

Prophet Muhammad The Ideal Model for Human Life

About the Book

Anas ibn Malik was quite perceptive when he asked the Prophet, peace be upon him: "O Messenger of Allah, where will I find you on the Last Day?" He was inquiring about the Prophet's location in the Gathering Place.

Anas understood with certainty—despite being one of the Companions and beloved of Allah—that his deeds would be meaningless without the protection of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Every path other than his is blocked. Reading this book will unveil the reasons and more.

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Publications

- Prophet Muhammad: The Ideal Model for Human Life
- Research paper submitted to the Board of Senior Scholars at Al-Azhar titled "Movements of Doubt Regarding the Prophetic Sunnah," comprising 220 pages.
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Mahmoud Rabi' Hassan

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Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Preface

Chapter One: The Character of Prophet Muhammad

- 1- Essential Morals and Inherent Traits.....
- 2- The Prophet's Emotional Resilience.....
- 3- Contemplation and Reflection.....
- 4- The Prophet's Wit and Quick Thinking.....
- 5- Inner and Outer Peace.....
- 6- Refuting Doubts about the Prophet's Character.....

Chapter Two: Social Relationships

- 1- The Foundation of Social Relations.....
- 2- The Relationship with Children and Grandchildren.....
- 3- The Marital Relationship with Wives.....
- 4- The Relationship with Relatives.....
- 5- The Relationship with Friends.....
- 6- Dealing with the Opposing Views.....
- 7- Treating the Enemies.....

Chapter Three: Dealing with Novel Matters

1- Facing Challenges and Obstacles.....

2- Dealing with Emergency Problems.....

3- The Prophetic Advice.....

Conclusion

In the Name of Allah—the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon the mercy sent to all creation, our master, the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, and upon his household and Companions.

I am continually astonished by the perplexity of figures, both past and present, regarding the character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They struggle to grasp the reasons behind his greatness and why he is regarded as the ideal model for human life! Some sought to rival the Prophet's character, hoping to gain praise and admiration—like Abu Jahl—but resorted to casting accusations against this unique figure when they found no other way. Others, in their despair, claimed his character was fictional, believing it impossible for such perfect qualities to exist in reality. Yet, there were those who bowed their heads in respect and reverence, acknowledging that this ideal human character remains unmatched, past or present.

The analysis of this extraordinary character of the Prophet continues to occupy a significant place in their minds as they seek to uncover the source of such unparalleled perfection and the origins of these unique human qualities. Some attributed it to magic, arguing that a magician merely creates the illusion of perfection and deceives those around him. Others linked it to soothsaying, believing that a soothsayer's ability to predict the future allows him to prepare for events in advance. Some thought it stemmed from poetry and an expansive imagination, as poetry can refine one's nature and transport the poet to realms of idealized fantasy. However, there were those who discerned the truth, understanding that these human qualities were not of earthly origin. They realized that no one who lives entirely among humans, influencing and being influenced by them, could possess such attributes. Instead, they concluded that there must be a connection to other realms,

which contributed to these characteristics and morals—unlike anything people had ever seen or heard of before.

This is the conclusion reached by the German scholar Karl Heinrich (1876–1933) after extensive research. He wrote in his book “The Orientals”: “Those who claim that the Prophet of the Arabs was a fraud or a sorcerer are gravely mistaken, for they have not grasped his noble principles. Muhammad is worthy of respect, and his teachings deserve to be followed. We should not pass judgment without proper understanding, and indeed, Muhammad is the greatest man who brought to the world a religion of guidance and perfection.”

Throughout this work, I wanted to highlight an example of the character and humanity of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), focusing on him as a human being rather than solely as a Prophet and Messenger. Before beginning my blessed journey to explore this radiant and extraordinary figure—whose true nature is beyond complete comprehension—I would like to emphasize the words of the Indian scholar Ramakrishna Rao (1836–1886) in his book *Muhammad-the Prophet of Islam*: “It is impossible to fully grasp Muhammad's character in all its dimensions. The best I can offer is a glimpse of his life through a series of beautiful images: Muhammad the Prophet, Muhammad the Warrior, Muhammad the Statesman, Muhammad the Orator, Muhammad the Reformer, Muhammad the Guardian of Orphans, the Protector of Slaves, Muhammad the Emancipator of Women, and Muhammad the Judge. Each of these magnificent roles in every aspect of life qualifies him to be a hero.”

Therefore, I began by exploring various aspects of Prophet Muhammad's character and morals, which were inherent in him from birth. Then, I examined his relationships with those around him, focusing on how he interacted with and regarded them. Finally, I addressed how he responded to new challenges and issues. And I concluded with his advice for the betterment of individuals and society.

I pray to Allah and seek intercession through His Prophet that this work benefits me and all who read it or any part of it, that it be dedicated sincerely to His noble cause, and that it serves as a source of benefit for me and my parents.

Preface

Say, O Prophet, "I am only a man like you." (Quran 18:110)

The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the humanity of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), a fact that the Prophet himself affirmed. He (peace be upon him) said in a Prophetic tradition, "I am only a human being like you; I forget as you forget, so if I forget, remind me."¹

The question is: How should we perceive the Prophet's humanity? Grasping this concept is crucial, as it marks the line between faith and disbelief. A correct understanding has guided some to the truth, while a flawed interpretation has led others astray.

Consider the difference between how Abu Jahl, Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, and the other disbelievers of Quraysh understood the Prophet's humanity, and how Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, Umar al-Faruq, and the other Companions grasped it.

The disbelievers fixated on the outward appearance—and even misunderstood that—saying: "What is this Messenger who eats food and walks in the markets?" [Quran 25: 7]. Their objection was not merely to his human needs like eating and drinking; they implied something deeper. They assumed that since he had a human soul that desires food and drink, he must also crave power, prestige, and wealth, and would even resort to deceit to achieve these ambitions.

¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih, Book: Facing the Qibla (392).

They judged the Prophet's humanity by comparing it to their own, assuming that any one of them could fulfill the role as long as it was a human task. They said, "Why was this Quran not sent down to some great man from the two cities?" [Quran 43: 31]. They echoed the sentiment of the people of Salih (peace be upon him), who said before them, "Has the message been sent down upon him from among us?" [Quran 38: 8].

To resolve this debate, the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared: "Say O Prophet, 'I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your Lord is one God'" [Quran 18: 110]. This means that, outwardly, I am like you, but in reality, my humanity is unique because I bear the responsibility of the message and the burden of revelation. Who else could bear the weight of the revelation, which even the mighty mountains could not withstand? "If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah" [Quran 21: 21]. Who could bear its heavy burden? "Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word" [Quran 37: 5].

The difference between me and you is that I am chosen for the revelation, and only one specially prepared by Allah can be chosen for such a task: "I made you for Myself" [Quran 20: 39].

The Companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) recognized the unique nature of his being. They regarded his self and human nature as a special entity with distinct attributes, a divine gift to the universe. They sought blessings from everything associated with him, including his blessed saliva, as mentioned by `Urwah ibn Mas`ud to the people of Mecca before his conversion. They did this to purify themselves through his pure essence, knowing that the entire earth was sanctified by his blessed feet. It became a purifier for others as well.

As Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated, "The earth has been made a mosque for me and a means of purification."²

When the Companions would sometimes overlook or misunderstand the limits of Prophet Muhammad's unique qualities, he would remind them and clarify that he was a human unlike any other. Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "I used to write down everything I heard from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Quraysh told me, 'You write down everything, even though the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is just a man who speaks in anger and pleasure?' I stopped writing, but when I mentioned this to the Prophet (peace be upon him), he pointed to his mouth and said, 'Write, for by the One in Whose hand is my soul, nothing comes out of it (his mouth) except the truth.'"³

Indeed, why would not this be the case? Humanity was created to bear the weight of the message. Allah says, "Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear" (Quran 2:286). Thus, Allah prepared him for this prophecy before assigning him to it and for this message before he was tasked with it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) carried this message even before the creation of mankind and jinn, as he stated: "I was a Prophet while Adam was between soul and body (i.e. after creating his body and before ensouling him)."⁴

² Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (438) and by Muslim in his Sahih (521) from Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari.

³ Recorded by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (3646) and by Ahmad (6802).

⁴ Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (20596), by al-Tirmidhi in his Al-'Ilal (683) and in his Sunan (3609), and by Abu Nu'aym in Tarikh Asbahan 2/197.

He was a Messenger to all of creation, whether through a message of duty or one of honor, and even a Messenger to other Prophets themselves. This is affirmed by the Quran. Allah, Almighty, says in Surah Aal-Imran: "And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying, 'Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom, and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you [must] believe in him and support him.' [Allah] said, 'Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My commitment?' They said, 'We have acknowledged it.' He said, 'Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.'" (Quran 3:81). The Prophet (peace be upon him) reinforced this when he said, "If Moses, son of Imran, were alive, he would have no choice but to follow me."⁵

In light of the universal and comprehensive nature of his message, the one chosen by Allah to deliver it was endowed with unique qualities and distinct attributes. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was patient, forbearing, broad-minded, quick-witted, gentle, and warm in his dealings with people. He loved them, and they loved him in return. He repaid wrongs with good, never became angry for personal reasons, endured harm with grace, and interacted with each person according to their individual circumstances, making him a role model for all.

His creation was extraordinary, and his humanity transcended worlds without changing or taking on a different form. He could move from the physical, observable world to the unseen realm beyond it while maintaining his same form and composition, fully experiencing the other world in all its details, just as angels do when they enter our world.

⁵ Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (15156), by Abu Ubayd in Gharib al-Hadith 3/28-29, by Ibn Abi Shaybah 9/47, by Ibn Abi Asim in As-Sunnah (50), by al-Bazzar in Kashf al-Astar (124), by al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab al-Iman (177), by al-Baghawi in Sharh al-Sunnah (126), and by Ibn Abd al-Barr in Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi 2/42.

A prime example of this is the Night Journey and Ascension ('Isra and Mi'raj), where he met all the Prophets in the realm of the Barzakh (the intermediate world) and encountered angels in the heavenly realm. This extraordinary ability enabled him to deliver the message in the most complete and perfect manner. It is inconceivable that Allah would burden him with what he could not bear or assign him a task without providing him with the necessary support.

No one should be surprised by the extraordinary character we will discuss in this book. In fact, this character will speak for itself through its words and actions. It will reveal itself through its influence on thousands of exemplary men, and even through its impact on time and place, remaining unaffected by them.

This remarkable figure was a role model for everyone—rich and poor, healthy and sick alike. Yet, despite this, it was never a contradictory personality. Instead, it set an example in every situation it encountered.

As the French writer and historian Alphonse de Lamartine said in his book “The History of Turkey”: "If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad?"

Chapter One

The Character of Prophet Muhammad

(1)

Essential Morals and Inherent Traits

A person might possess many ideal qualities, such as honesty, trustworthiness, and humility, yet still lack other virtues like forbearance and generosity. Another person might embody all these ideal traits but fall short of perfecting them, and these traits may not consistently define them throughout their life. There are also those who seem to perfect these qualities, but their excellence does not stem from inner purity or moral integrity; instead, it is driven by external influences, such as hypocrisy or the desire to achieve goals that can only be attained by displaying these virtues.

The character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was marked by all the ideal qualities, reaching perfection in each due to the purity of his nature, not because of external influences—true patience is different from mere pretense. These attributes were inherent in him (peace be upon him), not circumstantial reactions swayed by events.

To this effect, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was genuinely trustworthy, both before and after his Prophethood (i.e. receiving Revelation). He was entrusted with everything, including wealth. For instance, he was the custodian of the Quraysh's valuables even after he openly declared his message and they rejected him. Despite their hostility, betrayal, and attempts to deceive him, surrounding him on all sides, ready to strike him as one man and deprive humanity of its greatest example of virtue, he remained steadfast.

The Quran vividly portrays this situation, reducing their act from betrayal to mere cunning: “And [remember, O Muhammad], when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you. But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners” (Quran 8 : 30).

In such circumstances, the reaction of the other party is not considered treachery; rather, it is seen as an act of justice—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, with the initial aggressor being the greater wrongdoer.

In such circumstances, it is natural for someone who has been wronged and betrayed to seek just retribution, at the very least, against those who oppressed them. They might even be tempted to humiliate those who wronged and betrayed them.

However, the trustworthiness of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not dictated by situations or driven by emotions. It was an inherent quality. He ensured that the trusts (amanah) in his care were returned to their rightful owners. In fact, I would not be exaggerating to say that he safeguarded these trusts until the owners themselves requested them or until it was time to return them.

For this important task, the Prophet (peace be upon him) chose a member of his own family, Ali ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him), rather than just any Companion. This choice seemed to convey that this matter was deeply personal, as well as religious. The Prophet was trustworthy by nature, not merely by divine command, and he entrusted a member of his household, not just a follower, to fulfill this duty.

These trusts included not only material possessions but also secrets that the Quraysh had confided in the Prophet (peace be upon him). Thus, he appointed someone strong and reliable to ensure their protection.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was the custodian of the Quraysh's secrets, despite their hostility towards him. Yet, their foolish actions never led him to betray those secrets. They entrusted him with their secrets, knowing full well.⁶

Secrets are only kept by those of great honor,

And among noble people, secrets remain concealed.

With you, secrets are in a locked house,

Whose key is lost, and whose door is sealed.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was also a guardian of people's honor, as even his enemies attested. He never engaged in backbiting, nor did he accuse anyone unjustly. He never sought to dishonor those who wronged him. This was confirmed by Abu Sufyan ibn Harb before he embraced Islam when he spoke before Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, and again when he heard of the Prophet's marriage to his daughter, Umm Habiba.

Umm Habiba, the daughter of Abu Sufyan (may Allah be pleased with both of them), migrated with her husband, Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh, to Abyssinia. However, her husband converted to Christianity and died there as a Christian, leaving her alone in a foreign land without a husband or family. Unable to return to her family, from whom she had fled to preserve her faith, she found herself in a distressing situation, caught between two difficult choices: remain in hardship and isolation or return to the torment of her former life.

⁶ These lines of verse excerpted from "The verses on virtues and opposites" by al-Jahiz, section: The Virtues of Keeping Secrets, 27.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) learned of her plight, he proposed marriage to her, offering her a place in his household and rescuing her from this challenging situation—one that only those with true nobility, courage, and chivalry could fully understand. He appointed a representative to contract the marriage on his behalf, allowing her to join him in Madinah once a safe escort was available and when the Muslims there were ready to return to the Hijaz, the land they longed for.

When her father, Abu Sufyan, heard of this marriage—before he had embraced Islam and while still the leader of Quraysh—he made a statement that history has preserved: "What an excellent husband, whose nose cannot be cut."⁷ In other words, "What an honorable man, whose character we cannot criticize! What a protector of honor!" Abu Sufyan recognized that the Prophet's trustworthiness was an inherent part of his noble character, not something acquired through Prophethood or revelation—especially since, at that time, Abu Sufyan still denied the Prophet's claim to Prophethood.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was also known for his unwavering commitment to protecting lives. He never betrayed anyone who sought his refuge, nor did he disappoint those who placed their trust in him. This is exemplified by an incident narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him). During an expedition towards Najd, they were caught in the midday heat in a valley full of thorny trees. The Prophet (peace be upon him) dismounted and the people scattered, seeking shade. He rested under a tree, hanging his sword from it. While they were asleep, the Prophet was suddenly awakened and found a Bedouin standing with him. The Prophet recounted, "This man drew my sword while I was asleep. When I

⁷ This refers to someone who is noble. This is explained in Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Quran, 9/44, and in Al-'Uqd al-Farid, 96.

awoke, he was holding it, unsheathed. He asked me, 'Who will protect you from me?' I replied, 'Allah,' three times. The Prophet did not retaliate but simply sat down."⁸

In this situation, the man sought protection from the Prophet, who honored his request and did not respond with harm. He was steadfast in his trustworthiness, even towards someone who had threatened him.

One might wonder why, despite the Prophet's exemplary trustworthiness in all situations, he is not as widely cited as a symbol of integrity as Al-Samaw'al, who is renowned for his loyalty and fulfillment of promises.

