

Forgiving people

Allah forgives those who forgive. The verse asks a question that ends most grudges. What we hold against people is what we ask Allah to hold against us.

CENTREPIECE Surah an-Nur 24:22

FIRST KHUTBAH

1. The verse that disarms

Allah says: let them pardon and let them overlook. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? (Nur 24:22). The verse was revealed when Abu Bakr swore never to support a relative who had slandered Aisha. Abu Bakr resumed his support.

2. Forgiving for Allah, not the offender

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was offered the opportunity to destroy Ta'if, the city that had stoned him. He refused and said: I hope Allah will bring forth from their offspring those who will worship Him (Bukhari 3231). He forgave because of who Allah is, not because they deserved it.

3. What forgiveness is not

It is not pretending the harm did not happen. It is not putting yourself back in the path of someone dangerous. It is releasing your claim on revenge and handing the file to Allah, who is the more capable Judge.

SECOND KHUTBAH

Return to the centrepiece and gather the message around one honest change connected to forgiving people.

Suggested closing: Send the message. Make the call. Walk over to them. Begin the easier life that opens on the other side of the held grudge.

PREPARATION NOTES

1. Read every cited verse or hadith in full before using it.
2. Add one example your own congregation will recognise.
3. Check questions of fiqh and recognised disagreement with a qualified local scholar.

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