

Seeking
FORGIVENESS



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Assalaamu alaikum wa rahmatullah.

Tasbeeh

Surely all praise is due to Allah Lord of all created worlds, The One Who said in His Noble Book (in translation),

“This Book is sent down from Allah, the Exalted, the All Knowing Forgiver of Sins, Acceptor of Repentance, Severe in Punishment, Having a Long Reach. There is no god but Him; to Him is the final return.” (Quran 40: 2 – 3)

We seek forgiveness from Him, we seek help and support from Him, we turn to Him in repentance and seek guidance from Him. May prayers and peace be on His Messenger, Muhammad (saw), the unlettered Prophet and on his family, his companions, his wives, his children and all of his descendants.

About the Quran

“The month of Ramadan, in which the Quran was sent down; a guide for humanity and clarification of the guidance and the foundation for judgement....” (translation of Quran Surah 2: 185)

One of the beautiful aspects of Ramadan is that it marks the presence of Quran in the lower realm. In this month occurred the “nazlah” or descent. Of this Book Syed Qutb says in his Tafseer, ***“...Quran is the definitive and timeless Book of the Muslim Ummah, its guiding light and raison d’etre, the source of its strength and security, from whom she has drawn all the enduring qualities and elements that have made her great. Without the gifts that the Quran has given the Muslim Ummah, it would have become forgotten history long ago...”***

The essential quality of Quran is also the main purpose for which he was sent to dwell amongst us, hoping to be recognized, utilized, respected and loved. The message is timeless as the need for human guidance is also timeless. Khurram Murad says of his book, **Way to the Quran**, that it is for those ordinary inexpert and unlearned seekers who are ***“struggling hard to fulfill their desire to understand, absorb and live the Quran...”***. He says those who first heard it found each word ***“deeply relevant”***. Today we should be no different.

So the haqq or right of the Quran is that we read, recite, carefully study and allow ourselves to respond to what is said to us especially during this month, “whose days are the best of all days, whose nights are the best of all nights and whose hours are the best of all hours”.

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References

To study – darasa -

Surah 3: 79: **“It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Book, and Wisdom, and the Prophetic Office, should say to people: ‘Be ye my worshippers rather than Allah’s.’ On the contrary (he would say): ‘Be ye worshippers of Him Who is truly The Cherisher of all; for ye have taught The Book and ye have studied it earnestly.’”**

Surah 7: 169: **“After them succeeded an (evil) generation; they inherited the Book, but they chose (for themselves) the vanities of this world, saying (for excuse): ‘(Everything) will be forgiven us.’ (Even so), if similar vanities came their way, they would (again) seize them. Was not the Covenant of the Book taken from them, that they would not ascribe to Allah anything but the truth? And they study what is in the Book. But best for the righteous is the Home in the Hereafter. Will ye not understand?”**

To follow closely – talawa –

Surah 2: 121: **“Those to whom We have sent the Book study it as it should be studied: they are the ones that believe therein. Those who reject faith therein – the loss is their own.”**

To carefully consider – dabara –

Surah 4: 82: **“Do they not consider the Qur’an (with care)? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy.”**

Surah 23: 68: **“Do they not ponder over the Word (of Allah), or has anything (new) come to them that did not come to their fathers of old?”**

Surah 47: 24 **“Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Qur’an, or are their hearts locked up by them?”**

Aspects of Forgiveness

“Say, ‘Oh My servants, who have wronged their own souls, do not lose hope of the Mercy of Allah. Surely Allah forgives all sins, for He is most surely The Forgiving One, The Most Merciful.’ “ (translation of Quran 39: 53)

In the common list of the Beautiful Names of Allah are found two attributes of forgiveness, **Al-Ghafur** and **Al-Ghafaar**. Both also appear in the Quran in various ayaat and embody different aspects of this noble attribute of Allah ta'ala. Though I will note something of the difference here, I encourage you to look into these Names and bring whatever information you find or receive to share with us.

Al-Ghafur – The All Forgiving Who causes the sinner to forget, thereby erasing all painful feelings of regret.

Surah 35: 28: **“And so amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle, are they of various colors. Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge. For Allah is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving.”**

Al-Ghafaar – The Great Forgiver Who covers the sin and hides it from others.