Al-Samaw'al, a Jewish figure, is renowned for his exemplary trustworthiness and fidelity. His story is often cited as an example of integrity. According to the account, a man entrusted Al-Samaw'al with stolen shields for safekeeping. When the shields' rightful owners came to retrieve them, Al-Samaw'al refused, stating that he had a duty to protect these trusts. In response, the owners captured Al-Samaw'al's son and threatened him, saying, "Either you return our shields, or we will kill your son in front of you." Al-Samaw'al chose to have his son killed rather than surrender the shields, and they executed the boy in front of him.

This decision reveals a profound imbalance, both psychologically and in terms of fulfilling duties and obligations. Although Al-Samaw'al maintained his trustworthiness in safeguarding the shields, he neglected other critical responsibilities. By choosing to prioritize the trust of man over the life of his own child, he failed to uphold his duties to both his creator and his creation.

⁸ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (2910) and by Muslim in his Sahih (843) from Jabir ibn Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him.

Such an action cannot be deemed praiseworthy, as overemphasis on one virtue at the expense of others is as detrimental as neglecting it. True excellence, as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), involves achieving perfection in one quality without neglecting others.

Sir William Muir, in his book "The Life of Muhammad", writes: "Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was universally known as 'the Trustworthy' from a young age, due to his noble character and exemplary conduct. Muhammad transcends any simple description. Only those who deeply study his illustrious history will fully understand his prominent position among the prophets and thinkers of the world."

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a shining example of forgiveness, forbearance, and overlooking the faults of others, even those who had wronged him. His magnanimity was rooted in the purity of his heart, not in a desire for sympathy or appeasement. A powerful illustration of this is his conduct towards the people of Mecca on the day of its conquest. He did not wait for them to plead for mercy before granting his forgiveness; instead, he had already resolved to pardon them before even leaving Medina. He instructed his companions not to harm the innocent or those who did not engage in combat.

As they approached Mecca, some companions, recalling the injustices they had suffered, felt a surge of zeal. One of the standard-bearers, Sa'd ibn 'Ubada (may Allah be pleased with him), exclaimed, "Today is the day of slaughter!" The Prophet (peace be upon him) immediately responded, sending someone to take the standard from Sa'd and declaring, "No, today is the day of mercy." He then passed the standard to another.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not seek to humiliate the people of Mecca with his forgiveness. Instead, he honored their dignity, treating them with the respect befitting their status as leaders of the Arabs. He demonstrated this by honoring their leader, saying, “Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan is safe.”

When he asked them, “What do you think I will do to you?” it was not to belittle them but to prompt them to reflect on their actions. It was as if he were saying, “If you know that I am noble and the son of the noble, why did you insult and reject me?”

As the poet aptly puts it:⁹

When I recall the favors you’ve bestowed upon me,
Despite my misdeeds, errors, and sins,
I am almost overcome with regret,
But then I remember that you are inherently generous.

⁹ These lines of verse are from the speech of Amir Sadiid al-Mulk Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Muqlid ibn Munqidh, the grandfather of Usama ibn Murshid, in his plea for mercy. They are found in *Khuridat al-Qasr*, 2/357, *Al-Durr al-Farid* (1349) 2/425, and *Al-Mustatraf* 202.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was always forgiving when it came to his own personal rights. Even when disbelievers struck him and caused his face to bleed, he prayed for them, saying, "O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know."¹⁰ However, when harm was inflicted on others, he would not rest until justice was served. He was committed to upholding the rights of the wronged and defending the oppressed.

Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: "Once, I insulted a man by criticizing his mother. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to me, 'O Abu Dharr! Did you insult him by his mother? You are a man who still has remnants of ignorance in you. Your brothers are your servants whom Allah has placed under your care. So, if you have a brother under your care, feed him from what you eat, clothe him from what you wear, and do not burden them with tasks they cannot bear. If you do burden them, then help them.'"¹¹

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was gentle and kind, always favoring ease, simplicity, and leniency in all matters. He would often recite the verse: "Nor do I pretend to be someone I am not. (Qur'an 38, 86). It was said about him, "Whenever the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was given a choice between two matters, he would choose the easier of the two."¹²

¹⁰ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3290) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1792).

¹¹ Recorded al-Bukhari in his Sahih (30) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1661).

¹² Al-Bukhari narrated in his Sahih (274) and Muslim in his Sahih (2327) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was never given a choice between two matters except that he chose the easier of the two, as long as it was not sinful. But if it was sinful, he was the farthest of people from it. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, never took revenge for himself, except when the sanctity of Allah was violated, in which case he would take revenge for the sake of Allah."

He would lower himself in humility to everyone, never displaying arrogance. He would spread his cloak for guests and say, "Treat people according to their rank."¹³ Despite the reverence he commanded, he would draw people closer, reassuring those intimidated by his presence. To the woman who trembled before him, he said, "Poor woman, be calm,"¹⁴ and to the man who was awestruck in his presence, he gently remarked, "Take it easy; I am not a king. I am only the son of a woman who ate (Qadid) dried meat."¹⁵

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would joke with both the young and the old, but he always spoke the truth. He was known throughout his life as someone who never lied, and no one ever reported otherwise. Even the disbelievers of Quraysh did not accuse him of lying in his message. As our Lord says: "We know that you are saddened by what they say, but they do not deny that you are truthful; rather, the wrongdoers reject the signs of Allah" (Quran 6:33).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was the bravest of people. Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "When the battle would become intense and the fighting would rage, we would seek protection by the Messenger of Allah, and he would be the closest among us to the enemy."¹⁶

¹³ Recorded by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (4842).

¹⁴ Recorded by al-Tabarani (25/446), and al-Haythami said (6/12): "Its narrators are trustworthy." It was also narrated by Ibn Sa'd (1/317).

¹⁵ Recorded by Ibn Majah in his Sunan (3312) from Abu Mas'ud. "Qadid" refers to meat that is salted and dried in the sun.

¹⁶ Recorded by Ibn al-Ja'd in his Musnad (2561), by Ahmad in his Musnad (1042), and by Abu Ya'la in his Musnad (302).

He was also the most generous of people, without any pretense. He would give with the generosity of someone who had no fear of poverty. He would even say to those in need, "I do not have anything to give you, but buy what you need on my account, and when something comes to me, I will pay it off."¹⁷

O you whose generosity God has shaped his hand for,

He excels only in giving and generosity.

Your gifts have reached everyone on earth,

For you and generosity are created from the same essence.¹⁸

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was known for his excellent manners and was loved by everyone. He was compassionate and gentle, often saying, "Gentleness is not found in anything except that it beautifies it, and it is not removed from anything except that it makes it defective."¹⁹ He also said, "Whoever is deprived of gentleness is deprived of all good."²⁰

¹⁷ Al-Tirmidhi narrated in *Ash-Shama'il* (355) and Ibn Abi Dunya in *Makarim al-Akhlaq* (390) from Umar ibn al-Khattab that a man came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, asking for help. The Prophet replied, "I do not have anything, but you may take on credit from me, and I will repay you when I have something." Umar then said, "O Messenger of Allah, you have given him something that Allah has not obligated you to give. Why take on a burden you cannot fulfill?" The Prophet disliked Umar's words. An Ansari then said, "O Messenger of Allah, spend and do not fear any decrease from the Lord of the Throne." The Prophet smiled, and his face lit up with joy from the Ansari's words. He then said, "This is what I have been commanded to do."

¹⁸ These lines of verse are by Abu Wajzah al-Sulami, found in *Al-Mahasin wa al-Adad* 29 and *Al-Mustatraf* 86.

¹⁹ Recorded by al-Bukhari in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* (365/469) and by Muslim in his *Sahih* (2594) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

²⁰ Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his *Musannaf* (25303) and by Abu Dawud in his *Sunan* (4809).

His kindness and forbearance were so profound that he did not stop a Bedouin who urinated in the mosque. As narrated by Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) in a hadith reported by Bukhari: A Bedouin urinated in the mosque, and the people were about to reprimand him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) told them, "Leave him alone and pour a bucket of water over his urine. You were sent to make things easy, not to make them difficult."²¹

In another narration, after finishing his act, the Bedouin sat near the Prophet (peace be upon him) and prayed, "O Allah, have mercy on me and Muhammad, but do not have mercy on anyone else with us!"²² This was because he had not found anyone among them who showed him the same compassion as the Prophet (peace be upon him).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) favored ease in all matters. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said, "Whenever the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was given a choice between two matters, he always took the easier one, as long as it was not sinful."²³

²¹ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (217).

²² Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5664) from Abu Huraira.

²³ Recorded al-Bukhari in his Sahih (274) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2327) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

He would mention the virtues of certain actions but did not impose them on people to avoid making things difficult for them. Consider his statements: "If I did not want to impose difficulty on my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the siwak (toothstick) for every prayer."²⁴ He also said, "If I did not want to impose difficulty on my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the siwak at every ablution."²⁵ And he said, "If I did not want to impose difficulty on my Ummah, I would have commanded them to delay the `isha (night) prayer until one-third of the night or half of it."²⁶

All of this reflects the essence of the noble character of this ideal Prophet, whose influence was recognized by both friends and enemies, and even those who disliked him, often through just a momentary glimpse of his speech. The greatness of his character impacted thousands simply by seeing him and millions merely by hearing about him.

The renowned author Max van Berchem stated in the preface of his book, "The Arabs in Asia": "The truth is that Muhammad is a pride for all of humanity. He came bearing absolute mercy to them. His mission was defined by the verse: 'And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.'" (Qur'an, 21:107).

²⁴ Recorded by al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (22), by Abdul Razzaq in his Musannaf* 5746), by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (1802), and by Ahmad in his Musnad (607).

²⁵ Recorded by Abdul Razzaq in his Musannaf (2106), by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (1787), and by Ahmad in his Musnad (7412).

²⁶ Recorded by al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (167) from Abu Huraira.

(2)

The Prophet's Emotional Resilience

This section is dedicated to analyzing how a person reacts in various situations—those that provoke anxiety, sadness, or joy.

The Prophet encountered these situations, like any human being, but he did not respond to them as ordinary people do. At the same time, he did not handle them in a way that would put his followers in difficulty when trying to emulate him; he was not excessive in qualities like forgiveness, pardon, and humility to the extent that they were misplaced, thereby encouraging those with ill intentions to take advantage of him.

A person is tested by everything around them and by every situation they encounter, as our Lord, Glorified and Exalted, has said: "But His Will is to test you with what He has given each of you" [Quran 5: 48]. He the Almighty tests you in everything He has created around you and will hold you accountable according to the resources and capabilities He has granted you. Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has tested you with your work and will judge you on how well you perform it based on the strength, energy, patience, and endurance He has given you. You are also tested with your parents: how do you treat them? Do you treat them well or poorly? You are tested with your spouse, your friends, your knowledge, your work, your strength in moments of power, your weakness in moments of vulnerability, your joy when you are happy, and your sorrow when you are sad... How will you handle these situations? Will they draw you closer to Allah, or will they distance you from Him? Will they make you more righteous in society, or will they lead you to rebel against it?

If you align with the first scenario, then you are a balanced person. However, if the second scenario resonates, you are a troubled individual, swayed by your desires, which dictate your actions and direction. Others can manipulate you at will, controlling your path in society as a rider controls the reins of their mount.

This issue extends beyond the immediate situation you face; it affects the overall trajectory of your life and the development of your character.

A truly strong person is one who shapes situations rather than being shaped by them. Such a person inspires the sentiment, "If not for their presence, this situation would not have turned out for the better."

A balanced person is one who does not become a burden to others in any circumstance; they do not add to someone's sorrow or deepen the wounds of someone who is already suffering.

When we delve into historical and biographical texts, we find that the Prophet's character was ideal in its responses to various situations. He never escalated a situation or caused harm to anyone through words or actions. For instance, in moments of joy, the Prophet maintained a balance, never allowing himself to be swept away by excessive celebration, which could later result in emotional or psychological distress. He always left room for the uncertainties and sudden changes life might bring. His profound understanding of the world's transient nature contributed to his emotional stability, as reflected in his saying: "If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much."²⁷

²⁷ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (6120) from Abu Huraira.

His joy never diminished his dignity; rather, it was subtly visible on his face to those who observed him closely. Ka'b ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: "When the Messenger of Allah was pleased, his face would shine as if it were a piece of the moon, and we recognized that from him."²⁸

At times, he expressed his happiness through words to uplift others, as he did when he returned from the Battle of Khaybar and encountered his cousin Ja'far ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet said: "I do not know which of the two brings me more joy: the conquest of Khaybar or the arrival of Ja'far."²⁹

Similarly, the Prophet would not express joy in the presence of someone grieving. Instead, he shared in the happiness of others and mourned with those who were sorrowful, as if their trials were his own. In moments of sorrow, the Prophet never complained to anyone but Allah. It is as if the following lines of poetry were written about him:³⁰

O you who inquire about my state,
It has neither worsened nor improved.
As you know, I am a man who endures,
And I do not complain to anyone.

²⁸ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3363) from Ka'b ibn Malik, may Allah be pleased with him.

²⁹ Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (34380) and by al-Hakim in his Mustadrak (4293) from Jabir ibn Abdullah.

³⁰ These lines of verse are attributed to Baha' al-Din Zuhair and are found in his Diwan 69.

This trait is characteristic of the individuals with perfect moral character, and even greater is the ability to conceal one's inner grief. The Prophet embodied this perfectly, always appearing cheerful, with a bright face and a constant smile. As Jarir ibn Abdullah Al-Bajali said: "Since I embraced Islam, the Messenger of Allah never refused to see me, and he never saw me without smiling."³¹

Yet, despite this outward joy, he often carried deep sorrow and was lost in thought, keeping his grief hidden within his heart—except when his eyes revealed it. For nothing speaks more clearly of the heart than the eyes.

Usama ibn Zaid (may Allah be pleased with them) narrated: We were with the Prophet when one of his daughters sent a message calling him, informing him that her son was nearing death. The Prophet instructed the messenger: “Return to her and tell her that Allah takes what He wills and gives what He wills. Everything with Him has a specific term. So, tell her to be patient and seek reward.”

The messenger returned, reporting that she had sworn the Prophet would come to her. The Prophet, accompanied by Saad ibn Ubadah and Muadh ibn Jabal, and I, went to her. The child was brought to the Prophet, and his soul was rattling as if it were in a sack due to the severity of the death throes. The Prophet's eyes filled with tears. Saad, surprised by the Prophet's tears, asked, “What is this, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet replied: “This is mercy that Allah has placed in the hearts of His servants. Allah only shows mercy to those of His servants who are merciful [toward His creation].”³²

³¹ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (2871, 5739) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2475).

³² Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1224) and by Muslim in his Sahih (923) from Usamah ibn Zaid.

The Prophet did not share his grief, with people around him, but he did empathize with their sorrows. He found joy in what made them happy and sadness in what troubled them. He participated in their customs, traditions, and their ways of celebrating and mourning.

For instance, when the mother of the believers, Aisha bint Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with them both) organized a wedding for a couple from the Ansar, the Prophet asked, “O Aisha, was there any entertainment? For the Ansar enjoy entertainment.”³³ This was his way of encouraging her to adapt to the local customs of Medina, blending seamlessly into the community, and embracing their way of life rather than introducing something unfamiliar. This hadith serves as a reminder to those who confine Islam to specific dress codes or cultural practices, urging them to understand the broader and more inclusive nature of the faith.

The Ansar in Medina had a distinctive heritage of poetry and stories that they shared during their festivals. The Prophet did not prohibit these traditions, even during Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. In fact, he would listen to and sometimes engage with their performances. For instance, 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: "The Messenger of Allah entered while two young girls were singing songs of Bu'ath. He lay down on the bed and turned his face away. Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) came in and said, 'The musical instruments of the devil are present with the Prophet!' The Prophet responded, 'Leave them.' When he was distracted, I nudged the girls, and they left."³⁴

³³ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahaih (4867).

³⁴ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahaih (907), and by Muslims in his Sahih (892).

The Prophet would dress in the local attire of the place he was visiting to ensure he did not appear out of place. For example, as narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari by Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet wore a Roman cloak with narrow sleeves when he went to Tabuk to meet the Romans.

This practice was not a deceptive military tactic like Napoleon Bonaparte's during the French campaign in Egypt, nor was it similar to Adolf Hitler's false claims of affection for Egyptians during World War II, which led some misguided followers to even call him "Muhammad Hitler." Rather, it was a genuine effort to reassure the local people that their way of life would remain unchanged and that they would not feel alienated in their own land. This approach proved successful, unlike the destructive impact of colonial rule, such as the French campaign's killings, destruction, and property seizures, or the lingering damage from World War II mines planted by Britain, which had no legitimate connection to our land.

