

Ramadan Daily Quran Studies, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2025

Produced by:

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore (UK)

Study 24:

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

His generous treatment of the enemy

- The Holy Prophet was told the following about those who rejected him:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾
وَاللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ط
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٩﴾

“You have no concern in the matter whether He turns to them (mercifully) or punishes them; surely they are wrongdoers.

And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.

He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases.

And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” — 3:128–129

- As a mortal the Holy Prophet might have sometimes desired a severe punishment for his enemies; but he is told that it was not his concern, as Allah might forgive them, even though they deserved punishment.
- The all-comprehensiveness of the mercy of God expressed in this verse is unique in any sacred literature.

- The words “He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases” mean that no human being whoever, whether a prophet or not, can claim to know that certain people will be forgiven by God and certain other people will be punished.
- We can only know and mention *the ways* which lead to forgiveness and those which lead to punishment.

- When the Muslims won the battle of Badr, they took some seventy prisoners from the enemy soldiers. The following verse addresses the Holy Prophet about them:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْرَى
إِنْ يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِمَّا أُخِذَ مِنْكُمْ وَ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ
وَ اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

“O Prophet, say to those of the captives who are in your hands:
If Allah knows anything good in your hearts,
He will give you better than what has been taken from you,
and will forgive you. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” — 8:70

- “What has been taken from you” is the amount some of them had to pay to the Muslim community for their release. This was sent by their relatives from Makkah.
- The Holy Prophet released all these prisoners of war in the following ways:
 - Any of them who could read and write could earn his freedom by teaching ten Muslim children to read and write.
 - Others had to make a payment if they could afford it.
 - Those who were poor were just released freely.

- This battle, the first one, was the only occasion when the Holy Prophet sought such compensation for the Muslim community. In later battles, the prisoners were released without anything being demanded for their return. They were not punished or tortured or enslaved by the Holy Prophet.
- In this verse the prisoners are promised that if they have good intentions and behave well, if there is anything good in their hearts, they will suffer **no loss** as a result of having had to pay for their freedom. The meaning is that God will turn their hearts towards Islam.

- So, although they had to pay to gain their freedom from captivity, yet as a result of that *same* captivity they had the opportunity to see Muslims and true Islam close at hand, and some of them were attracted to accept it.
- In this way, Allah gave them something *better* than what was *taken* from them, as the verse says.
- Among the prisoners captured at Badr was one Suhail ibn Amr. He was a spokesman of the Quraish and a skilful orator who used to make speeches against the Holy Prophet by means of his public speaking talents.

- He was brought before the Holy Prophet and a Muslim suggested to the Holy Prophet that, as a punishment, his front teeth should be pulled out:

“so that he would never be able to exercise his oratory against you.”

- The Holy Prophet rejected this suggestion without hesitation and said:

“Certainly not. I will not mutilate anyone, for God would mutilate me as a punishment even though I am His Prophet.”

- In the story of the prophet Joseph in the Quran, Joseph's ten older brothers conspired against him and succeeded in removing him from the family home when he was a teenager by abandoning him in a wilderness.
- As a result, Joseph spent years in Egypt, first as someone's slave and later in prison. Eventually he reached the high position of being the second-in-command of the king in Egypt.
- Now these brothers needed his help to obtain food to survive a famine. He could have punished them for how they had treated him. But he forgave them, by saying:

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيْبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ طُ يَغْفِرُ اللهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ اَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيْمِيْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾

“He said: There is no reproach against you this day.

Allah may forgive you, and He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy.”

— 12:92

- We mention this because the Holy Prophet also had to go into exile to Madinah because of persecution by his brethren in Makkah.
- After eight years spent in exile at Madinah, when the Holy Prophet conquered Makkah, he had all these people before him, in his power.

- They had persecuted him and other Muslims for years, tortured and killed many of them, driven them out from Makkah, and then waged war against them repeatedly. They had tried to murder him many times.
- He now addressed them and asked them:
“What treatment do you expect from me?”
- They replied that they hoped for good treatment because he was of a noble character. The Holy Prophet declared:

“I say as my brother Joseph said: ‘There is no reproach against you this day’.”

- This act of unconditional forgiveness of your blood-thirsty foes, when they are completely in your power and submitting before you, has no parallel in world history.

END OF STUDY 24