Surah 40: 42: **“Ye do call upon me to blaspheme against Allah, and to join with Him partners of whom I have no knowledge; and I call you to the Exalted in Power, Who forgives again and again!”**

Surah 71: 9-10): **“Further I have spoken to them in public and secretly in private, saying: ‘Ask forgiveness from your Lord; for He is Oft-Forgiving.’”**

Allah (swt) wants the request for forgiveness to be directed to Him so that He can respond to us.

Surah 4: 106: **“But seek the forgiveness of Allah; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

Surah 4: 110: **If anyone does evil or wrongs his own soul but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

And Allah (iwj) has said. “...Call on Me; I will answer you.” (translation of Surah 40: 60)

Forgiveness is of such great importance for us that Allah repeatedly calls on us to seek after it from Him

“Then why do they not turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (translation of Quran 5: 74)

also

2: 199: **“Then pass on at a quick pace from the place whence it is usual for the multitude so to do, and ask for Allah’s forgiveness. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

27:46: **“He said: ‘Oh my people! Why ask ye to hasten on the evil in preference to the good? If only ye ask Allah for forgiveness, ye may hope to receive mercy.’”**

and has included in the Quran many duah for us to use.

1. The first duah of istighfar taught by Allah to our parents Adam and Hawwa in the Garden.

Surah 7: 23: **“They said: ‘Our Lord! We have wronged our own sould; if Thou forgive us not and bestown not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall certainly be lost.”**

2. Duah of Prophet Nuh (as)

Surah 11: 47: **“Noah said: ‘O my Lord! I do seek refuge with Thee, lest I ask thee for that of which I have no knowledge, and unless Thou forgive me and have Mercy on me, I should ineed be lost!”**

Surah 71: 28

3. Duah of Prophet Ibraheem (as) –

Surah 14: 40 – 41: **“O my Lord! Make me one who establishes regular Prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring O our Lord! And accept Thou my Prayer. O our Lord! Cover (us) with Thy Forgiveness – me, my parents, and (all) Believers, on the Day that the Reckoning will be established!”**

4. Duah of Prophet Musaa (as) –

Surah 7: 155: **And Moses chose seventy of his people for Our place of meeting; when they were seized with violent quaking, he prayed: ‘O my Lord! If it had been Thy Will Thou couldst have destroyed, long before, both them and me; wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us? This is more than Thy trial; by it Thou causest whom Thou wilt to stray; and Thou leadest whom Thou wilt into the right path, Thou are our Protector; so forgive us and give us Thy mercy; for Thou are the Best of those who forgive.’”**

Surah 7:156: **“And ordain for us that which is good, in this life and in the Hereafter; for we have turned unto Thee.’ He said: ‘With My Punishment I visit whom I will; but My Mercy extendeth to all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practice rgular charity, and those who believe in Our Signs.”**

5. Duah of Prophet Muhammad constructed from

Surah 110, Al Nasr (The Help): **“When comes the Help of Allah, and Victory, and thou dost see the People enter Allah’s Religion in crowds, celebrate the Praises of thy Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness; for He is Oft-Returning (in Grace and Mercy).”**

6. General duah –

Surah 2: 286: **“On no soul doth Allah place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) “Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which Thou didst lay on those before us. Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. Thou are our Protector; help us against those who stand against Faith.”**

7. Duah of Pious ones –

Surah 3: 147: **“All that they said was: ‘Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and anything we may have done that transgressed our duty. Establish our feet firmly, and help us against those that resist Faith.’”**

8. Duah of those endowed with understanding –

Surah 3: 193 – 194: **“Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to Faith: ‘Believe ye in the Lord.’ And we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to thy self our souls in the company of the righteous.’ ‘Our Lord! Grant us what Thou didst promise unto us through Thy Messengers. And save us from shame on the Day of Judgment; For Thou never breakest Thy promise.’”**

8. Duah of a portion of the servants of Allah –

Surah 23: 109: **“A part of My servants there was, who used to pray: ‘Our Lord! We believe. Then do Thou forgive us, and have mercy upon us. For Thou are the Best of those who show mercy!’”**