The Prophet engaged with people's joys, sorrows, and customs because it was his natural disposition. Interacting with people inevitably leads to being affected by their emotions, whether it be happiness, sadness, anger, or contentment.

The essence of an ideal character is not merely in experiencing positive states like joy and contentment or avoiding negative ones like sadness and anger. The true measure lies in how one expresses these emotions. The Prophet did experience anger, but how he expressed it was pivotal.

He was calm in his anger, never seeking personal revenge. However, when the limits set by Allah were violated, his anger was profound. He expressed his anger in various ways: sometimes with a glance, at other times with a smile, or by turning away, depending on the situation. It was never easy to provoke him through words or actions. For example, when the Quraysh tribe insulted him, calling him names

like “O despised one,” he responded: “Do you not marvel at how Allah deflects their insults and curses? They curse and insult ‘Mudhammam,’ but I am Muhammad.”³⁵

The Prophet demonstrated responses that avoided provoking issues or stirring emotions. As the poet wisely put it:³⁶

"I have passed by a mean-spirited person who insults me.

I moved on, then said, 'It does not concern me.'

The Prophet was an ideal interpreter of situations and comments. He did not let his anger be triggered merely because the speaker was an adversary. Allah instructed the believers to adopt this ideal quality, as stated in the Quran: "O believers! Stand firm for Allah and bear true testimony. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what you do" (Quran 5:8).

This verse emphasizes that enmity should not lead to injustice or unfairness in disputes and judgments.

This characteristic was evident in the Prophet even before it became associated with his Prophethood. His children inherited this trait from him. For example, it is reported that Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin (may Allah be pleased with him) was once performing Tawaf around the Kaaba when some people incited a man to insult and abuse him, offering him a thousand dirhams if he succeeded in provoking the Imam. The man waited outside the mosque and, upon seeing Imam Ali, began to hurl insults and vile accusations at him.

³⁵ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3533) from Abu Huraira.

³⁶ These lines of poetry are recorded in Al-Kamil by al-Mubarrad 3/61 and in As-Sihah by al-Jawhari 5/1882.

Despite this, Imam Ali Zain al-Abidin remained silent. Once the man had finished, Imam Ali calmly said, "O my brother, everything you said about me, and even worse that Allah has concealed, is known only to Allah." The man was so moved that he declared, "I bear witness that you are the son of the Messenger of Allah."

When asked why he acted in this way, the man admitted he had been influenced by envious individuals. Imam Ali then gave him a thousand dirhams and said, "If you find yourself in need, come to us instead of standing at the doors of the mean-spirited."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry, but his expression of anger varied depending on whether the fault was against him personally or against others. When the fault was against him, he would express his anger by turning away and not responding, as he did with those who insulted and reviled him. However, if the fault was against someone else, he would take a stand to ensure that the wrongdoer would not continue in their mistake or injustice, whether before or after the message of Islam.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry to prevent a mistake from becoming a social phenomenon that could not be controlled. He was particularly angered by any form of discrimination among people, whether it was based on tribalism or other criteria. For instance, when the issue of the Makhzumi woman who stole arose, the Quraysh were troubled by the matter. They asked who would speak to the Prophet (peace be upon him) about it, and they said, "Who would dare to speak to him except Usama ibn Zaid, the beloved of the Prophet (peace be upon him)?" Usama spoke to him, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Do you intercede for a punishment from the limits set by Allah, Usama?"

Then he stood up and addressed the people, saying: “O people! The reason that those before you were destroyed was that they would let the noble ones among them go free when they stole, while they would impose the punishment on the weak. By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand.”³⁷

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry if people were discriminated against based on their color, as was the case with our esteemed companion Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (may Allah be pleased with him). Abu Dharr had a special place in the Prophet's heart, to the extent that the Prophet said about him: “The dust of the earth has not carried, nor the green has shaded, a man more truthful than Abu Dharr.”³⁸ However, he once fell into a prohibited act and, in his anger, referred to our master Bilal ibn Rabah (may Allah be pleased with him) as “the son of a black woman.” The consequence of this anger was that he was met with equal anger, even greater, so that Abu Dharr could not respond even with a word. He learned that such words were neither noble nor humane and that anger should not lead one to say things without realizing their meaning. Upon hearing about this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “O Abu Dharr! Have you disparaged him because of his mother? You are a man with some ignorance of the days of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance).”³⁹

³⁷ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3288) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1688) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

³⁸ Recorded by Ibn Abu Shaybah in his Musannaf* (32265), by Ahmad in his Musnad (6519), and by al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (3801) from Abdullah ibn Amr.

³⁹ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (30) from al-Ma'rur ibn Suwayd.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would also get angry if there was discrimination based on physical characteristics such as height, shortness, strength, or weakness. For example, it was reported by Muawiya ibn Qura (may Allah be pleased with him) that Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) was harvesting dates, and when the wind blew and revealed his shins, the companions laughed at their thinness. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Do you laugh at the thinness of his shins? By the One in Whose hand is my soul, they are heavier in the scale than Mount Uhud.” That is, in terms of value, status, and worth. How many times have they supported him in his prayers and struggles, and how much has he exerted himself to reconcile people!

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry if discrimination was based on race. He said: “O people, indeed your Lord is One, and your father is one. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have superiority over an Arab. A red person has no superiority over a black person, nor does a black person have superiority over a red person, except by piety. Have I conveyed this message?” They said, “Yes, the Messenger of Allah has conveyed it.”⁴⁰

He would also get angry if discrimination was based on gender. He said: “Women are the counterparts of men.”⁴¹

He would get angry even if the discrimination was based on religion, as humanity encompasses everyone. For instance, Sahl ibn Hanif (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up when a Jewish funeral passed by. When told it was a Jewish funeral, he responded: “Isn’t it a soul?”⁴²

⁴⁰ Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (23489) from Abu Nadrah.

⁴¹ Recorded by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (236) and by al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (113) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

⁴² Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1312) and by Muslim in his Sahih (690).

They assumed that religious differences could justify different treatment in human interactions. However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught them that religion should not oppose any aspect of human nature; rather, it comes to affirm and emphasize it.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry if he saw someone making judgments about the inner thoughts of others or if people were judged based on assumptions. This was evident in an incident involving our master Usama ibn Zaid (may Allah be pleased with him). Usama reported:

The Prophet (peace be upon him) sent us to Harraqah from the Juhaynah tribe. We arrived at their watering place in the morning, and I and another man from the Ansar caught up with one of them. When we confronted him, he said, “There is no god but Allah!” The Ansar man refrained from attacking him, but I struck him with my spear and killed him. When we returned to Medina, the Prophet (peace be upon him) heard of this and said: “O Usama, did you kill him after he said, ‘There is no god but Allah’?” I replied, “O Messenger of Allah, he only said it out of fear of being killed.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) repeated his question: “Did you kill him after he said, ‘There is no god but Allah’?” He kept repeating it until I wished I had not embraced Islam before that day.⁴³

In another narration, the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked, “Did you not split open his heart?”⁴⁴ meaning: How could you know if he said it out of fear of the sword? Perhaps he said it with sincere belief, turning to his Lord, abandoning his former worship of the created and his sinful deeds.

⁴³ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (6478) and by Muslim in his Sahih (96).

⁴⁴ Recorded by Muslim in Sahih (96) from Usama ibn Zaid, and this is also found in Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shaybah (28932).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would get angry when rights were violated and laws were breached, even if it was someone infringing on their own rights.

For example, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered the mosque and saw a rope stretched between two pillars. He asked, “What is this rope?” They replied, “It is a rope for Zainab; when she feels tired during her night prayer, she holds onto it so that she can continue praying without stopping.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Remove it. Let one of you pray according to their energy, and when they become tired, let them sit down.”⁴⁵ This demonstrates that even in worship, one should not overburden themselves beyond their capacity.

This compassion from a Prophet and Messenger, who was tasked with commanding obedience, worship, and the increase of acts of devotion, reflects his humanity and his concern for the well-being of all people.

Indeed, the great author Max von Berchem noted in his book "The Arabs in Asia" (as previously mentioned): “The truth is that Muhammad is a pride for all of humanity, and he came to bring absolute mercy to it. The theme of his mission was: ‘And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds’” (Qur'an 21:107).

⁴⁵ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1099) and by Muslim in his Sahih (784).

Anger may sometimes be driven by a desire to display power and dominance, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) had this power yet chose to forgive. Anger may also be driven by a desire for revenge and taking pleasure in the misfortunes of others, which is characteristic of a person who sees those around them as inferior. How much more so for the Prophet, who was seen by those around him as superior?

People can be categorized into four types when it comes to anger:

1. A person who is quick to anger and slow to calm down, and this is the worst type.
2. A person who is quick to anger and quick to calm down, which is better than the first type.
3. A person who is slow to anger and slow to calm down, which is better than both previous types.
4. A person who is slow to anger and quick to calm down, which is the best of all.

The best among all these is a person who maintains balance, quick to anger when necessary to prevent a greater harm and slow to anger in situations where anger would only escalate the situation.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would assess each situation appropriately. It is described that when he was angry, nothing could deter his anger. This can only be the case for someone who gets angry for the sake of truth, because those who get angry for falsehood are not respected, especially by honorable people such as the Arabs in general and the Quraysh in particular.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was highly self-controlled and managed his emotions well, as demonstrated by his saying: “The strong person is not the one who can out-wrestle others; rather, the strong person is the one who controls themselves when angry.”⁴⁶

This emotional stability bewildered his enemies, who were unsure how to shake him so that he would become a person influenced by others, even by their opinions. One day, Zaid ibn Sahanah—one of the Jewish scholars—came to claim a debt he was owed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). He pulled at the Prophet’s garment from his right shoulder and said, ‘O Banu Abd al-Muttalib, you are people who delay payments, and I know you well,’ implying that they were slow in repaying debts. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) rebuked him, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ‘O Umar! I and he were more in need of something other than this from you: that you command me to settle the debt well and command him to ask for it in a good manner. Go, Umar, and pay him his due. However, he still has three days left for the debt to be due, so add thirty sa’s (units of measure) to it for the disturbance you caused him.’⁴⁷

This emotional stability is also evidenced by the fact that his enemies never managed to exploit a single lapse in his behavior, either in his dealings with them or with others.

⁴⁶ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5763) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2609).

⁴⁷ Recorded by al-Hakim in his Mustadrak (2264).

(3)

Contemplation and Reflection

Every balanced individual must set aside time for self-reflection. The constant barrage of situations can lead to mistakes in handling them, which may disrupt relationships with others, resulting in fatigue and boredom.

A person who regularly takes time to be alone, reviews their actions, and identifies their weaknesses in order to address them, is someone who is successful in life. Such a person neither grows weary of others nor causes others to grow weary of them.

Solitude nurtures the soul, which is why all religions—whether man-made or divinely revealed—have encouraged it. Wise individuals throughout history have also advocated for it, sometimes introducing it through practices like yoga to encourage self-improvement. When individuals improve, society as a whole benefits.

The personality of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was one of remarkable beauty, deeply drawn to all things beautiful. When he could not find beauty on earth, his thoughts would ascend to the heavens; if it was absent in reality, it was etched within him, for he embodied the very essence of beauty in the universe. This is why he often sought refuge in places of tranquility and beauty, secluding himself for an entire month each year to allow his mind to wander through the realms of the seen and unseen. He was constantly reflecting on the mysteries beyond the physical world, or more precisely, on the Creator of all that exists. It seemed that the tangible world could not fully satisfy his intellectual curiosity or fill his heart with awe. The vast universe, which has long puzzled humanity with its mysteries, found no spacious place in the heart and mind of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Consider the profound hadith reported by Al-Bayhaqi from Aisha, the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), in which she narrates that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) entered her home and found a colored curtain hanging on the door. He said, “Take it down, for it has reminded me of the worldly life.”

His thoughts were absorbed in contemplation of his Lord and His greatness, so much so that he rarely concerned himself with worldly matters, focusing instead on the duties of his divine mission and the rights of people that Allah, the Most Glorious, had entrusted to him.

It is as though the material world occupied no significant space in the Prophet’s thoughts; rather, it served as a slender thread pointing to the greatness beyond—a greatness too vast for the limited minds of people to fully grasp.

"In everything there is a sign
that points to the fact that He is the One."⁴⁸

Many minds have attempted to explore the unseen world, only to be baffled by its mysteries. Failing to decipher its symbols, they retreated in confusion, denying both the present and the unseen, dismissing it all as mere fantasy with no basis in reality.

It is unsurprising that the mind of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) would knock on these doors—indeed, open them—and venture into these realms, exploring them with ease. After all, he entered these realms with his body, so how could his mind not traverse them?

⁴⁸ The lines of verses are attributed to Abu al-Atahiyah, Ismail ibn Qasim.

What is truly remarkable, however, is the harmony between his earthly body and his heavenly mind. His body did not confine his intellect, nor did his intellect sever his connection to the physical world. He lived on earth while his thoughts dwelled in the heavens.

Does this not reflect the depth of the Prophet's thinking and the balance of his actions, which left his enemies perplexed as they tried to understand his character? At times, they accused him of sorcery, at other times, of madness, or of being a soothsayer, or even a poet. They did this because they saw in him an extraordinary person with impeccable qualities and responses—an ideal character by all human standards. Yet, they were ignorant of the true source of his perfection, leaving them confused. They vacillated between attributing it to magic, which deceives the eyes but is ultimately an illusion; to soothsaying, which predicts the future and prepares for it without awaiting the shock of unexpected events; to poetry, which elevates the lowly and humbles the mighty; and to madness, which places the afflicted in the realm of "the unintended," even if they exhibit perfection in their moments of clarity.

Despite these accusations, the emotional stability of this ideal character overcame them, leading many to join the ranks of his followers.

When they interacted with him closely, they found no pretense in his character, no outward facade hiding inner contradictions. Instead, they were confronted by a personality that held up a mirror to their own selves, compelling them to reckon with their own minds.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not immediately provide answers to their questions upon asking. Rather, he allowed their minds to search for the answers, even if they repeated the same question multiple times.

Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) would become upset when he observed a lack of understanding in those who were capable of grasping deeper insights. Imam Al-Hafiz Ahmad ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani (may Allah have mercy on him) elaborates on this in his commentary on a hadith narrated by Aisha, the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her). She recounted that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) would only assign tasks that people could handle. However, they would say, "We are not like you, O Messenger of Allah, for Allah has forgiven your past and future sins." This would anger him until it was visible on his face, and he would respond, "Indeed, I am the most God-fearing and the most knowledgeable of you about Allah."⁴⁹

The Prophet's anger stemmed from their failure to understand the difference between closeness to Allah and the mere abundance of deeds, despite their sharp intellect and keen observation.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) constantly engaged his companions with thought-provoking questions, refining their minds and challenging their understanding. The depth and frequency of these questions were so profound that they could fill an entire book, if not more.

It is crucial to recognize that the Prophet's deep thinking, sharp observation, and frequent contemplation were not merely responses to the events and situations he faced. Instead, his reflective nature was rooted in his pure soul, a desire to retreat from life's distractions, and a focus on meaningful pursuits. His contemplation arose from a genuine love of knowledge and a passion for solving the mysteries of the universe. He was never content to let a moment pass without gaining new insights or solving a problem. This is evident from his reflection on the concluding verses of

⁴⁹ Recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih from 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her).

Surah Al-Imran, where he remarked, "Woe to those who recite them without reflecting on their meaning."

Even the Canadian Orientalist Dr. Samuel Zwemer (1867–1952), known for his critical stance towards Islam, acknowledged in his book "The East and Its Customs": "Muhammad was undoubtedly one of the greatest religious leaders among Muslims. It is also true that he was an effective reformer, an eloquent orator, a courageous warrior, and a profound thinker. It would be unjust to attribute to him anything that contradicts these qualities. His Quran and his history affirm the truth of this statement." Even the testimony of critics can sometimes validate the truth.

(4)

The Prophet's Wit and Quick Thinking

Quick thinking is a clear indicator of a person's ability to excel in goodness or, if misapplied, to be cunning in wrongdoing. When one inclines toward goodness and channels their intellect in that direction, it is the strongest evidence of a sound soul, free from the maladies of the heart and mind.

This type of quick thinking reflects a form of intelligence that may be difficult to fully control, making a person's sharpness evident through their speech, movements, and actions.

