

# Welcome Home: Our Duty to the Incarcerated

Dec 26, 2025

**Theme:** Remembering those forgotten, Supporting those who need it most, Sadaqah, Redemption in Islam

**Purpose:** To remind the Ummah that the only thing that separates us from those incarcerated is qadr. And to highlight the extent of Allah's forgiveness and the importance of supporting new Muslims who found Islam in incarceration.

[Sample Khutbah below:](#)

## Key Themes & Objectives:

1. Islam is a religion of redemption for anyone who walks the Sirat al-Mustaqeem, the straight path.
2. Every Muslim deserves dignity and the materials needed to get closer to Allah.
3. One of the most righteous things a believer can do is help someone on the path to Islam.

## Quranic References:

- [Surah Ali 'Imran, verse 159](#)

بِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

*"O Messenger of Allah! It is a great Mercy of God that you are gentle and kind towards them; for, had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would all have broken away from you."*[3:159]

- Surah Al Ma'idah, verse 2

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا  
ءَآمِينَ  
الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ  
شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا  
تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ٢

*“O believers! Do not violate Allah’s rituals ‘of pilgrimage’, the sacred months, the sacrificial animals, the ‘offerings decorated with’ garlands, nor those ‘pilgrims’ on their way to the Sacred House seeking their Lord’s bounty and pleasure. When pilgrimage has ended, you are allowed to hunt. Do not let the hatred of a people who once barred you from the Sacred Mosque provoke you to transgress. Cooperate with one another in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is severe in punishment.”[5:2]*

- Surah Al-Isra, verse 70

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ  
كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

*“Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures.” [17:70]*

- Surah Maryam, verse 60

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

*“As for those who repent, believe, and do good, it is they who will be admitted into Paradise, never being denied any reward.” [19:60]*

- Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 10

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

*"The believers are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers. And be mindful of Allah so you may be shown mercy." [49:10]*

- Surah Ad-Dhariyat, verse 25

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ

*"When they [the angels] came to him [Abraham], they said: 'Peace'; he said: 'Peace also be to you; (you seem to be) a group of strangers.' [51:25]*

## Hadith:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مَنِيعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا زَيْدُ بْنُ الْحُبَابِ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مَسْعَدَةَ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - : " كُلُّ بَنِي آدَمَ خَطَاءٌ وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَائِينَ التَّوَّابُونَ " .

- The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has stated, "All the children of Adam are sinners, and the best of sinners are those who repent." (Sunan Ibn Majah 4251)

حَدَّثَنَا حَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْخَلَوَانِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو تَوْبَةَ الرَّبِيعُ بْنُ نَافِعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاوِيَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَلَامٍ - عَنْ زَيْدٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَبَا سَلَامٍ، يَقُولُ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ فَرُّوخَ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ عَائِشَةَ، تَقُولُ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " إِنَّهُ خُلِقَ كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ عَلَى سِتِّينَ وَثَلَاثِمِائَةِ مَفْصِلٍ فَمَنْ كَبَّرَ اللَّهُ وَحَمَدَ اللَّهُ وَهَلَّلَ اللَّهُ وَسَبَّحَ اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ اللَّهَ وَعَزَلَ حَجْرًا عَنْ طَرِيقِ النَّاسِ أَوْ شَوْكَةً أَوْ عَظْمًا عَنْ طَرِيقِ النَّاسِ وَأَمَرَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ نَهَى عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ عَدَدَ تِلْكَ السِّتِّينَ وَالثَّلَاثِمِائَةِ السَّلَامَى فَإِنَّهُ يَمْشِي يَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَدْ زَحَرَخَ نَفْسَهُ عَنِ النَّارِ " . قَالَ أَبُو تَوْبَةَ وَرُبَّمَا قَالَ " يُمْسِي "

- A'isha reported Allah's Messenger as saying: "Every one of the children of Adam has been created with three hundred and sixty joints; so he who declares the Glory of Allah, praises Allah, declares Allah to be One, Glorifies Allah, and seeks forgiveness from Allah, and removes stone, or thorn, or bone from people's path, and enjoins what is good and forbids from evil, to the number of those three hundred and sixty joints, will walk that day having saved himself from the Fire." (Sahih Muslim 1007a)

وعن أنس ، رضي الله عنه قال: " سمعت رسول الله ، صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "قال الله تعالى: يا ابن آدم، إنك ما دعوتني ورجوتني غفرت لك على ما كان منك ولا أبالي، يا ابن آدم، لو بلغت ذنوبك عنان السماء، ثم استغفرتني غفرت لك ، يا ابن آدم، إنك لو أتيتني بقراب الأرض خطايا، ثم لقيتني لا تشرك به شيئا، لأتيتك بقرابها مغفرة" (رواه الترمذي. وقال حديث حسن).

