



His Mercy is Vast

A Practical Guide to Seeking Allah's Forgiveness

Ammar Awais

 **TA·HA**
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Introduction

Among the greatest and most sublime attributes of Allah is His infinite mercy, as described in the Qur'an and Sunnah. A number of His traits are either derived directly from His mercy or closely linked to it. His names, such as:

Al-Rahman (The Entirely Merciful)

Al-Raheem (The Especially Merciful)

Al-Rauf (The Kind)

Al-Ghaffar (The Perpetual Forgiver)

Al-Ghafir (The Forgiver)

Al-Afuw (The Ever Pardoning)

all have connotations of being exceedingly merciful, forgiving, and compassionate.

Two of the very first three verses of the Qur'an signify His immense compassion and mercy. The opening verse – **In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful**¹ – is uttered before beginning

1 Al-Fatihah 1:1

any new task in general, as a constant reminder to us of Allah's mercy. Many of the prayers taught by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as well as those in the Qur'an, generally draw upon the divine attributes of unmatched mercy (*rahmah*) and forgiveness (*maghfirah*).

In fact, the Qur'an specifies Al-Rahman as a generic name of God by which we can ordinarily call upon Him:

Say, "Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful [Al-Rahman]. Whichever [name] you call – to Him belong the best names..." (Al-Isra 17:110)

This book is the result of extensive research into the divine attributes of mercy and forgiveness as explained in the Qur'an and Sunnah. I have chosen to focus on Allah's mercy alone despite the fact that His punishment is also a reality, and something not to be taken lightly. There are two main reasons for adopting this approach.

The first is a specific command of the Prophet ﷺ which strongly resonated with me:

Make things easy for the people, and do not make things difficult for them and give them glad tidings and do not repel them.
(Bukhari, narrated by Anas ibn Malik)

The degree to which Allah has described Himself as merciful is certainly among the best tidings that can be conveyed to people. So there is a need to celebrate this beautiful attribute of Allah – to propagate it – so that people may recognise Allah correctly, and not despair of His mercy and forgiveness.

Secondly, some teachers of Islam emphasise Allah's wrath and punishment as a means to make people obey Him through fear, and so they are not aware of the great extent to which Allah is compassionate, kind, and forgiving. The consequence of this is that people stay away from their Lord instead of coming towards Him. I believe that if there were a true understanding of the real extent of Allah's compassion, so many more people would be upon the path of optimism, hope and guidance today.

Therefore, I wrote this book to provide you – the reader – with a more profound understanding of divine mercy as well as making a practical difference in your life; to help you connect with Allah better and view your relationship with Him in a completely different light. There is specific guidance on how to address Allah in your personal supplications and which deeds can help you attain forgiveness for your sins, with Allah's permission.

There are six chapters in the book, as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of sin.

Chapter 2 discusses the divine attributes of mercy and forgiveness.

Chapter 3 looks at the manner in which we can seek Allah's forgiveness.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the deeds, acts and attributes that can wipe out many sins.

Chapter 6 examines how the doors of divine mercy remain open for us even after we leave this world.



An Expiation for Every Sin

Allah informs us in a hadith qudsi (hadith where the meaning is revealed by Allah and worded by the Prophet ﷺ):

Every (sinful) deed can be expiated. (Bukhari)

For most minor sins, the expiation is as simple as sincerely asking Allah for forgiveness and doing our best not to commit that sin again. We will look in Chapter 3 about exactly how to seek forgiveness from Allah.

For certain other deeds, legal expiation has been prescribed by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. For example, someone who hunts an animal while in a state of *ihram* (sacred state) during Hajj is required to offer an animal sacrifice or feed the poor or fast. Such forms of expiation are meant to make the sinner realise the gravity of their offence rather than cause them undue difficulty. These compensatory acts often revolve around benefitting the less fortunate.

Even in these matters, there is room for discretion and empathy towards the offender. Consider the following incident in which the Prophet ﷺ showed great leniency in the matter of legal expiation due to the particular circumstances of the offender.

Once, a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and declared, “O Allah’s Messenger, I am ruined!” When asked about what bothered him, he revealed that he had engaged in intimacy with his wife while fasting during Ramadan. The Prophet ﷺ advised him to manumit a slave as expiation, but the man answered, “I cannot afford that.” He was then told to fast for two



consecutive months, to which he answered, “I have no strength to do so.” As a final resort, the Prophet ﷺ told him to feed sixty deserving persons, but the man had nothing to offer as charity.

Later, when a basket of dates was gifted to the Prophet ﷺ, he gave it to the man, and said, “Take it and give it in charity.” The man replied, “O Allah’s Messenger, shall I give it to people other than my family? By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, there is nobody poorer than me in the whole city of Al-Madinah.” The Prophet ﷺ smiled at the man and told him to take the basket of dates home to his family. (Bukhari, narrated by Abu Hurayra)

No wonder, the Prophet ﷺ was sent as a **‘mercy to the worlds’**¹⁸ – a glowing tribute to Allah’s own infinite mercy and compassion!

18 Al-Anbiya 21:107