I chose to follow the chapter on "Contemplation and Reflection" with a chapter on "Quick Thinking" to counter any misconception that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) lacked the ability to respond promptly to urgent situations, requiring extended time for planning and deliberation. My intent is to demonstrate that the Prophet (peace be upon him) possessed exceptional abilities and high-level skills, yet he always exercised precise judgment in responding to each situation. As the poet wisely said:

Patience may help one achieve some of his needs,

While haste might lead to mistakes.

Some matters may be missed with patience,

While haste could have brought success.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would act swiftly in situations that required immediate action, while postponing those that allowed for and required deliberation.

A person with quick wit is often someone who is honest with both themselves and others, which allows them to navigate situations and challenges with ease. This is clearly demonstrated by the Prophet's swift and compelling responses to questions posed to him on the spot—responses that not only answer but also convincingly and sometimes astonishingly satisfy the questioner.

Consider this brief dialogue, a calm and objective discussion between a Prophet whose words are divinely inspired and one of his followers on a matter of everyday life. The conversation is grounded in objectivity and transcends social distinctions.

In this instance, the Prophet (peace be upon him) presents a religious teaching with implications for both faith and medicine, while his companion, relying on observation and experience, questions the medical aspect of it.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "There is no contagion and no superstition."⁵⁰ This means that illness does not spread from one person to another except by the will of God; if God does not will it, the disease will not spread, even if a healthy person and an ill person were to share the same bed. Thus, the notion of contagion is merely a manifestation of God's will.

The Companion reflects on this teaching, understanding that while the concept itself is open to doubt, it must be true because it comes from a Prophet, whose words are a revelation from God. Although the Prophet's authority might have discouraged further questioning, his humanity invited discussion. The Companion asks, "O Messenger of God, why do we see a camel with mange enter among healthy camels, and soon they all become mangy? We observe a sick camel entering among healthy

⁵⁰ Recorded by l-Bukhari in his Sahih (5717) from Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him.

ones, and within days they are all afflicted with mange. So why should not we believe in contagion?"

The Prophet (peace be upon him) responds with a thought-provoking question: "Who caused the first camel to contract mange?" In other words, who afflicted the first camel that then spread the disease to the others? Was it contagion, or was it the decree of God? If it was contagion, then who afflicted the first camel? Through this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) guides his companion to understand that the first camel was afflicted by mange not through contagion but solely by the will and power of God.

The Prophet's message is clear: all matters unfold according to divine decree, and the true cause lies in the will of the Almighty, not in outward appearances.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) often provided responses to his Companions' questions that have since become timeless wisdom, passed down through generations and remembered by those who listen with understanding.

One of his Companions once asked him for advice, saying, "O Messenger of God, give me counsel." The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "Do not get angry," and he repeated this advice several times.⁵¹

This concise yet profound counsel is a perfect example of the Prophet's ability to convey deep meaning in few words. If people truly adhered to this advice, we would avoid many of the conflicts and problems that we frequently encounter and experience in our daily lives.

⁵¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (6116) from Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him.

True intelligence and quick thinking also involve the ability to find an alternative solution at the very moment when the conventional one fails, and to achieve your objective through multiple legitimate means.

The following story provides clear evidence, saving you the need for further search and inquiry.

The story begins when the Quraysh army arrived at the region of Badr, where the Muslim army was already encamped. It was customary for armies, before reaching the battlefield, to send out spies to gather intelligence about the terrain, the enemy's position, and any other useful information. These spies were required to be intelligent, skilled in handling situations, and adept at concealing both their identity and the presence of their army if captured by the enemy.

Two spies from Quraysh reached the Muslim camp but were unlucky enough to be captured due to the vigilance of the Islamic army. They were brought before the Prophet (peace be upon him), and a brief conversation ensued. The Prophet asked them, "How many are they?" They responded, "We don't know," which indicated their loyalty to their people and their strong belief in their cause. It was clear that torturing them for information would not yield any new insights, so the Prophet resorted to another smart way instead.

The Prophet then asked them, "How many camels do they slaughter each day?" The spies answered, "Nine one day, and ten the next." From this, the Prophet deduced that their army consisted of approximately 900 to 1,000 men. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) successfully obtained the information he needed indirectly after the direct approach failed, relying on his intelligence rather than force or coercion.

More impressively, the Prophet demonstrated the art of escaping tricky situations without resorting to lies or deceit. In the same battle, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) went out to gather intelligence about the Quraysh army themselves. They encountered an old man, bent by age, with eyebrows drooping over his eyes—a man of great experience, beyond that of many humans or jinn.

They asked him about Quraysh, whether he had seen them or heard any news of their approach. The man shared what he knew and then, in turn, asked them, "Who are you?" This posed a dilemma: either they would have to reveal their true identity, or they would have to lie—both difficult choices, especially since the Prophet (peace be upon him) could never tell a lie.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "We are from water," referring to the human being's origin from the reproductive fluids of a man and a woman. The old man interpreted this as meaning they were from a tribe named "Water," leaving him puzzled about which tribe it could be.

This story raises the question: Is it possible for someone to possess such a powerful weapon as quick wit, extreme intelligence, and precise planning, and yet never use it to harm others or even think of doing so? This question brings us to the concept of the "safety lock" for this weapon—an essential trait that ensures its proper use: "inner and outer peace."

Inner and Outer Peace

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was at peace all alone; he was never in conflict with himself or others. He was neither so absorbed in his own self that he neglected others, nor so occupied with others that he overlooked his own self-improvement.

He possessed a soul that was serene and at peace, as if he had made a pact of tranquility with it. This inner stability and calmness naturally manifested in his interactions with others and in his responses to various situations—a quality we previously discussed under the trait of "emotional stability."

In this chapter, our aim is to examine the Prophet's nature, particularly in terms of his peacefulness versus hostility, through an objective analysis of his actions and reactions in different circumstances.

As a Muslim, I hold the Prophet's character in the highest esteem and will meet Allah with that conviction. I can only describe him as possessing perfection in all the praiseworthy qualities. However, in this delicate chapter, I will recount events and situations with complete objectivity, refraining from imposing my opinion on the esteemed reader, and leaving the judgment entirely in your hands.

A hostile personality is one that does not merely defend itself but seeks to humiliate, exact revenge, and inflict suffering on its opponent. Such a person is not satisfied unless others are subjugated before them, and they refuse to allow anyone to rise from this subjugation. Even when unable to achieve this, a scent of arrogance still emanates from them, and sparks of hostility shoot from their eyes like poisoned arrows.

In contrast, a peaceful personality is one from whom others are safe—safe from harmful thoughts and schemes. It is a personality that uplifts others, even when it is broken itself, and gives to others, even at its own expense. A peaceful personality strives to maintain harmony in society, even at the cost of its own well-being.

Dear reader, you can discern the peaceful nature of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by observing how he ignored those who insulted and reviled him, choosing not to respond. This was not out of weakness or inability—how could it be, when he was the son of the noblest of the Quraysh and one of their most respected? Rather, it was because he preferred peace over regret, as if the words of Imam al-Shafi'i were spoken:⁵²

The fool addresses me with all manner of disgrace,

But I refuse to answer him back.

He increases in foolishness, and I increase in patience,

Like incense that only grows more fragrant when burned.

The following sections present to the readers a story that reveals the true nature of the Prophet's character and the depth of his peacefulness.

The story begins at the conclusion of the Battle of Badr, where the Muslim army achieved a decisive victory over the Quraysh leaders. Seventy Quraysh men were killed, and another seventy were taken captive. The Muslims then faced a dilemma: What should be done with the prisoners? Should they be ransomed and released? But how could they show mercy to those who had recently expelled them from their lands, homes, and wealth, and committed countless wrongs against them? Or should they follow the common practice of that era and distribute the prisoners among the

⁵² The lines of verse are recorded in the Diwan of Imam Al-Shafi'i, page 11.

Muslims as slaves and servants? But how could a man enslave his own brother, father, or uncle? Or should the prisoners be executed, as they had come with the intent to kill the Muslims?

Before any decision was made, the captives were not treated harshly, although they were bound with ropes to prevent their escape. Even this moved the Prophet's heart, leading him to loosen the bonds of some.

When it was time to decide the fate of the captives, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) convened his council of advisors. They were divided into two groups: one led by Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) and the other by Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him).

Umar's group advocated for executing all the captives as just retribution for the killing of the weak and innocent in Mecca, and as a deterrent to anyone considering hostility against the Muslims. Their stance was, "A life for a life, an eye for an eye, and the one who initiates aggression is the greater wrongdoer."

In contrast, Abu Bakr's group recommended accepting ransom and releasing the captives, regardless of whether they embraced Islam. They reasoned that these captives were, in many cases, the fathers, sons, uncles, and relatives of the Muslims. Their guiding principle was:

My homeland, though it may wrong me, is dear;

My people, though they withhold from me, are noble.

The other group believe:

Sow kindness, even if it seems out of place;

For no good deed is ever wasted, no matter where it is sown

Even if much time passes, only the sower will reap what they have planted.⁵³

The Prophet (peace be upon him) leaned toward the view of Abu Bakr's group and accepted their advice. He chose to accept the ransom for the captives and set them free, a decision that aligned with his initial inclination. The Prophet's peaceful and compassionate nature disdained war and always preferred peace. After all, is he not the one who said, "Do not wish to meet the enemy in battle; rather, ask Allah for safety"?⁵⁴ And is he not the one who said, "A true Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe"?⁵⁵

His mercy extended not only to people but to all of creation. He forbade cutting down trees, destroying crops and livestock, and even burning ants with fire.

When it comes to outward peace, it shines as clearly as the sun. The Prophet (peace be upon him) never initiated hostility or started a war with any tribe. His greeting was always, "Peace be upon you," and he frequently urged, "Spread peace among yourselves."⁵⁶ In letters to kings and rulers, he began with, "Peace be upon you." He never engaged in battle without first seeking peace, and he always extended peace to the people of any town he entered. He also established peace treaties with the

⁵³ The lines of verses are mentioned in "Al-Durr Al-Farid wa Bayt Al-Qasid," volume 3, page 343 (2722).

⁵⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (7237) and Muslim in his Sahih (1742).

⁵⁵ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (6484) and Muslim in his Sahih (41).

⁵⁶ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in "Al-Adab Al-Mufrad" (980), (989), and by Muslim in his Sahih (54).

Jewish tribes of Banu Qurayza, Banu al-Nadir, Banu Qaynuqa, and with the people of Mecca during the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah.

This commitment to peace was not something new after his prophethood; it was an inherent part of his character. In his youth, he participated in the "Hilf al-Fudul" (Alliance of the Virtuous) after the "Harb al-Fijar" (Battle of Fijar), in which the Quraysh were involved. This alliance was a peace pact among the tribes, agreeing to support the oppressed and restrain the oppressors. Reflecting on this alliance, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "If I were called to something similar in Islam, I would respond."

He valued such an agreement more than the finest red camels, a symbol of wealth at the time.

A person with such wisdom, intelligence, emotional control, and a profound commitment to peace surely deserves to be a role model for anyone striving for excellence.

The English writer Edward Lane, in his book "Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians", wrote: "Muhammad possessed many admirable qualities, such as kindness, courage, and noble character. It is impossible to judge him without being deeply moved by the impact of these traits. How could it be otherwise, when Muhammad endured the hostility of his own people and tribe with immense patience and fortitude? Despite this, his nobility was such that he never withdrew his hand from anyone who shook it, even if it was a child. He never passed by a group without greeting them with peace, always wearing a sweet smile. Muhammad was passionate and zealous, never shying away from truth and always combating falsehood. He was truly a messenger from heaven, determined to fulfill his mission in the best possible way. He never lost sight of the purpose for which he was sent, tirelessly working

towards it and enduring all kinds of hardships until he successfully accomplished his mission.”

(6)

Refuting Doubts about the Prophet's Character

It was said long ago:⁵⁷

High honor is not free from harm,

Until blood is shed on its sides.

No great person is exempt from criticism. However, in this context, we do not intend to stick to the literal meaning of the above lines of verse. Rather, we will uphold the truth, not out of favoritism for those I love, but for the sake of justice.

An intelligent, perceptive, and quick-witted person may find that others often struggle to understand his actions and the wisdom behind them. This is not due to a genuine deficiency in their understanding, but rather because the person's insights and foresight exceed their own.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has been acknowledged by both friends and foes for his intelligence, insight, honesty, trustworthiness, justice, compassion, and patience. However, some researchers studying his life have encountered instances that they believe contradict these virtues. Some have resolved this issue by denying these events, despite their authenticity, out of a protective zeal for this exemplary character. Such individuals may be excused if they possess the necessary research tools and are sincere in their intentions, and they may be rewarded by Allah.

⁵⁷ The lines of verse authored by Al-Mutanabi.

Others have used these situations to criticize, presenting them in various contexts—sometimes out of context and sometimes in full—but often accompanied by commentary that misleads readers.

I intend to address these issues impartially, free from partisanship, bias, or personal attacks, as Allah alone knows the true intentions. Through my analysis, I have found that misunderstandings often arise from examining these situations in isolation from their historical, geographical, and personal contexts, and from interpreting actions solely as reactions.

This excerpt from the context might be intentional—though I do not believe any Muslim would act in such a way—or it might simply reflect a limited understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) life.

Therefore, I will provide some examples and explain them in a scholarly manner, so that the reader can understand any actions of the Prophet Muhammad that might seem inconsistent with his lifelong noble traits and virtues.

One such misunderstood situation is his stance on the Quraysh caravan returning from Sham, which led to the Battle of Badr.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) had heard that a large Quraysh trade caravan was returning from Sham and would pass near Medina without any protection. So, he set out with a group of 314 men from among the emigrants and the helpers with the aim of intercepting this caravan and bringing it back to Medina.

Some might view this as an act of aggression, intimidation of the innocent, theft from the absent, and outright highway robbery. This perspective, however, is superficial and fails to consider the underlying causes and motivations.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers had left Mecca under duress, fleeing persecution to avoid being coerced away from their faith through torture, death, and other forms of oppression. They had left behind their homes, land, livestock, trade, and all that they could not carry with them.

The historical accounts tell us that entire families had to leave everything they owned in Mecca and were forcibly displaced. They left their homes to become guests in foreign lands and abandoned their businesses to work as laborers for others. All their wealth and possessions were seized by the people of Mecca, while their original owners suffered hardship under the hospitality of their new hosts.

This was not the first time the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions attempted to reclaim some of these plundered resources. The Prophet had sent his companions multiple times to recover their rights and belongings whenever a Quraysh caravan passed by.

Interestingly, in all these missions, only the emigrants went out; not a single helper (Ansar) was sent along. This was because the emigrants were the only ones with a legitimate claim to the wealth, and the Ansar did not join these expeditions unless the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself was with them, out of fear that he might face conflict with the Quraysh or others, which indeed happened.

The Prophet resorted to this approach because peaceful solutions had proven ineffective with the Quraysh. The emigrants could not recover any of their wealth from Mecca even through negotiations.

The reader may recall this situation involving the noble Companion Suhayb ibn Sinan al-Rumi, who, when he tried to leave Mecca with his wealth and trade, was pursued and prevented from departing. He asked them, “If I leave my wealth and trade with you, will you let me go?” They agreed, so he left his possessions with

them and migrated to Medina. When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) learned of this, he said to him, “A profitable trade, Abu Yahya.”⁵⁸

But how could someone like Suhayb live as a guest with others when he had enough to support himself and his entire family? How could he see his children going to bed hungry while others enjoyed the fruits of his hard-earned wealth?

Know that tolerating the continuation of such injustice signifies weakness and inferiority, which Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions—who embody the highest ideals of honor, bravery, and integrity—did not accept. They set out to reclaim their property or, at the very least, to send a message to the Quraysh demonstrating their courage and determination to restore their honor and claim their rights by any means necessary.

This situation can be summarized by saying: “This stance was a necessary reaction to an action that reason and social norms cannot accept.” It was a defense of their rights, not an act of injustice.

Another situation that some readers of the Prophet’s biography have questioned is his treatment of ‘Uyayna ibn Hisn al-Fazari. According to Ummul Mu’minin ‘Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), a man requested permission to enter Prophet Muhammad’s (peace be upon him) presence. The Prophet said, “Let him in. How wretched is the son of his tribe, or how wretched is the man of his tribe.” The term “tribe” here refers to his clan, indicating his displeasure with him. Yet, when the man entered, the Prophet spoke to him gently.

