

Forgiving people

Nothing here says the wrong did not happen. It says the response is yours to choose, that the better choice is named, and that what it costs you is paid back from somewhere else.



Would you not like it for yourself?

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

“And let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?” The argument is not that the offender deserves it.

Qur'an 24:22

Two things listed together

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ

“...those who restrain anger and who pardon people — and Allah loves the doers of good.” Swallowing the anger is one step; pardoning the person is the next.

Qur'an 3:134

Equal repayment is allowed

فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

The verse first permits a reply in kind — “the recompense for an injury is an injury like it” — then: “but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allah.” Permitted and better are not the same.

Qur'an 42:40

Repel with what is better

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

“Repel [evil] by that which is better; then the one between whom and you there was enmity becomes as though he were a devoted friend.”

Qur'an 41:34

Take what is easy

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant.” Three instructions for dealing with people, in one line.

Qur'an 7:199

What it buys

مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ، وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلَّا عِزًّا، وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلَّا رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ

“Charity does not decrease wealth; Allah adds nothing to a servant who pardons but honour; and no one humbles himself for Allah but Allah raises him.”

Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa's-Silah wa'l-Adab

Said with blood on his face

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِقَوْمِي فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

He ﷺ described a prophet whose people struck him until he bled, wiping the blood away and saying: “O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 3477

Cover, and be covered

“A servant whose fault Allah conceals in this world, Allah will conceal him on the Day of Resurrection.” Not broadcasting the wrong is part of forgiving it.

Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa's-Silah wa'l-Adab

It is not weakness

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

“And whoever is patient and forgives — that is of the matters requiring determination.” ‘Azm: resolve. The Qur'an files it under strength.

Qur'an 42:43