10. Duah of the Angels –

Surah 40: 7 – 9: **“Those who sustain the Throne (of Allah) and those around it sing Glory and Praise to their Lord; believe in Him; and implore Forgiveness for those who believe: ‘Our Lord! Thy Reach is over all things, in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in Repentance, and follow Thy Path; and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire!’ ‘And grant, our Lord! That they enter the Gardens of Eternity, which Thou hast promised to them, and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their posterity! For Thou are (He), the Exalted in Might, full of Wisdom.’ ‘And preserve them from (all) ills; and any whom Thou dost preserve from ills that Day – on them wilt Thou have bestowed Mercy indeed; and that will be truly (for them) the highest Achievement.’”**

From the above ayaat, it is evident that those seeking forgiveness for themselves and others are from those with raised consciousness (taqwa) and nobleness of character. This is also evident in:

Surah 42: 36 – 37: **“Whatever ye are given (here) is (but) a convenience of this Life; but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting. (It is) for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord; those who avoid the greater crimes and shameful deeds, and, when they are angry even then forgive.”**

Surah 42: 43: **“But indeed if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs.”**

Surah 45: 14: **“But tell those who believe, to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of Allah; it is for Him to recompense (for good or ill) each People according to what they have earned.”**

Special Time for Sincere Seekers of Forgiveness

Although seeking of forgiveness is encouraged throughout the day, we find that, in Quran, Allah specifically mentions and gives honor to those who do this in the early hours of the morning – al ashaar. For example see:

Surah 3: 15 – 17: **“Say: Shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? For the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord, with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home; with companions pure (and holy) and the good pleasure of Allah. For in Allah’s sight are (all) His servants – (Namely), those who say: ‘Our Lord! We have indeed believed; forgive us, then, our sins, and save us from the agony of the Fire’ – Those who show patience, firmness and self control; who are true (in word and deed); who worship devoutly; who spend (in the way of Allah); and who pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.”**

and Surah 51: 15 – 18: **“As to the Righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs, Taking joy in the things which their Lord gives them, because, before then, they lived a good life. They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, And in the hours of early dawn they (were found) praying for Forgiveness.”**

Why is this action at this specific time especially recognized by Allah ta’alaa?

Who will receive Forgiveness?

1. Surah 33: 35: **“For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah’s praise – for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and a great reward.”**
2. Surah 34: 4: **“That He may reward those who believe and work deeds of righteousness; for such is Forgiveness and a Sustenance Most Generous.”**
3. Surah 35: 7: **“For those who reject Allah is a terrible Penalty; but for those who believe and work righteous deeds is Forgiveness, and a magnificent Reward.”**
4. Surah 36: 11: **“Thou canst but admonish such a one as follows the Message and fears The (Lord) Most Gracious, Unseen. Give such a one, therefore good tidings, of Forgiveness and a reward most generous.”**

5. Surah 49: 3: **“Those that lower their voice in the presence of Allah’s Messenger – their hearts has Allah tested for piety. For them is Forgiveness and a great Reward.”**

Allah is abundant in Forgiveness.

Surah 13: 6: **“They ask thee to hasten on the evil in preference to the good. Yet have come to pass, before them, (many) exemplary punishments! But verily thy Lord is full of forgiveness for mankind for their wrongdoing. And verily thy Lord is (also) strict in punishment.”**

Pardon and Overlook

As Allah knows many of us will not reach the level of being able to forgive in some instances, we are told to “pardon and overlook” and leave the matter to Allah.

Surah 2: 109: **“Quite a number of the People of the Book wish they could turn you (people) back to infidelity after ye have believed; from selfish envy, after the Truth hath become manifest unto them. But forgive and overlook, till Allah accomplishes His purpose; for Allah hath power over all things.”**

Surah 5: 13: **“But because of their breach of their Covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places and forget a good part of the Message that was sent them; nor wilt thou cease to find them – barring a few – ever bent on (new) deceits. But forgive them, and overlook (their misdeeds); for Allah loveth those who are kind.”**

Surah 24: 22: **“Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want, and those who have left their homes in Allah’s cause. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

and Surah 64: 14: **“O ye who believe! Truly, among your wives and your children are (some) that are) enemies to yourselves; so beware of them! But if ye forgive and overlook, and cover up (their faults), verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

“And race to Forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden who measure is that of the Heavens and Earth prepared for the pious; those who spend in prosperity and adversity, who restrain anger and pardon all, for Allah loves those perfect their characters and those who having done something shameful or wronged their souls, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins. And who can forgive sins except Allah? ...”
(translation of Quran Surah 3: 133 – 135)