⁵⁸ The complete hadith was narrated by Al-Tabarani in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir" (7308) and by Abu Nu'aym in "Hilyat Al-Awliya" 1/151-152.

‘Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) asked, “O Messenger of Allah, you said what you said about him, and then spoke to him softly?” The Prophet replied, “O Aisha, the worst people in the sight of Allah on the Day of Judgment are those whom others avoid out of fear of their vile behavior.”⁵⁹

Some people misunderstand this as hypocrisy or backbiting, believing that the Prophet spoke ill of him behind his back while presenting a façade of kindness in his presence. The misinterpretation arises from an incomplete understanding of the context and the parties involved.

‘Uyayna ibn Hisn was a prominent leader of his tribe, which followed his commands and avoided what he prohibited. Any confrontation with him could have led to severe consequences for the community. Moreover, failing to warn others about his negative traits could lead to the misconception that he was an acceptable companion of the Prophet, potentially resulting in future conflicts.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was a guide, a leader of a nation, and the founder of a state. To not advise his community would be deceitful, which is inconceivable for him. Did not our master Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman know the names of the hypocrites in Medina so that he could inform the caliph after him if they caused trouble?

Judge Iyad al-Yahsubi al-Maliki states: "This man, ‘Uyayna ibn Hisn, had not embraced Islam at that time, although he had outwardly professed it. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) intended to clarify his true nature so that people would recognize him and not be deceived by his apparent piety. In fact, ‘Uyayna’s actions during the Prophet’s lifetime and afterward indicated his weak faith. He apostatized along with the apostates and was later brought as a prisoner to Abu Bakr

⁵⁹ Recorded by Muslims in his Sahih (2591).

(may Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) described him as ‘wretched,’ reflecting the signs of prophethood because he showed what was described. The Prophet spoke kindly to him to win him and others like him to Islam." (Al-Nawawi's commentary on Muslim's Sahih)

The Prophet's words about him before his entrance were a form of advice and to prevent those present from mistakenly thinking that this person was close to the Prophet or might be given an important role in the affairs of the Muslims. It was common for the Prophet to maintain the leadership of tribal leaders in their tribes even after embracing Islam, and he did not remove their authority or leadership. This practice was continued by Abu Bakr and then by Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) during their early rule, with the principle that only those truly deserving of leadership would be appointed, regardless of their background.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) wanted to make it clear that ‘Uyayna was not suitable for any form of empowerment, not even in people's hearts. An interesting point is that the narrators of the hadith mentioned the name of this man explicitly in many narrations of this event, unlike their usual practice of omitting names to avoid exposing individuals. This indicates that they understood the Prophet's intention to warn and alert people about ‘Uyayna so that they would not be deceived by his proximity to the Prophet or his apparent favor.

As for ‘Uyayna ibn Hisn, his proximity to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) or his distance from him was not of significant concern to him. He embraced Islam out of desire and ambition. Thus, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) extended kindness to him, hoping to strengthen his faith and retain him and his followers in Islam. The Prophet gave him one hundred camels from the spoils of the Battle of Hunayn to win his heart and make him fond of Islam. This generous gift was unmatched by what was given to anyone else from the spoils, causing some of the

Ansar to feel discomfort and jealousy. They did not understand that the Prophet's intention was not just to favor 'Uyayna but to reach out to his followers.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also softened his speech and showed a cheerful face to 'Uyayna because he was a harsh Bedouin, and dealing with him gently was necessary to avoid provoking him, especially given his apostasy and the potential for conflict. The companions would not have allowed him to be disrespectful or cause any Muslim to abandon their faith.

Indeed, this gentle treatment was to prevent potential discord, and it was not mere rhetoric. A similar situation almost occurred during the caliphate of Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him). 'Uyayna ibn Hisn spoke disrespectfully in front of Umar's courtiers, which could have undermined the authority of the caliphate. Umar nearly reacted violently to preserve the respect for the caliphate, but one of his courtiers—who was also 'Uyayna's nephew—intervened and reminded him of Allah's command in the Quran: “Show forbearance, and enjoin what is good; and turn away from the ignorant.” (Quran 7: 199). This reminder calmed Umar's anger, as he was known for his adherence to the Quran.

From this, we learn that the Prophet (peace be upon him) spoke about 'Uyayna ibn Hisn as a form of advice to the people and to clear himself of any injustice in the distribution of spoils. He softened his speech to win his heart and preserve peace among the Muslims and to prevent discord that could affect even a newly established state.

Among the hadiths misunderstood by some as being discriminatory or favoring his tribe is the saying, “Give precedence to Quraysh and do not precede them.”⁶⁰ Despite the Prophet's early struggles with Quraysh and their hostility, he maintained that they should be given precedence in certain matters. If these individuals knew the reason behind this, they would have supported the Prophet wholeheartedly.

This precedence was not exclusive to Quraysh but applied to anyone who was honored in pre-Islamic times. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) would maintain the leadership of anyone who was a leader before Islam, as long as they were knowledgeable.⁶¹ Quraysh had a respected position in pre-Islamic Arabia due to their service to the Kaaba and their esteemed status among the Arabs. Islam did not come to overturn social structures but to correct and refine them. Thus, the Prophet maintained the existing status to prevent Islam from being misused for personal vendettas or to humiliate past leaders.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) restored rights to those who deserved them and kept them in their positions, reflecting Islam's principle of elevating and respecting individuals while maintaining justice. Islam enhances one's status in society and restores rights, never degrading or undermining past achievements.

The Prophet's actions were in line with his principles of fairness and were not favoritism based on tribal affiliation.

⁶⁰ Recorded by Al-Shafi'i in his Musnad (278), Ahmad in Fada'il Al-Sahaba (1066), Ibn Abi Asim in Al-Sunnah (1519), Al-Bazzar in Al-Bahr Al-Zakhar (465), and Al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab Al-Iman (1490) and Ma'rifat Al-Sunan wal-Athar (217).

⁶¹ Recorded by Al-Shafi'i in his Musnad (278), Ahmad in Fada'il Al-Sahaba (1066), Ibn Abi Asim in Al-Sunnah (1519), Al-Bazzar in Al-Bahr Al-Zakhar (465), and Al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab Al-Iman (1490) and Ma'rifat Al-Sunan wal-Athar (217).

Let us consider a final example of a hadith that might lead some readers to misunderstand the Prophet's intentions. Abu Dawood narrated from Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) that during the conquest of Mecca, Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Sarh sought refuge with Uthman ibn Affan (may Allah be pleased with him). Uthman brought him to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), saying, "O Messenger of Allah, accept Abdullah's pledge of allegiance." The Prophet looked at him three times, each time refusing, before finally accepting his pledge. Then he turned to his companions and said, "Was there not a wise man among you who would have gone to this person while I was refraining from accepting his pledge and kill him?" They replied, "We did not know, O Messenger of Allah, what was in your mind. Why did you not signal to us with your eyes?" He responded, "It is not appropriate for a prophet to have deceitful eyes."⁶²

Those who only read this text might have misgivings and doubts about the Prophet, who was well-mannered and rightly guided by Allah. It is important for readers of the Sunnah to understand texts in their full context, considering the time, place, and circumstances surrounding them.

In this text, we see the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) seemingly condemning to death someone who came to him in peace and pledged allegiance, wishing that one of his companions had killed him before he could make the pledge, thus sparing his life and ensuring his safety!

⁶² Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his *Musannaf* (38068), Abu Dawud in his *Sunan* (2683), Al-Nasa'i in his *Sunan* (4067), and Al-Hakim in his *Al-Mustadrak* (4360).

This requires reflection because it contradicts what the companions had come to expect from the Prophet's treatment of those who came to him in peace and sought to join the Muslim community. Clearly, there must be a deeper reason, and understanding the context can reveal it.

The key lies in the actions of Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Sarh himself. He committed a grave sin that could not be forgiven by mere repentance and return to Islam. By forgiveness here, I mean worldly forgiveness where the matter is forgotten as if it never happened.

Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Sarh had previously pledged allegiance and joined the Muslim community. The Prophet (peace be upon him) had honored him by making him a scribe for the revelation. However, he later apostatized and reverted to disbelief. Despite the gravity of this betrayal, it was not the primary reason for the Prophet's wish for his punishment.

Abdullah used his position as a scribe to aid the polytheists, leaking state secrets and betraying the Muslim community. He claimed that the Prophet was authoring the Quran himself and that he had assisted the Prophet in composing it, even altering words as dictated by the Prophet, claiming that the Prophet endorsed these changes. Furthermore, he spread slander about the Prophet and his companions in every gathering he attended.

How many potential converts to Islam were deterred by Abdullah's words? And what if he converted again? There would be no guarantee that he wouldn't betray the Muslims again, as he had done before. His reversion to Islam the second time was likely motivated by a desire to escape punishment, knowing that Islam erases past sins.

Such crimes and treason made him deserving of the death penalty, which is a just punishment recognized throughout history for those who betray their state and ally with its enemies, a concept akin to "high treason" in modern international law, which typically prescribes execution.

Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Sarh stood before the Prophet (peace be upon him) seeking protection while his life was at risk. The Prophet hesitated to grant him amnesty, possibly hoping one of the companions would execute the sentence. However, the Prophet knew this would not happen, as his companions would not act without his explicit command. The Prophet aimed to establish a legal principle for his state, consistent with laws practiced by neighboring states: "High treason is only punishable by death."

The amnesty granted to Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Sarh was a prophetic act of mercy, not royal clemency. He came seeking both safety and to rejoin the Muslim community. The door to repentance remains open until the sun rises from the west, so the Prophet accepted him back, but after establishing a rule to prevent Abdullah from repeating his previous betrayal for the rest of his life.

In these four examples, there is enough to understand the root of the issue and the reason behind some misunderstandings of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The summary of the issues with these hadiths and others is: "A misinterpretation by a limited intellect."

The French scholar, Sadiou Louis, says: "Muhammad was not only the prophet of the Arabs but of the world if people were just. He did not bring a religion exclusive to the Arabs. His teachings, worthy of respect and admiration, demonstrate that he was great in his qualities, great in his morals, and we are in dire need of men for the world like Muhammad, the Prophet of the Muslims."

Chapter Two

Social Relationships

(1)

The Foundation of Social Relations

Considering anyone who is loved by others and successful in their relationships, one finds them to be generous, giving without expecting anything in return. This generosity is not about money or material things, but about giving what people often withhold: loving those who dislike you, staying connected with those who cut you off, and giving to those who deny you.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized this principle in various situations, expressing it in different beautiful and gentle ways: He emphasized it when he said: "Renounce what is in the hands of others, and people will love you."⁶³

In another narration, he (peace be upon him) said, "Exchange gifts, and you will love one another, and enmity will disappear."⁶⁴ And "The true maintainer of family ties is not the one who merely reciprocates, but the one who upholds the ties even when they are severed."⁶⁵

⁶³ Recorded by Ibn Majah in his Sunan (4102), Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (5972), and Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak (7873) from Sahl ibn Sa'd Al-Sa'idi, who said: A man came to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, guide me to a deed that if I do it, Allah will love me and the people will love me." The Messenger of Allah replied, "Renounce the world, and Allah will love you; renounce what people possess, and the people will love you."

⁶⁴ Recorded by Imam Malik in Al-Muwatta' as reported by Abu Mus'ab Al-Zuhri (1896), from Ata ibn Abdullah Al-Khurasani.

⁶⁵ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5645) and in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (68), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (1697), and Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (1908).

This means that the person who visits their relatives even when they don't reciprocate earns a greater reward than the one who only visits those who visit them.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) reinforced this principle in various instances. For example, when a man approached him asking for help, the Prophet gave him a large flock of sheep. The man returned to his people and said, "Muhammad gives like someone who does not fear poverty." Another said, "I have come to you from the best of people."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also demonstrated this when another person came asking for assistance, but the Prophet had nothing to give at that moment. He gently apologized and then said, "Go to the market and purchase what you need, and I will cover the cost when I have the means."⁶⁶

When Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) heard this, he said, "O Messenger of Allah, Allah has not burdened you beyond what you can bear!" The Prophet remained silent until his displeasure showed on his face. Then Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "O Messenger of Allah, spend and do not fear poverty from the Lord of the Throne." The Prophet's face brightened, and he said, "This is what I have been commanded to do." He would often say to his companions, "Whatever good I have, I will not withhold it from you."⁶⁷

As long as a person is generous, they will earn the love and affection of others.

⁶⁶ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi in Al-Shama'il (355) and Ibn Abi Al-Dunya in Makarim Al-Akhlaq (390) from Umar ibn Al-Khattab. The hadith has been previously cited and referenced.

⁶⁷ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1400) and Muslim in his Sahih (1053) from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him: Some people from the Ansar asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he gave them. Then they asked him again, and he gave them until he had nothing left. He then said, "Whatever good I have, I will not withhold from you. Whoever seeks chastity, Allah will grant him chastity. Whoever seeks self-sufficiency, Allah will make him self-sufficient. And whoever seeks patience, Allah will grant him patience. No one has been given a gift better and more comprehensive than patience."

A man once entered Basra and asked, "Who is the leader of this city?" The people replied, "Al-Hasan ibn Abi al-Hasan al-Basri." He then asked, "How did he become your leader?" They answered, "By being independent of people while they are in need of him."

The character of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was inherently generous, both materially and spiritually, in every aspect of his life, whether private or public. This generosity led to remarkable success in all his social relationships, even with enemies who sought every possible way to harm him.

He loved people without expecting their love in return, gave without expecting anything back, and wished good for them even if he had no share in it. This is how he nurtured his companions and family.

It is narrated that a man once insulted Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), and Abdullah responded, "You insult me while I possess three qualities—qualities that should protect me from harm and slander!" He continued, "I hear of rain falling in a Muslim land, and I rejoice for them, even though I have no crops or livestock there. I hear of a just judge in a Muslim country, and I am pleased, even though I may never need his judgment. And when I read a verse from the Book of Allah and understand its meaning, I wish that all Muslims could understand it as I do."

Now, let us draw closer to our Prophet (peace be upon him) and observe how he interacted with those around him.

(2)

The Relationship with Children and Grandchildren

In this section, we highlight the natural love that Allah Almighty has instilled in the hearts of parents for their children. I do not claim that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had a greater love for his children than others have for theirs. However, I can describe his relationship with his children as one of "balance without excess or distraction," a harmonious blend of love and proper upbringing, where neither aspect overshadows the other or distracts from it.

This balance extends to all parties involved, ensuring that no one side dominates another, even when societal norms might support such dominance, like favoring a son over a daughter.

Despite the Prophet's children dying in infancy, his equality in treatment and affection is evident in his interactions with his daughters. Many with weak hearts, if not blessed with a son, may mistreat their daughters. However, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) honored his daughters profoundly. As narrated by the Mother of the Believers, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), she said: "I have never seen anyone who resembled the Prophet (peace be upon him) in speech and demeanor more than Fatima. When she entered upon him, he would stand to greet her, welcome her, kiss her, and seat her in his place."⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (971), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (5217), Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (3872), and Al-Hakim in his Al-Mustadrak (4732) from Aisha, the Mother of the Believers.

He would often say: "Fatima is a part of me; whoever angers her angers me."⁶⁹ If he sensed any criticism regarding this love and respect, he would respond: "Only a noble person honors women."⁷⁰

The Prophet was displeased with any hint of favoritism. Once, a companion of the Prophet sat with him, and when his son entered, he placed him on his lap. When his daughter entered, however, he seated her on the floor in front of him. Even though this companion treated his daughter gently and spoke to her as kindly as he did to his son, the Prophet (peace be upon him) looked at him disapprovingly and asked: "Why not on the other thigh?"—meaning, why not place her on the other side beside her brother? The companion then moved his daughter to his other thigh. The Prophet (peace be upon him) remarked: "Now you have achieved balance."⁷¹

Situations like these may have led the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to say: "Be equitable among your children in gifts; if I were to favor anyone, I would have favored women over men."⁷²

⁶⁹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3510), (3556), and Muslim in his Sahih (2449) from Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah.

⁷⁰ Ibn Asakir reported in his book "Al-Arba'in fī Manāqib Ummahat al-Mu'minin" (109) from Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The best of you is the one who is best to his family, and I am the best of you to my family. No one honors women except a noble person, and no one dishonors them except a base person."