- Anas (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Allah, the Exalted, has said: 'O son of Adam, I forgive you as long as you pray to Me and hope for My forgiveness, whatever sins you have committed. O son of 'Adam, I do not care if your sins reach the height of the heaven, then you ask for my forgiveness, I would forgive you. O son of 'Adam, if you come to Me with an earth load of sins, and meet Me associating nothing to Me, I would match it with an earthload of forgiveness. (Al-Tirmidhi 3540)

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - { أَكْثَرُ مَا يُدْخِلُ الْجَنَّةَ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ } أَخْرَجَهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَصَحَّحَهُ الْحَاكِمُ .

- Abu Hurairah (RAA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "The fear of Allah and good morals (Akhlāq) are the two major characteristics which lead to Paradise." (Tirmidhi 2004, Sahih by Hakim)

## Practical Examples:

- As of 2025, over 10,000 copies of Islamic literature have been given into the hands of incarcerated Muslims and 8,610 Quran translations have been distributed across 366 prisons, through the organization Islam in Prison.
- Brother Malcolm, while imprisoned, encouraged countless others to awaken spiritually through self-dedication.
- A study conducted by Pew discovered that many Muslim prisoners saw praying, reading, and serving the community as stabilizing factors in their daily existence behind bars, reducing recidivism and increasing positive behavior.
- Approximately 10% of incarcerated people find their way to Islam while incarcerated.

## Self-Reflection Questions for Congregation:

- What will it take to extend our hands in Salaam toward those in our own congregation?
- What do we want our place of worship to represent?
- How many individuals have we already neglected to feel welcome?
- How can I strive to please Allah SWT, both inside and outside the masjid?

## Recommended Dua (with translations):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا، وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، فَاعْفِرْ لِي مِنْ عِنْدِكَ مَغْفِرَةً، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

- "O Allah, I have wronged myself greatly. Only You forgive wrong actions. Forgive me with forgiveness directly from you. You are the Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

- "Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and the believers on the Day when the reckoning will be established." - (Quran 14:41)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبُخْلِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ تُرَدَّنِي إِلَى أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدُّنْيَا، وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ

- "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from miserliness, and seek refuge with You from cowardice, and seek refuge with You from being brought back to (senile) geriatric old age, and seek refuge with You from the affliction of the world and from the punishment in the Hereafter." (Al-Bukhari 6390)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ زَوَالِ نِعْمَتِكَ، وَتَحَوُّلِ عَافِيَتِكَ، وَفُجَاءَةِ نِقْمَتِكَ، وَجَمِيعِ سَخَطِكَ

- "Allah! I seek refuge in You against the declining of Your Favors, passing of safety, the suddenness of Your punishment and all that which displeases You." (Muslim 2739)

## Messaging Guidelines:

- Encourage a sense of community and welcoming for previously incarcerated Muslims and new Muslims in general.
- Highlight organizations already doing the work, Islam in Prison, Furqaan Foundation, etc.
- Avoid encouraging caution around those previously convicted
- Emphasize individual action in an organized sense: drive the reflection questions, but encourage that there are already organizations and movements in place, so that the passion can be effective and appropriate.

## Sample Khutbah

### First Khutbah

**Al-ḥamdu lillāh**, we praise Allah — the One who dignified the children of Adam, who opens the doors of repentance wider than any prison gate, and whose mercy is not constrained by human judgment or social labels. We praise Him for His justice and His compassion, and we bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger, sent as a mercy to the worlds — to soften hearts, not harden them; to restore dignity, not erase it.

**Dear brothers and sisters,**

Allah has already settled the question of **human worth**. He does not leave it to courts, governments, or public opinion. He tells us plainly in the Qur'an:

**“Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with good things, and favored them greatly over much of what We have created.”**

*(Sūrat al-Isrā' 17:70)*

This dignity is **not conditional**. It is not revoked by failure, erased by sin, or canceled by incarceration. When Allah grants karāmah — dignity — no conviction, sentence, or label has the authority to strip it away.

