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Khutbah

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Title: [Cleanse the Heart through Pardon and Forgiveness](#)

DVD title: The Exemplar of the Truly Faithful:  
Manifesting the Power to Pardon and Forgive

Opening duas. Allah tells us in Suratul Nūr:

**And let not those among you who are endowed with the favor and the ease bestowed by Allah swear that they would not give to their relatives and the poor and the immigrants in the way of Allah. And let them pardon and overlook the faults of others. Would you not like Allah to forgive you? And Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Singularly Compassionate.**

*Asalaamu aleikum.* As we find ourselves toward the last 10 Days of Ramadan, believe it or not, we come to the point where we really must understand the Compassion and the Mercy of Allah (swt), the gifts He has given to us, and our own shortcomings. When Allah gives this message to us, it's important that we understand from the point of view not only of Muslims, but as Sufis. A person who is not only a Muslim but has deepening insight, has the experience of Allah and has the power of Allah bestowed upon them and gifted to them, is encouraged and admonished to use that insight and power for the benefit of their own soul, for the benefit of the souls of other people, and for the benefit of humanity in general. Most specifically, those who are in ignorance and searching for knowledge can be helped a great deal.

As it happens in this world we live in, people have fears, anger, greed, desires and doubts. As a consequence, we harm one another. Sometimes we do that consciously and purposefully, and sometimes – most often – unconsciously. One of the powers / *karamat* of Allah that is manifest automatically in the heart of the Sufi, and truly in the heart of a

real Muslim, a person of faith / *iman* is [their heart is so] filled with that faith that they are called faithful. That is the definition of a person who is a Muslim: a person of faith and submission to Allah. A person who lives to have and exemplify that faith, who has that knowledge and experience, who has been given the power and courage behind that faith has another name. That person is called a *mu'min*, a believer.

A person who leaves everything just to exist in that state is a believer. That doesn't mean you don't do anything else. It means you exist in the state where you recognize the power/*karamat* of Allah; that your heart is open. You are grateful and faithful, and you are a believer. One of the greatest powers that is given to us in this process is the power to be forgiving and to pardon others. Do you know what it means to pardon a person? I think we all know. You don't have to go to law school to know what that means. When a person is incarcerated, there are three options: to stay in jail, to be paroled, or to be pardoned. Most of us remain a lot of time in the jail of our own egos. If you are paroled, you get out of jail, but you have to report to the parole officer. You served a certain amount of time, but you were still guilty. So you are still legally a criminal, and you have to be watched over very carefully. You can get out and be in society, though.

When you are pardoned, it means a mistake was made and you never should have been there in the first place. You never were a criminal, and they are going to wipe the record clean. Well, Allah gives pardons, like the President of the US. I don't think there is an equality there. In a sense it disregards whether the person was guilty or not guilty, but there is a feeling that there was enough reason to pardon that person and wipe their record clean. Of course, the time spent in that incarceration weighs heavily on the heart, soul and body of that individual. It means there was a mistake made, or there was enough repentance that Allah deemed the slate is wiped clean.

When someone makes a mistake, you have to realize that the Sufi, and the real Muslim, the one who is faithful and filled with that belief and *iman*, has the power to pardon them, to fully excuse them. We say that. We say, “Pardon me, excuse me,” when we do something we feel is wrong. Usually the answer is, “Don’t worry about it; it’s nothing.” As we say in the idiom of New Jersey, “Furgedaboutit.” When you have the power to punish and get back at someone, and you pardon them, this is one of the greatest secrets of Allah. It is a way to know Allah, to be in *mizan* / balance / harmony, just as the prophets / *ambiyā* pardoned the errors of others. It means you don’t accuse your family and friends for what they have outwardly done wrong. When you forget the cause through which there was some inward affliction, some damage done; when you extend yourself charitably and lovingly in the choice you have to pardon that person, this is a great blessing from Allah (swt). Many of us don’t understand this and don’t use it.

Even though you have the power over that individual for revenge, or to harm them in some way, or to criticize them, or to humiliate them, or make them uncomfortable, you choose to pardon them. This is not just an act of the mind; it is an act of the heart. A person who does not have the ability to do that had better turn their attention to their heart. We wouldn’t know about pardoning people unless we had examples of those who have done it. So Allah (swt) has given us the examples time and time again of saintly people, of the *awliyā*, of the messengers, of the prophets, whose ways were to pardon people who have done wrong. This is the way of Allah (swt), for Allah forgives the misdeeds, the actions, and the wrong words of those who seek His Forgiveness. Allah is the Most Forgiving, al-Ghaffur. Every night in our *hatim*, our *salawat*, we recite recitations about “Allah, You are the One alone Who can forgive us. I have wronged myself, and if you don’t forgive me, surely I am of those who are lost. You are forgiveness itself, forgive me, Allah. Ya Ghaffur.”