⁷¹ Recorded by Ibn Abi Al-Dunya in "Al-Nafaqah 'ala Al-'Ayāl" - Chapter on Fairness Among Children and Equitability Between Them (36) from Al-Hasan.

⁷² Recorded by Sa'id ibn Mansur in his Sunan (393) from Yahya ibn Abi Kathir, Al-Harith in "Baghyat Al-Bahith" (454), and Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (11997) from Ibn Abbas.

Equality in treatment and gifts is required not only between sons and daughters but also among sons themselves. It is inappropriate to favor one child over another. This issue is particularly evident among those who have married more than one wife, where there can be a tendency to favor children from one wife over those from another.

A relevant incident occurred during the Prophet's time when the esteemed companion Bashir ibn Saad came to him seeking his witness for a gift he wanted to give to his son al-Nu'man, which was a garden. The Prophet asked a question that reflects true dignity, honor, and integrity: "O Bashir, have you given a similar gift to all your children?"

Bashir replied: "No, O Messenger of Allah."

The Prophet responded: "Then do not have me witness it, for I do not witness injustice."⁷³

Here, the emphasis is not solely on equality but on justice. Equality does not always equate to justice in every situation. One child might have a legitimate right to more of their father's wealth due to their specific contributions or care.

Justice among children is not limited to financial matters and possessions; it extends to everything, including looks and kisses. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) demonstrated this when he would kiss his grandsons, Hasan and Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them). When Al-Aqra' ibn Habis saw him doing this, he was astonished and said, "Do you kiss your children? By Allah, I have ten children and

⁷³ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (1623), Al-Bazzar in Al-Bahr Al-Zakhar (3283), and Al-Nasa'i in his Sunan (3681).

have never kissed any of them!" The Prophet responded, "What can I do for you if Allah has removed mercy from your heart?"⁷⁴

The relationship between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his children was one of love and compassion, as reflected in his words: "Fatima is a part of me; what troubles her troubles me."⁷⁵ This relationship did not distract him from his faith or cause him to deviate from his beliefs. He even stated, "By Allah, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand"⁷⁶—though this was never the case, and may Allah's peace and blessings be upon both her and her father.

This relationship also did not hinder him from his mission or stand between him and his duty to propagate his faith and deliver his message. His family described how he would joke with them and assist with household chores, but when it was time for prayer, he would act as if he did not know anyone in his household.⁷⁷

The Prophet (peace be upon him) maintained a delicate balance in his relationships with others, ensuring that no relationship conflicted with another and that no one was favored at the expense of another. This quality is rare in individuals.

⁷⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5997) and Muslim in his Sahih (2318) from Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: The Messenger of Allah kissed Hasan ibn Ali while Al-Aqra' ibn Habis Al-Tamimi was sitting nearby. Al-Aqra' said, "I have ten children and I have never kissed any of them." The Messenger of Allah looked at him and then said, "Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy."

⁷⁵ Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad (16123) with the wording: "Fatimah is a part of me. What harms her harms me, and what troubles her troubles me." It is also reported by Al-Tirmidhi (3869), Ibn Abi Asim in Al-Ahad wal-Mathani (2957), and Al-Tabarani in Al-Kabir (277). In the narrations of Ibn Abi Asim and Al-Tabarani, it includes: "and what angers me is what angers her."

⁷⁶ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3288) and Muslim in his Sahih (1688).

⁷⁷ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (644) from Al-Aswad, who said: I asked Aisha, "What did the Prophet do in his house?" She replied: "He would be engaged in the service of his family, meaning serving his family, and when the time for prayer came, he would go out to pray."

This is not just rhetoric but a truth demonstrated through real-life situations. For example, the Mother of the Believers, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), once said to Fatima, the Prophet's daughter: "Your father married your mother as a widow—she had been married before him—and he married me as a virgin."

Fatima did not respond but went to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and shared the conversation. The Prophet smiled and said: "O Fatima, tell her that my mother married my father as a virgin, and you married him as a widow." This way, the Prophet addressed the situation tactfully, providing Fatima with a balanced reply that upheld respect and avoided creating conflict.

Another notable example of the Prophet's fairness involved his daughter Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her) when her husband was captured in the Battle of Badr. Among the items she sent for his ransom was a golden necklace inherited from her mother, Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her). Upon recognizing the necklace, the Prophet felt a deep emotional conflict, understanding its significance to Zainab.

Although the Prophet could have kept the necklace for himself from the spoils or released the captive without ransom, he chose to uphold the principles of trust and justice. He faced the dilemma between his fatherly affection for Zainab and his broader responsibility to all Muslims. He looked at his companions with compassion and said: "If you think it best to return the necklace to her and release her captive, then do so."⁷⁸ He left the decision to them, and they promptly complied, returning the necklace and freeing her husband, al-As ibn al-Rabi.

⁷⁸ Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (26362), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (2692), and Al-Hakim in his Al-Mustadrak (4306).

Having addressed the Prophet's relationship with his children, it is also important to mention his interactions with young children in general, as it complements the discussion.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) demonstrated his love for children through acts of mercy and compassion, as seen in the stories of his son Ibrahim and the recent account of his grandchild's passing. He would shorten his prayers if he heard a child crying, saying: "I stand in prayer intending to make it long, but when I hear a child crying, I shorten it, as I dislike causing distress to his mother."⁷⁹

He also engaged playfully with children. For example, when a young boy's pet bird died, the Prophet asked, "O Abu 'Umayr, what happened to the little bird?"⁸⁰ His grandsons, Hasan and Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them), would ride on his back while he was in prostration, and he would not rise until they had dismounted.

During early childhood, it is crucial to bond with the child, build their affection, and be closer to them than anything else. This strong foundation enables effective teaching in the next phase—education. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified gentle guidance during this stage, as shown when he advised his stepson, Umar ibn Abi Salama, on proper table manners: "O young boy, say 'Bismillah' (In the name of Allah), eat with your right hand, and eat from what is directly in front of you."⁸¹ He allowed the child to learn through affection rather than reprimand, as narrated by Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him): "I served the Prophet (peace be upon him) for ten years, and he never once said 'Uff' to me.

⁷⁹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (675) and Muslim in his Sahih (470).

⁸⁰ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5778), Ibn Al-Ja'd in his Musnad (1409), Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (4087), and Ahmad in his Musnad (12137).

⁸¹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5061) and Muslim in his Sahih (2022).

He never asked about something I did not do with 'Why didn't you do it?' nor about something I did with 'Why did you do that?'"⁸²

The Prophet's approach was not to scold for shortcomings but to let the child learn from his example, as Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) recounts: "I spent the night at my aunt Maimuna's house. The Prophet (peace be upon him) got up to pray during the night, and I joined him in prayer. I initially stood on his left side, but he gently moved me to his right."⁸³

This nurturing method produced exceptional individuals like Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, the brave Zaid ibn Haritha, the valiant Abdullah ibn Zubair, the experienced Usama ibn Zaid, and the distinguished scholar Abdullah ibn Abbas—heroes raised by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from a young age. May Allah be pleased with them all.

⁸² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (277) and Abdul Razzaq in his *Musannaf* (17946).

⁸³ Recorded by Abu Dawood Al-Tayalisi in his *Musnad* (2754).

(3)

The Marital Relationship with Wives

The Prophet (peace be upon him) held his wives in the highest regard, understanding their feelings of satisfaction and displeasure. He treated them not merely as a prophet would his followers but as an ideal husband, embodying a model of excellence that many women admired. This is exemplified by Khadijah's (may Allah be pleased with her) proposal to marry him when he was just twenty-five.

To appreciate the contrast, one needs to look at historical attitudes toward wives of that era. Typically, a wife was viewed as merely a household item, with no role or influence outside the home. She was often seen as having no authority in guiding the family or making decisions.

A telling example is the reaction of Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) when his wife questioned one of his decisions. He asked her, "Do you question me?" She responded, "Why not? Hafsa, your daughter, questions the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the point where he spends the day upset."⁸⁴ Umar was taken aback by her boldness, as such behavior was unusual at the time.

This progressive approach, led by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), represented a significant shift at a time when neighboring societies debated whether women were closer to being human or animal. Today, we desperately need a similar transformation in how we treat one another, led by those who are sincere, in hopes that it will inspire a return to our core values and ethics.

⁸⁴ The full report is narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (4629).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was mindful of never causing his wives lasting harm or pain. For example, he avoided hitting them. As Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said, “The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) never struck anything with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant.”⁸⁵

He also avoided actions that might humiliate or demean his wives, such as forcing them out of their home. Instead, if he was upset, he would leave the house and spend time in the mosque. On one occasion, when he was displeased with his wives, he stayed away from them for a month in the mosque without visiting any of them.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was sensitive to their feelings, including their jealousy, and he managed these emotions with patience. For instance, when Aisha learned that another wife had sent a dish of sweets to the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his visit to her house, Aisha, overcome by jealousy, broke the dish. The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw this but did not react with anger. Instead, he responded calmly with a smile, collected the food himself, and said, “Your mother has shown jealousy,”⁸⁶ acknowledging her feelings without escalating the situation. This approach reflects the Prophet's understanding that certain reactions are part of human nature and should be met with compassion and patience. He did not reprimand anyone for natural feelings but prayed for their alleviation. For example, when proposing to Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) after her husband Abu Salama's death, she expressed concerns about her age, children, and jealousy. The Prophet (peace be upon him) reassured her, saying, “As for age, I am older than you; as for your children, I will care for them; and as for jealousy, I will pray to Allah to remove it from you.”⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Recorded by Muslims in his Sahih, (79).

⁸⁶ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (4927) from Anas, may Allah be pleased with him.

⁸⁷ Recorded by Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (497), (499).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) frequently consulted his wives and valued their opinions on various matters, including issues related to people, war, and state affairs. A notable example is his consultation with Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) during the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions were prevented from performing Umrah and had to return to Medina, the companions hesitated to follow his command to shave their heads and exit their state of Ihram. Umm Salama suggested that he shave his head in front of them to encourage them to follow suit. The Prophet (peace be upon him) took her advice, and his actions led to the companions complying with his instructions.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) showed great respect and affection towards his wives, treating them with kindness and understanding. He did not hold them accountable for shortcomings in household duties, even those related to his food and drink. For instance, he would ask, “Do you have anything?” in the morning, and if they did not, he would say, “Then I am fasting.”⁸⁸

He also respected his wives' feelings and maintained their dignity. When traveling and arriving in Medina at night, he would stay at the outskirts to avoid seeing them in a state they might not wish him to see. This consideration allowed them to prepare themselves before meeting him.

Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was the first to designate a day to honor women. Responding to a request from a woman who asked for a day dedicated to them, he agreed and allocated a day—reportedly Thursday⁸⁹—for meeting with and honoring women.

⁸⁸ Recorded by Muslim in his Sahih, (1154).

⁸⁹ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih from Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) would let a young girl hold onto his garment and lead him through the streets of Medina until she fulfilled her need.⁹⁰ He spoke positively about girls, saying, “Do not disdain girls, for they are the comforting and cherished ones,”⁹¹ and he advised kindness towards women, saying, “Be good to women.”⁹²

While this book does not focus on Islam’s honoring of women, it is important to highlight the Prophet’s view of them. The respect he had for women was even greater than what he outwardly displayed, as the society of his time, with its known attitudes towards women, might not have been ready for more. The Prophet even refrained from rebuilding the Kaaba to avoid causing unrest among the newly converted Muslims.

Nevertheless, he summed up his regard for women with a statement that reflects his deep respect: “Only a noble person honors women.”⁹³

⁹⁰ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5724) from Anas ibn Malik, who said: A maid from the maidservants of the people of Madinah used to take the hand of the Messenger of Allah and walk with him wherever she wished.

⁹¹ Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (17373), Ibn Abi Dunya in "Al-Nafaqah 'ala Al-'Ayāl" (97), and Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (856) from Uqbah ibn Amir.

⁹² Recorded by Muslim in his Sahih (1468) from Abu Hurairah.

⁹³ Ibn Asakir reported in his book "Al-Arba'in fi Manaqib Ummahat al-Mu'minin" (109) from Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The best of you is the one who is best to his family, and I am the best of you to my family. No one honors women except a noble person, and no one dishonors them except a base person."

The Relationship with Relatives

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) maintained his relationships with others based not only on how they treated him, but also by extending kindness even to those who had wronged him. He would generously give to those who denied him, forgive those who had wronged him, and keep connections with those who had severed ties with him. He said: “The true maintainer of ties is not the one who merely reciprocates; rather, the true maintainer is one who, when his ties are severed, keeps them intact.”⁹⁴

The Prophet was deeply affected by the suffering of his uncle, Al-Abbas, while he was imprisoned, to the extent that he could not sleep on the day of Badr. When his companions asked him why he was not sleeping, he replied: “I heard the groans of my uncle Al-Abbas in his chains,” so he had him released, after which he was able to sleep.⁹⁵

Furthermore, when Hassan ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) mocked the polytheists for their harm to the Prophet, the Prophet instructed him to bring Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) along. This was because Abu Bakr was knowledgeable about Arab lineages, ensuring that Hassan would not mock any of the Prophet’s relatives.

It is not unusual for someone to love their relatives and maintain ties with them, or even to sever them. What is truly remarkable is when someone betrays him, yet he supports them; when they drive him out of his home, he makes their land a sanctuary

⁹⁴ Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5645) and in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (68), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (1697), and Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (1908).

⁹⁵ Recorded by Al-Bayhaqi in his "Sunan Al-Kubra" (18145) from Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both of them.

where no harm is allowed; when they belittle him, he honors them and says: “Honor the Quraysh and do not precede them.” When they deny his chosenness, he affirms it by saying: “Indeed, Allah chose Kinana from the descendants of Isma'il, chose Quraysh from Kinana, chose Banu Hashim from Quraysh, and chose me from Banu Hashim. I am the choicest of the choicest of the choicest.”⁹⁶

And when they persisted in plotting to kill him, he remained steadfast in preserving their lives, as demonstrated by the famous day when he said: “Go, for you are all free!”

The Prophet did not only honor those who were close relatives but also those who were distant, whether in relation or in place. He addressed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas—with great respect, saying to his companions: “This is my maternal uncle; let no one belittle his status,”⁹⁷ as he was from the Banu Zuhra, the tribe of the Prophet's mother, Amina.

He extended his respect further by advising his companions regarding Egyptians, as his great-grandmother, Hagar, the mother of Isma'il (peace be upon him), was Egyptian. He said: “You will soon conquer a land where the qirat (a unit of currency) is mentioned. Be kind to its people, for they have a covenant and a kinship.”⁹⁸

The Prophet also honored the tribe of Sa'd, the people of Halima al-Sa'diyah (may Allah be pleased with her) who nursed him.

One of the ways the Prophet (peace be upon him) honored his relatives and kin was by shouldering their burdens and helping them through life's difficulties. He took on the responsibility of raising his cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with

⁹⁶ Recorded by Muslims in his Sahih, (2276).

⁹⁷ Recorded by Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (3752) and by Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (323).

⁹⁸ Recorded by Muslim in his Sahih, (2543) from Abu Dharr.

him) to lighten the load on his uncle Abu Talib, who had many dependents. The Prophet took Ali into his own home, providing for him as he did his own children, sharing his food and drink. This was a gesture of respect for Ali and honor for his father.

The Prophet was also careful not to bring sorrow to their hearts or be the cause of their grief. This was evident during the Battle of Uhud when the polytheists mutilated the body of his uncle Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib (may Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet said: "If it were not for the fact that my aunt would have been distressed, I would have left him to be resurrected from the bellies of birds and wild beasts." He was deeply saddened by the loss of his uncle and expressed his grief, saying: "O my uncle, I have never been afflicted like this."

In this context, Abdullah ibn Rawaha (may Allah be pleased with him) lamented:⁹⁹

My eyes wept, and it is rightful for them to weep,

Tears and lamentation cannot bring back the lion of God,

The day they said: 'Is Hamza the man who has been slain?'

All the Muslims were affected by his loss,

There, the Prophet was afflicted by his loss,

O Abu Ya'la, your pillars have been shaken,

And you were the noble, righteous, and supportive.

⁹⁹ The lines of verses were cited by Ibn Hisham in Al-Sirah, volume 2, page 162, under the chapter "What Was Said in Poetry on the Day of Uhud."

