mercy and justice can exist together. The overwhelming conquest of Makkah witnessed prophets enemy being forgiven even in cases when he was oppressed and tortured by them before but making sure that community don't allow injustice.

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<sup>25</sup> Surah Ash-Shura 42:40)



“And if someone does you a kindness, repay it with something better. And if anyone does you wrong, then forgive them.”<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, it highlights that forgiveness is key, yet Muslims must seek justice and respond with kindness and fairness to all actions in the face of wrongdoing, as well as in achieving the balance between mercy and strict punishment.

## **8-Conclusion:**

### **Summary of Key Points:**

Thereby, as discovered in the Islamic sources, not only does forgiveness holds a moral aspect, but it is a deep spiritual act that expects the one forgiven to stray away from all evils, which in turn reflects on the forgiving person in terms of personal evolution also; and this leads to social evolution, with the community flourishing. Forgiveness of others as per the teachings of Qur'an and Hadith is what best describe with Allah's quality of Rahman and Rahim. Forgiveness is not only an act of mercy, the data shows, but one that reduces tension and creates calm in the long run.

Forgiveness is fundamental to repair in human conflict, especially in our families and communities. It helps heal relationships and create a collaborative, non-violent society. Forgiveness 船 This aspect of our Islamic teachings is so vital to the bonds we have with our fellow man that even the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the greatest example of forgiveness and how it plays a key role in our families and communities

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<sup>26</sup> *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2584, accessed June 12, 2024, <https://sunnah.com/muslim/41/2584>.

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and how we can grow beyond the “wounds” of our pasts.

Moreover, forgiveness is essential for social harmony, particularly after collective wrongdoings or social tensions. The necessary act of forgiveness on the part of the victors, as demonstrated by the Prophet (PBUH) towards his enemies after the conquest of Makkah, is pivotal in the process of rebuilding and reconciling fractured societies.

### **Final Thoughts:**

The concept of forgiveness is an evergreen topic in Islam. In an age where division, conflict, and violence seem to be the ruling powers of the world, the Islamic teachings on forgiveness provide a tool for healing and reconciliation. Forgiveness is a monetary value in our hearts and in our lives too. Those who adopt these values will help usher in a world of greater peace and justice.

Forgiveness in Islam is an invitation for people to rise above their interpersonal conflicts, become conformed to the exegeses of God, and seek communal restoration. In the face of personal and societal turmoil, forgiveness is something we can lean on.

### **Call to Action:**

As forgiveness is one of the core values in Islam, it is your responsibility to practice the art of forgiveness on your daily life. When we forgive those that harm us, we help create the peace we have in ourselves and in the collective as we are all connected. Having forgiveness means healing, restoring people, and bringing hearts together. May we all aspire to embody these lessons of forgiveness and mercy in our daily lives as we follow the path and example of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH),

for when such ideals are fulfilled, the world becomes a better place, a more just, compassionate, and peaceful place.



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