Islam does not deny that people sin. It confronts that reality honestly and directly. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“All the children of Adam are sinners, and the best of sinners are those who repent.”**

*(Sunan Ibn Mājah)*

This hadith shatters the dangerous idea that sin permanently disqualifies a person from honor, belonging, or nearness to Allah. If repentance is beloved to Allah, then **supporting people who are turning back to Him is not leniency — it is obedience.**

Allah Himself tells us:



**“As for those who repent, believe, and do righteous deeds — they will enter Paradise, and they will not be wronged in the least.”**

*(Sūrat Maryam 19:60)*

Notice, brothers and sisters, Allah does not say *they will always be haunted by their past*. He does not say *their repentance will be questioned forever*. He says **they will not be denied any reward**.

Many of our brothers and sisters encounter Islam **for the first time while incarcerated**. Others return to it during moments of isolation, fear, and deep reflection — moments when distractions are stripped away and the heart finally turns upward. Prison, for many, becomes the place where arrogance is broken and sincerity is born.

And how are we commanded to meet people who are wounded, ashamed, or struggling?

Allah reminds the Prophet ﷺ — and through him, the Ummah:

**“It is by a mercy from Allah that you were gentle with them. Had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.”**

*(Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān 3:159)*

Harshness does not reform. Cruelty does not heal. Suspicion does not invite repentance. **Mercy opens doors that punishment alone never can.**

The Prophet ﷺ embodied this mercy not selectively, but consistently — especially toward those society looked down upon. To deny compassion to the incarcerated is not caution; it is a contradiction of the character Allah praised in His Messenger.

Allah also gives us a clear command about how communities are meant to function:

**“Cooperate with one another in righteousness and taqwā, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression.”**

*(Sūrat al-Mā'idah 5:2)*

Supporting incarcerated Muslims with knowledge, resources, human connection, and pathways back into community life is **cooperation in righteousness**. Turning away, dehumanizing, or treating people as permanently suspect is not neutrality — it is neglect of a divine command.



And let us be honest with ourselves. What separates us from those behind bars is not righteousness. It is **qadr**. Different circumstances. Different pressures. Different tests.

Any one of us could have been placed in their position. When this reality settles in the heart, judgment gives way to humility, and distance gives way to responsibility.

Islam is, at its core, **a religion of return**. A religion that meets people where they are and walks with them toward Allah. Allah tells us that even when strangers come to us, our posture should be one of peace:

**“When they entered upon him and said, ‘Peace,’ he said, ‘Peace — you are unfamiliar people.’”**

*(Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt 51:25)*

This is the ethic of the believer: not suspicion first, but welcome; not rejection, but engagement.

If we truly believe that forgiveness is real, that repentance is transformative, and that brotherhood is not conditional, then our actions toward incarcerated Muslims must reflect that belief — not just our words.

## Second Khutbah

**Al-ḥamdu lillāh**, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

**Dear brothers and sisters,**

Dignity does not end at conviction because **Allah’s door of forgiveness never closes**. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that every human being has countless opportunities each day to move closer to Allah — even through simple acts of goodness, removing harm from the path, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong.

‘Ā’ishah (raḍiyAllāhu ‘anhā) narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

**“Every child of Adam has been created with three hundred and sixty joints... and whoever does acts of goodness equal to them will walk that day having saved himself from the Fire.”**

*(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)*

Islam does not glorify wrongdoing — but it **never erases the one who sincerely turns back**.





Across prisons and detention centers today, Islam is already serving as a lifeline. Thousands of Qur'an translations and Islamic books have been placed into the hands of incarcerated Muslims. Many have found stability through prayer, learning, and service — pathways that reduce harm and restore purpose.

History reinforces this truth. Figures like **Malcolm X** encountered Islam while incarcerated and emerged transformed — disciplined, principled, and purposeful. His story is not an anomaly. It is a reminder of what happens when the Ummah refuses to abandon people at their lowest point and instead invests in their return to Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ told us:

**“The things that most often admit people into Paradise are taqwā of Allah and good character.”**  
(*Tirmidhī*)

A masjid that claims to represent Islam must reflect this mercy **in practice**. Welcoming formerly incarcerated Muslims, supporting reentry, providing companionship, education, and material assistance — these are not optional projects. They are **extensions of brotherhood**.

Allah declares:

**“The believers are but brothers, so make peace between your brothers — and be mindful of Allah so that you may be shown mercy.”**  
(*Sūrat al-Hujurāt 49:10*)

Let this Ummah be known for **restoring dignity, not withholding it**.

Let our sadaqah, our time, and our advocacy reflect belief in redemption.

Let us stand with those already doing this work and strengthen it with consistency and sincerity.

May Allah forgive us, forgive our brothers and sisters behind bars, ease their paths, and make us a community that reflects His mercy **before we ever speak of it**.