One who forgives, it is said, has a certain mark on them. That mark is the mark of nobility and honor. The nobility and honor that comes from Allah to them because they

are forgiving is the Light of Allah. It is the Nuri Muhammed that causes a radiance about them that actually you can feel and see. Hence, this verse occurs in the Surah an-Nūr.

That's because pardoning and forgiving are two distinctive attributes of Almighty Allah. He has entrusted the secrets of those attributes to those people who are pure and who are his friends. They are the ones who have adopted and taken on that *adab*, the manner, the courtesy of Allah (swt). That's why He said that they should pardon and turn away. **“Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”**

It is not, “do you not appreciate,” but “do you not love.” If we don't pardon and forgive human beings who are mortal like us, who are flawed like us, how can we expect Allah to pardon and forgive us? How can we understand that He pardons and forgives us?

There is a *hadith* of the Prophet (sal) where he said, **“Unite with whomever breaks with you. Become one with, friends with whoever breaks with you; and pardon whoever does wrong to you. And give to whomever deprives you and takes from you, and be good to whoever does wrong to you.”** He commanded us to follow him in this way. Allah (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an, **“Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it. And from whatever he forbids you, keep back from it.”** One of the greatest secrets of Allah (swt) is to pardon one another, and whoever is made happy by this, Allah makes happy. The Messenger of Allah (sal) also said, **“Are any of you capable of being like Abu Dada?” They said, “O Messenger of God, who is he?” He said, “One of your ancestors who, when he woke in the morning would say, ‘O Allah, I have forgiven the shattering of my honor by the common people.’”** When you realize that when you are raised high, you are also placed low, humbled.

When a person is truthful, but people accuses him or her of being a liar or they distrust that truth; when a person calls another to the truth, and then that person is scorned by others, confusion comes. When a person is injured without having done anything wrong, or when a person demands what is right, the people often oppose that person. When you give each of these aspects what is due, and you persevere, and you forbear and remain

strong, then truly we have reached a great goal. When you learn to turn away from the person who is your enemy, or who is ignorant and does not answer your doubts or accusations, you will notice then that Allah (swt) and others will come to your aid and come to help you. Only a foolish person wages battle with one who is a fool. That kind of battle only adds gasoline to the flame. One has to be forbearing, truthful and honest to learn this lesson. To become forbearing, you have to pardon those who act against you, who oppose you when you have the power to [take revenge]. You have to pray to Allah (swt) to give you the strength in that forbearance.

There is a stick that is used in India and Pakistan to clean the teeth called *mizwak*, a chew stick. You peel back the stick, and clean your teeth with it. I remember the first time I saw that was on an all night train in India. In the morning, the train stopped, and everybody got out and stood on the platform with their *mizwak*. Hundreds of people, brushing their teeth and spitting into the train track. The idea is that it purifies the mouth. If you see the teeth of people in that part of the world, unless they chew pan, their gums and teeth are very white and strong. Just like we remove the stains of the food and drink we eat from our teeth, so too we have to purify our heart of the things that accrue on our heart from day to day. We have to cleanse them. Our heart, which is red, full of blood and oxygen, beats strongly. When we get fear, anxiety, and doubts, and come into contact with negativity, our heart gets gray and soft and weak and palpitates. We have to purify our hearts with something pure. There is no branch we can stick into it, but there are actions and attitudes. We can do that with our prayer, with our *dhikr*, with our love and respect for one another.

Allah (swt) wants us to purify and clean our lives, and gives us a way to do that and be real Muslims and Sufis. It's not a label; it's a practice. When you have the tools and you use them, it's like you wouldn't think of not brushing your teeth twice a day (or once a day, or once every other day...) Some people brush their teeth after meal. We don't want to get to the point where we have to take our teeth out and brush them. How do we take

our heart out and clean it? One of the tools Allah (swt) has given to us is forgiveness and to pardon others, to pardon the wrong that is done by others. It's related:

**Allah sent the revelation to Huzair, "If you are not good natured such that you are like a morsel in the mouths of the children of Adam, I will not record you among the humble." Huzair replied, "O my Lord! What is the hallmark of the one You have chosen for Your Love?" He replied, "I make him content with meager provision, and I activate him to prepare for a momentous event. He eats little; he weeps much. He seeks My Forgiveness before dawn. He detests licentiousness for MySake, and he forgives others."**

*Alhamdulillah*, that's the message for today in the last days of Ramadan. (Duas).