Such gentleness and kindness in dealing with family and relatives required them to hold deep affection for him, even from afar, and to eventually make peace with him. People are bound by acts of kindness, which captivate them and make them follow and be subservient to those who have done them good.

This tenderness in dealings and this benevolence transformed these relatives from a state of disobedience to a state of being honored as “a noble brother of a noble lineage.”¹⁰⁰

You do not need to master the art of interpersonal skills or human management to live peacefully and harmoniously with others. What you truly need is to find a role model for how to interact and a higher example for living. You will have truly succeeded if you choose the unparalleled and esteemed figure named “Muhammad” (peace be upon him and his family).

Dr. Schberk, an Austrian scholar, states: “Humanity takes pride in being associated with a man like Muhammad. Despite his illiteracy, he was able to present a legislation that we Europeans would be extremely fortunate to attain the height of.”

¹⁰⁰ The complete report was narrated by Al-Azraqi in Akhbar Makkah (2/121), Ibn Zanjuyah in Al-Amwal (456), and Al-Bayhaqi in Al-Sunan Al-Kubra (18323).

(5)

The Relationship with Friends

A true friend is one who stands by you with their heart, words, and entire being, someone who willingly endures personal sacrifice to benefit you. They are the ones who support you through life's challenges, helping to bring you together when you feel scattered.¹⁰¹

A genuine friend is someone who brings joy into your life, celebrates your happiness, and guides you toward good while never leading you astray. Despite the heavy burdens and many responsibilities, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified the ideal friend.

He would host his friends at his home, engaging in meaningful conversation, listening and sharing laughter with them. He regularly visited them and checked on their well-being each morning after the Fajr prayer, even inquiring about their dreams, asking, "Did anyone among you see a dream today?"

The relationship among them was like that of a single soul, perfectly united in belief and conviction. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) even felt what they felt. For example, when he told them about the wolf that spoke, they exclaimed, "Glory be to God! A wolf that speaks!!" He responded, "Indeed, I, along with Abu Bakr and Umar, believe in this."¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ The attribution of the two verses has been disputed, and the narration of the first verse varies. The verses are mentioned in "Al-Tamthil wa Al-Muhadara" (463), "Rabi' Al-Abrar" (196), volume 5, page 195, and "Al-Mustatraf" (70, 131).

¹⁰² The entire report was recorded by al-Bukhari in his Sahih, (3471).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was deeply concerned about the illnesses and complaints of his companions. He was particularly distressed when Abu Bakr fell ill after entering the city and suffering from a severe fever. The Prophet prayed, “O Allah, make us love Medina as much as we love Mecca, or even more.”¹⁰³

He missed his companions when they were absent and showed them affection even if they had wronged him, or more accurately, wronged themselves.

One poignant example of this is from Ka'b ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him), one of the three who stayed behind during the Battle of Tabuk without a valid excuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed the Muslims not to speak or associate with them until God decreed their matter. Despite this, Ka'b would go to the mosque for prayers and return without speaking to anyone or being spoken to. What mattered most to him was catching a glimpse of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and receiving his gaze. Ka'b described, “Whenever I entered the prayer, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would look at me, and I would wonder if he was looking at me. If I looked at him, he would turn his face away, but when I turned back to my prayer, he would look at me.”

The Prophet (peace be upon him) gazed at Ka'b ibn Malik with a sense of longing, as though he missed him and his conversation. Unable to engage with him directly, he contented himself with simply observing him.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) loved his companions profoundly. He would personally feed them, placing bites of food into their mouths with his own blessed hands. When sharing a drink, he would serve them first, as he did with Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him), offering him milk before drinking it

¹⁰³ Recorded by Imam Malik in *Al-Muwatta'* as transmitted by Abu Mus'ab Al-Zuhri (1858), Al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* (3711), and Muslim in his *Sahih* (1376).

himself. When walking with them, he would walk behind them to keep an eye on them, as illustrated by the description, “He would guide his companions with his hand.”¹⁰⁴ When he sat with them, he did not distinguish himself from them, to the point that a passerby might ask, “Which one of you is Muhammad ibn Abdullah?”

In battle, he positioned himself closest to the enemy to shield his companions. Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) remarked, “When the battle became intense, we sought refuge behind the Messenger of Allah, who would be nearest to the enemy.”¹⁰⁵

When his companions faced difficulties, he prayed for them and offered himself in their service. For instance, during the Battle of Uhud, he told Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas, “Shoot, Sa’d! May my father and mother be sacrificed for you.”¹⁰⁶

He would assist them in the best possible way without expecting anything in return. A notable example is when he bought a camel from Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) when Jabir needed money, and later gifted the camel back to him.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar narrated in "Al-Akhbar Al-Muwaffaqiyyat" (211) from Al-Hasan ibn Ali, who said: "I asked my uncle Hind ibn Abi Hala Al-Tamimi, who was skilled in description, about the physical appearance of the Prophet, as I desired him to describe something about it for me to hold on to...". He then enumerated some of the Prophet's attributes: "He would let his companions go ahead of him and would greet first those he met." This is also mentioned in Al-Tirmidhi's "Al-Shama'il Al-Muhammadiyah" (8), Al-Ajurri's "Al-Shari'ah" (1022), and Abu Nu'aym Al-Isfahani's "Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah" (565). The phrase "He would let his companions go ahead of him" means that when he walked with his companions, he would let them walk ahead while he followed behind them.

¹⁰⁵ Narrated by Ibn Al-Ja'd in his Musnad (2561), Ahmad in his Musnad (1042), and Abu Ya'la in his Musnad (302).

¹⁰⁶ Narrated by Abu Dawud (104), Ahmad in "Fadail Al-Sahaba" (1314) and in his Musnad (1017), Ibn Majah in his Sunan (129), and Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (3755) from Ali, may Allah honor his face.

When he found an outsider among his companions, he would bring them closer. For example, when Salman al-Farsi (may Allah be pleased with him) felt out of place among those boasting of their lineage, the Prophet (peace be upon him) honored him by declaring, “Salman is one of us, the people of the house.”¹⁰⁷

Due to this treatment and love, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was cherished more than anything else by his companions. They reciprocated his love and respect, valuing his companionship over wealth and family, just as he valued them. When he asked, “Are you not pleased that people go away with sheep and camels while you return with the Messenger of Allah in your midst?”¹⁰⁸ they responded, “We are content with the Messenger of Allah as our share.”

Dear reader, remember that you cannot harvest sweetness from a bitter gourd. When you offer goodness, you will find it returned. Treat people well, and they will treat you well in turn. Choose your companions wisely, for a person is influenced by their friends. Therefore, be mindful of who you befriend and associate with.

¹⁰⁷ The hadith was narrated by Ibn Sa'd in *Al-Tabaqat* (4/82, 7/318), Al-Tabarani in *Al-Kabir* (6/260), Al-Hakim (3/598), and Al-Bayhaqi in *Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah* (3/418), from the hadith of Amr ibn Awf, with a raised chain of narration.

¹⁰⁸ The complete hadith was narrated by Al-Bukhari in his *Sahih* (4075, 4078) and by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (16470).

Dealing with the Opposing Views

Absolute pacifism towards those who disagree with you can be a significant flaw in the art of communication, leading to people disregarding your opinions and challenging you more often. Instead, the ideal approach is to maintain peace with those who show a reasoned approach to their dissent, who advocate for a particular issue with some merit, even if only in certain aspects, and who do not oppose merely for the sake of opposing or seeking attention.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) exemplified how to handle differing opinions. He would listen to the speaker until they had finished their argument, even if they were discussing principles that were unchangeable. A clear example of this is his interaction with `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah, who was sent by his people to persuade the Prophet (peace be upon him) to abandon his mission. `Utbah approached the Prophet (peace be upon him) while he was sitting near the Kaaba and said, “O my nephew! My people have sent me to offer you something.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, “Speak, Abu al-Walid.”

`Utbah then presented the Quraysh's tempting offers of wealth, power, and status in exchange for abandoning Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) listened silently, without interrupting, despite the offers contradicting the core of his mission. Once `Utbah finished, the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked, “Are you done, Abu al-Walid?” When `Utbah affirmed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Then listen to me.” He then recited the opening verses of Surah Fussilat. When he reached the verse [41:13], `Utbah placed his hand over the Prophet’s mouth, begging him to stop

out of fear of divine retribution. The Prophet (peace be upon him) complied and stopped reciting.¹⁰⁹

The disagreement in opinion was not a frightening or dangerous matter that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would avoid. Such avoidance is not the act of one who is confident in himself, his opinions, and his decisions. Rather, he enjoyed discussions and would frequently pose questions to his companions to debate with them. If he was convinced by their opinion, he would adopt it; otherwise, he would proceed with his own decision. If he found their insistence on a particular opinion, he would revert to it to avoid hurting their feelings. Let us consider three examples:

The first example is the advice of Al-Hubbab ibn al-Mundhir regarding the positioning for waiting for the polytheists' army at the Battle of Badr. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) arrived with the Muslim army at the well of Badr, he camped behind it and awaited the arrival of the Quraysh army. Al-Hubbab ibn al-Mundhir asked, "O Messenger of Allah! Is this a place that Allah has decreed for us to be stationed, so we must accept and obey? Or is it a matter of strategy and warfare?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "It is a matter of strategy and warfare." Al-Hubbab then said, "O Messenger of Allah! This is not the right place!" He suggested that the Prophet (peace be upon him) camp in front of the well or close to it to prevent the polytheists from accessing and taking control of it during the battle. The Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted his advice without any objection.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ The complete report was narrated by Abu Nu'aym in "Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah" (185).

¹¹⁰ The complete report is mentioned by Al-Bayhaqi in "Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah" (3/35), Al-Waqidi in "Al-Maghazi" (1/53), Ibn Hisham in "Al-Sirah" (1/620), and Al-Tabari in "Tareekh Al-Rusul wa Al-Muluk" (2/440).

The key point is not merely that the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted Al-Hubbab's opinion, but that Al-Hubbab felt comfortable to advise and discuss such critical matters. This indicates the Prophet's patience, open-mindedness, and his willingness to consider different opinions despite everyone acknowledging his extraordinary intelligence.

The second example is the incident at Hudaibiyyah, where an agreement was reached between Muslims and polytheists. Some companions saw certain terms as unfair to the Muslims. However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted these terms due to his foresight, which proved correct on the Day of the Conquest of Makkah. Nevertheless, these terms shocked some companions, including Umar ibn al-Khattab, who questioned the Prophet (peace be upon him) about them. Umar asked, "O Messenger of Allah! Are we not on the truth?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) affirmed, "Yes." Umar continued, "Are they not on falsehood?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) affirmed again, "Yes." Umar then asked, "So why should we accept humiliation in our religion and not fight them?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not reprimand Umar because he understood that Umar was defending a cause worth defending, not driven by personal bias or self-assertion. This demonstrates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted discussion to ensure that his companions were satisfied and had no unresolved concerns.

The third example involves a discussion between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and a group of enthusiastic youth who were critical of experience and perceived it as weakness. My intent is not to refer to the esteemed companions who debated with the Prophet (peace be upon him) on this matter but to highlight a type of youth present in every time and place who are quick to challenge established wisdom.

This discussion took place just before the Battle of Uhud when the Prophet (peace be upon him) learned of the Quraysh's intention to attack Madinah with their forces to avenge their losses from the Battle of Badr.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) gathered as many of his companions as possible to consult them about the military strategy. The discussion revolved around one key question: Should they wait for the Quraysh in the city until they arrived? If the Quraysh entered, the men would fight them on the ground while the women and children would throw stones from the rooftops, or should they go out to meet them outside the city?

The first option was the Prophet's (peace be upon him) view, a primarily peaceful approach. The Prophet thought that perhaps the Quraysh might be deterred from entering the city by the prospect of facing a large number of inhabitants and the possibility of their own people being unwilling to enter the homes, leading them to turn back. From a military perspective, it would force the Jews and hypocrites to engage in combat; those who would not fight for their faith might fight to protect themselves and their families from disgrace and shame.

However, the enthusiastic youth did not agree with this opinion. They believed that going out to meet the Quraysh was the best option to prevent anyone from thinking they were afraid of battle and to demonstrate their courage. The Prophet (peace be upon him) tried to convince them that remaining peaceful until the end was better and more sustainable. Nonetheless, he saw their insistence on their opinion and the influence of their emotions rather than their reasoning. The Prophet (peace be upon him) agreed to their viewpoint, donned his armor, prepared for battle, and then went out to face the enemy. When these devoted young men saw his reluctance, they realized their mistake and felt they had forced the Prophet (peace be upon him) into

a position he did not prefer. They went to him to express their change of heart and return to his view.

However, this change of mind was not due to intellectual conviction but rather sincere emotion and love. The Prophet (peace be upon him) rejected their return to his original opinion to teach them that such situations should be guided by reason rather than emotion. He said, "It is not for a Prophet who has donned his armor to remove it until he has fought or Allah has turned away the enemy from him."¹¹¹ This meant that once a Prophet has prepared for battle, he should not remove his armor until the battle is fought or the enemy is repelled. He went out with them to meet the polytheists outside the city to teach them an important lesson: "There is no dissent after agreement."

An important matter remains: the Prophet (peace be upon him) never forced anyone to accept his opinion, even if they were very close to him. Instead, he would present his view as close as possible to his companion's view and then leave it to their judgment, provided it did not involve sin or cause harm. This was evident on the day of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) dictated the treaty in the presence of the Quraysh, with Ali (may Allah honor his face) writing it down. This shows the Quraysh's complete confidence that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was the most eloquent among them and the most qualified to speak at such meetings.

The document began with: "This is what Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, has agreed upon with the Quraysh..." Suhail ibn Amr said, "If we had known that you were the Messenger of Allah, we would not have fought you. Remove 'the Messenger of Allah.'" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "O Ali! Remove 'the

¹¹¹ The complete report was narrated by Abdul-Razzaq in his "Musannaf" (9735), Ahmad in his Musnad (14787), and Al-Darimi in his Sunan (2205). The term "al-lama" refers to a protective shield and other weapons of war such as a sword or spear.

Messenger of Allah." Ali responded, "No, by Allah, I will never remove it." The Prophet (peace be upon him) honored his oath and did not insist further or argue with Ali. It was a situation that could not tolerate discussion, so he excused Ali from doing something that was uncomfortable for him and asked him to indicate where the phrase was so that the Prophet (peace be upon him) could remove it with his own hand.

This incident also teaches us a lesson from his interaction with Suhail ibn Amr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not argue with him, did not create discord after agreement, did not insist on his view, and did not create an issue over something that was not a term of the treaty.

It is worth noting that the Prophet (peace be upon him) never looked down on anyone who disagreed with him, regardless of their opinion's strength. He would listen to them until they finished presenting their view and then respond without disparaging the dissenting opinion.

Disagreement in opinion was never a reason for disrupting affection and brotherhood between him and anyone. As the saying goes, "Disagreement in opinion does not spoil affection."

Treating the Enemies

The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not initiate hostility with anyone unless someone made him an enemy. In such cases, the Prophet (peace be upon him) responded to hostility with the best and most peaceful methods possible. A close study of his life confirms this completely. There were instances when individuals deserved punishment, but when they came to him seeking forgiveness, such as Ka'ab ibn Zuhair, he forgave them.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) consistently warned against excessive bitterness in disputes, considering it a trait of hypocrites. He always strived to eliminate sources of enmity and worked to suppress the causes of conflict. The enmity towards him was due to the message he brought, not his personal character. His personality was never antagonistic and did not generate hostility on its own.

It is narrated that the leaders of the Quraysh went to his uncle Abu Talib, offering to fulfill any request in exchange for the Prophet (peace be upon him) abandoning his message or surrendering him to them. Abu Talib relayed their offer to the Prophet (peace be upon him), who responded by proposing that they only need to say the simple phrase, "There is no god but Allah." They replied that they would have agreed to ten other phrases if asked. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "By Allah, O my uncle, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to make me abandon this matter, I would not abandon it until Allah makes it victorious or I die in the process."¹¹²

¹¹² The report is mentioned by Ibn Hisham in "Al-Sirah" (1/240), Al-Tabari in his "Tareekh" (2/326), and Al-Bayhaqi in "Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah" (2/187).

It is unreasonable to give up one's principles just to please everyone, as they will never be universally pleased.

Dealing with an enemy is a cultural practice that everyone should learn. It involves focusing enmity on specific issues rather than generalizing it to all aspects of life. One should avoid extending hostility to the enemy's family or relatives, and leave room for possible reconciliation in the future.

This was the culture of the Prophet (peace be upon him) with anyone who showed or hid enmity. He confined the enmity to specific issues rather than extending it to all areas of life. For example, he lived with the Jews in Madinah, who were his staunch enemies, yet he engaged in business with them. Similarly, he interacted with the polytheists of Makkah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not harbor enmity for personal reasons. He married Soudah bint Zam'ah, whose father was a fierce enemy, and Umm Habibah bint Abu Sufyan, whose father was a leader of the polytheists at that time. He maintained peaceful relations with his enemies as much as possible, as previously discussed.

A testament to this is the acknowledgment of his enemies regarding his honesty and trustworthiness despite their animosity. For instance, when Abu Sufyan ibn Harb heard about the Prophet's (peace be upon him) marriage to his daughter Umm Habibah, he said, "What a good match! His lineage and marriage are excellent, and he is a fine man and husband."

Chapter Three

Dealing with Novel Matters

The novel matters (*mustajadat*) are issues that did not exist before but have arisen, and here I refer to urgent issues that require swift resolution (without quibbling over terminology).

They can be divided into two categories that warrant discussion: challenges and problems. As for challenges, these are obstacles that stand between a person and their goals. Problems refer to barriers that a person either creates of their own volition or that are imposed upon them.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) faced personal problems related to himself and his family, as well as social issues impacting his broader surroundings. He also encountered challenges that obstructed his mission to deliver his message and build his state. The Prophet (peace be upon him) dealt with these matters with a wisdom that is often lacking today—wisdom acknowledged even by his enemies. This wisdom led one scholar, Bernard Shaw, to remark, "If Muhammad ibn Abdullah were alive, he would solve the world's problems while drinking a cup of coffee," meaning he could resolve issues in just minutes.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) might delay solving a problem because the delay was part of the solution, not because the solution was beyond his reach. How many cases did he resolve immediately upon hearing them? He informed us that his judgments were based on his intellect and insight—most of the time, not direct revelation. Revelation came as support and endorsement. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "I am only a human being. You bring your disputes to me, and perhaps one of you is more eloquent in presenting his case than the other. I judge

based on what I hear. If I rule in favor of someone's claim to the right of his brother, he should not take it, for I am only giving him a portion of the Fire."¹¹³

In other words, one should not oppress their brother, using their eloquence to overpower the other party in a dispute. If I rule in favor of someone and grant them something from their brother's property, it is as though I am giving them a portion of the Fire.

Now, let us understand the Prophet (peace be upon him) in times of hardship as we do in times of ease.

¹¹³ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (7169) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1713) from Umm Salamah, may Allah be pleased with her.

(1)

Facing Challenges and Obstacles

It can be said that the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a series of significant challenges. Reflect on his words: “Allah will surely complete this matter until a traveler can go from Sana’a to Hadramawt without fearing anything except Allah or a wolf attacking his sheep. But you are being impatient.”¹¹⁴

With each new challenge, the Prophet (peace be upon him) demonstrated his skill in overcoming obstacles through various methods—direct or indirect, immediate or delayed, visible or hidden. He employed all these strategies to address the difficulties and challenges he faced.

For instance, he tackled the challenge of tribalism, which could have obstructed the establishment and continuity of the Islamic state. Although this issue did arise later, the Prophet (peace be upon him) identified the problem and prepared a remedy. He would personally praise each tribe’s honor and prestige, then encourage them to abandon tribalism, saying: “Leave it, for it is corrupt.”¹¹⁵

He fostered unity by establishing bonds of brotherhood—between an Aws and a Khazraj, between an Ansar and a Muhajir, between an Arab and a non-Arab, and even between a freed slave and a tribal chief. He arranged marriages among them, dissolving the distinctions and creating a community where people preferred each

¹¹⁴ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3612) and by Ahmad in his Musnad (21057).

¹¹⁵ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (4622) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2584) from Jabir ibn Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with both of them.

other over themselves, even in times of need. What a remarkable society, and what a state that could be built to match this one!

True civilization is about building the person, not just constructing roofs and walls. This society could not have its unity disturbed unless it was hidden behind veils or walls. A new challenge emerged, different from what was faced in Mecca: the challenge of hypocrisy. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) confronted this challenge indirectly, despite being aware of the hypocrites and informing Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman (may Allah be pleased with him) of their names. However, he dealt with them in a way that avoided direct confrontation, addressing them obliquely, such as saying, “What is the matter with some people who do such and such?” He did not decree their execution, despite it being a just punishment for those who betray their state and divulge its secrets to enemies. He instructed his companions not to act on such matters, and even advised Abdullah ibn Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul not to kill his father, the leader of the hypocrites, saying, “So that it may not be said that Muhammad kills his own companions.”¹¹⁶ Although execution might solve the problem of sowing discord, it could deter others from embracing the religion, preventing the state's development. Additionally, killing them might have caused tribal unrest in Medina. Thus, the indirect approach proved to be the best solution. Soon, the hypocrites faced their downfall—some died, some were killed, and some were guided and repented.

Another challenge was expanding the state's territory and securing its borders, which might require force. However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) always interacted with people based on firm beliefs and complete certainty. He preferred to first convince them of his religion, or at least introduce them to its principles, so they

¹¹⁶ From the previous hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (4622) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2584) from Jabir ibn Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with both of them.

would be inclined to make peace. He sent ambassadors and messengers to educate people about the principles of Islam. For example, he sent Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr (may Allah be pleased with him) to Medina before the migration, who played a key role in the conversion of its people. Similarly, he sent Mu'adh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) to Yemen. He carefully selected his ambassadors, teaching them how to interact with people, guiding them on the best practices, and emphasizing that understanding the society they were moving to was crucial for effective communication. This is exemplified in his comprehensive advice to Mu'adh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him), which began with, "O Mu'adh! You are going to a people of the Scripture..."¹¹⁷ This introduction helped to prepare him for the task by understanding their context before directing him on how to invite them.

In confronting this challenge, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also chose a peaceful approach, even when power was the common language of diplomacy among tribes and nations.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed obstacles and challenges with a unique mindset not commonly seen in his time, as if he were peering into the future through a thin veil. He managed to remove obstacles and overcome challenges in ways that his enemies had not anticipated, which led his companions and everyone around him to seek his counsel in facing life's challenges.

He provided sincere advice, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses, and assessing their ability to tackle challenges and overcome obstacles. His advice to Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) is a prime example of this. When Abu Dharr requested a leadership position, he said, "Appoint me, O Messenger of Allah."

¹¹⁷ The complete hadith was narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad (2071), Al-Darimi in his Musnad (1638), Ibn Majah in his Sunan (1783), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (1584), and Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (625).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) responded, "O Abu Dharr, I see you as weak, and I love for you what I love for myself. Do not appoint yourself over two people, nor take charge of an orphan's wealth."

Dealing with Emergency Problems

Human life is filled with personal and social problems, and the wise person is one who emerges from these problems with gains rather than creating multiple issues from a single problem.

How one handles problems is a significant reflection of their character, intelligence, and quick thinking, as well as an indicator of whether they are aggressive or peaceful. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) faced numerous challenging and emergency situations in his life, and he approached them with both intellect and humanity. His solutions were often admired and astonishing. While rulers and leaders might resort to orders and the use of force when a problem becomes intractable, a wise and patient leader is often regarded as a role model and remembered through the generations.

In this chapter, I will take a slightly different approach than the others. Instead of outlining the general principles established by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for problem-solving, I will recount specific events and how the Prophet addressed them. I will also share my understanding and provide readers with a perspective to derive their own principles for dealing with new challenges.

For instance, it is well-known that one of the most severe challenges a person can face is having their honor and reputation attacked, especially if they are known for their righteousness, good manners, and exemplary conduct, and if their family members are also known for their chastity and purity. It is even more difficult when the attacker is a friend or companion!

A significant problem faced by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) arose when rumors were spread in Medina accusing his pure wife, Umm al-Mu'minin Aisha bint Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with her), of immoral behavior. These accusations involved her with a man known for his exemplary manners and ethics, Safwan bin al-Mu'attal. Some of the Prophet's companions, both men and women, believed these false rumors, including the Prophet's poet, who was renowned for his love, respect, and defense of the Prophet.

The Prophet found himself in a difficult situation. Should he discredit his companions, who were known for their sincerity and support, or should he accept the false accusations against his virtuous wife, whom he knew was the best of women? Moreover, would this scandal distract him from his mission, his efforts to reconcile people, and resolve their issues?

The Prophet could have divorced her and married another, but that would have been unjust. The accusation might still have been held against her, even with overwhelming evidence of her innocence.

One might wonder why the Prophet did not publicly clear her name, given that he knew of her innocence. The response is that he did address the issue publicly, speaking to the people about his trust in his wife and advising them against engaging in such matters. However, many viewed him in this situation merely as a husband defending his wife, rather than as a prophet addressing injustice and protecting the truth for his community.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) faced persistent challenges from the hypocrites and their followers, who continued to spread false accusations about his wife, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her). Despite the Prophet's efforts to silence the gossip and protect her reputation, the rumors spread rapidly through Medina like wildfire.

To shield Aisha from hearing the damaging rumors and to protect her feelings, the Prophet decided to take her to her father's house, away from the mosque where she would have overheard the discussions and the Prophet's defense of her. His house was near the mosque, and her room was so close that she could hear everything spoken in the mosque.

For a whole month, Aisha stayed at her father's house, unaware of the accusations. The Prophet tried every possible way to silence the slanderers, but the hypocrites seized the opportunity to distract him from his mission and the expansion of the Islamic state.

The Prophet was faced with a dilemma: whether to keep Aisha and risk being distracted from his mission, or to divorce her and focus entirely on his prophetic duties. Some of his companions advised him to keep Aisha, noting that the intensity of the rumors was diminishing. Others suggested divorcing her to prevent the issue from being used as a weapon against him in the future.

Despite the advice, the Prophet was deeply committed to his wife and visited her at her father's house regularly. Eventually, Aisha discovered the rumors and was deeply hurt because the Prophet had not informed her directly. She thought he might have doubts about her, though the Prophet had no such doubts. The real reason for his decision to keep her away was to prevent the scandal from becoming a constant distraction that could interfere with his mission and responsibilities.

He was waiting for the storm to settle and for Allah to reveal her innocence, not because he doubted her, but to allow the matter to be resolved publicly. Eventually, Allah cleared Aisha's name, and those who continued to spread the rumors were subject to punishment, as the Prophet had anticipated.

Reflect on how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) resolved this problem without causing loss or harm to any party involved. He preferred patience in the face of such severe adversity over a solution that would break the spirits of others, a wound not easily mended by time.

Any judgment the Prophet made against those involved would have fueled the hypocrites' accusations against him, which would have been unjust. The Prophet was careful to avoid situations that could lead to suspicion and made sure that the devil had no opportunity to sow doubts about his character.

For instance, consider the story where two men came across the Prophet and his wife, Safiyya bint Huyayy, in the mosque at night. After they passed by, he called them over and said, "Be cautious, she is Safiyya!" to prevent any ill thoughts about him. The men were surprised by his action and said, "SubhanAllah (Glory be to Allah), O Messenger of Allah!"

The Prophet explained, "Indeed, Satan flows through the son of Adam like blood, and I feared that he might sow suspicion in your hearts."¹¹⁸

Therefore, the Prophet handled the problem by separating the involved parties and addressing each one individually to prevent accusations and misunderstandings. This approach ensured that no one could criticize him for his decisions, whether he chose to divorce Aisha if the accusations were true or enforce the punishment if she was proven innocent.

This example illustrates how the Prophet managed personal issues affecting him and his family, balancing his duties towards his mission and belief with the challenges he faced. It is reported that once he visited his daughter Fatimah, who complained about a severe headache. The Prophet responded empathetically, "And woe to my

¹¹⁸ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3281) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2174) from Anas.

head too, Fatimah!" It seemed that her suffering reminded him of his own pain, which he had temporarily forgotten due to his focus on teaching and resolving people's issues.

This example also shows that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) addressed problems at their root, rather than allowing them to expand due to circumstances and time. He did not allow issues to grow larger than their actual significance or to transform from personal issues into social problems. He did not deal with problems through temporary measures or soothing solutions; instead, he implemented fundamental and comprehensive remedies, even if the solutions took time to be effective.

The Prophet's approach to social problems was just as wise as his handling of personal issues. Even if he were not a prophet, he would be a head of state, and even if he were not a head of state, he would be a social reformer. People turned to him in times of crisis, confided in him, and sought his help with their problems due to his wisdom, insight, and sound judgment, which were always based on foresight and a clear mind. There was not a day when the Prophet did not deal with one or more issues, some of which he resolved immediately and others where he allowed time to address the problem.

Among the significant social issues the Prophet faced was the problem of slavery, which involved the subjugation of humans by other humans. This was not only an Arab issue but a global one, with the whole world ensnared in it. For those unfamiliar, this problem involved enslaving people as a result of wars and hostilities. When a tribe, town, or state defeated another, the captives became the property of their captors, who could force them into servitude and sell them if desired.

The problem could never be resolved through direct commands alone! Few people would be willing to relinquish their wealth simply by decree. Therefore, the Quran adopted a profound approach to ending this phenomenon, which was to encourage the emancipation of slaves from the humiliation of bondage and to make freeing slaves an expiation for many sins.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) complemented the Quranic approach by awakening human conscience. He made people aware that slaves were human beings with rights as well as duties. He set forth rights for slaves and imposed limits on how their masters could treat them, often making it difficult for masters to justify their behavior in society.

The Prophet advised: "He who has a slave should feed him from what he eats and clothe him from what he wears!"¹¹⁹ This was a challenging directive for many masters, who might have found it difficult to face people dressed as their servants. In fact, someone unfamiliar with their situation might not even be able to distinguish between a master and a servant.

The Prophet also forbade masters from addressing their slaves as "O slave!" Instead, they should use terms like "O boy" or "O girl," and if someone asked about them, they should say, "My young man" or "My young woman," not "my slave."

He commanded that masters treat their slaves well, not to overburden them, and to assist them with their tasks and show kindness. This was to tighten the constraints on masters and make them feel that emancipation was a relief from such burdens. They should view their slaves with compassion, humanity, and brotherhood, as the Prophet said: "Your brethren are your dependents; so whoever has his brother under

¹¹⁹ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (30) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1661) from Al-Ma'roor ibn Suwayd.

his authority should feed him from what he eats and clothe him from what he wears." He should not harm or mistreat them, treating them as if they were hired workers, whose wage includes food, clothing, marriage, and care.

Be aware that banning slavery outright could cause harm to some slaves and to society. Many of these slaves had left their families and friends and had no connections in their new communities. If they were freed, they might feel alienated in unfamiliar surroundings. They might be married and struggle to provide housing, food, and clothing, or find employment.

As for the societal impact, freeing thousands or even millions of people without providing for them would lead to a disaster, throwing them into the streets without shelter, work, or a livelihood. This would result in a humanitarian crisis of severe proportions.

Gradual implementation was the safest and most effective solution, proving its efficacy over time. The Quran used the method of encouraging emancipation, while the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) adopted a complementary approach: tightening the constraints on slavery to make people see emancipation as a relief for both the soul and the mind.

Now, after over fourteen centuries from the time of the Prophet, slavery is scarcely seen in any of the vast Islamic societies.

Consider how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) managed to resolve a global issue and address a major phenomenon. Reflect also on how he tackled other significant problems that could have devastated society, such as the issue of prostitution (zina), the oppression of women, tribalism, pride in lineage and military victories, ongoing wars, rampant arrogance, widespread illiteracy except among a few readers and writers, and dishonesty in trade. For example, the Prophet would

personally visit the market to check the quality of goods for sale. On one occasion, he found a merchant whose grains had been exposed to rain but had not been disclosed to buyers. The Prophet addressed the merchant, saying after their conversation, “Whoever deceives us is not one of us.”¹²⁰

He also dealt with issues like famine through austerity and social solidarity, and he managed the problem of epidemics with quarantine to prevent their spread. He addressed the issue of animal extinction by banning hunting in certain areas like Mecca and Medina, which inspired the concept of nature reserves. For market monopolies, he tackled it by constricting the monopolists, advising people not to deal with them: “The buyer is blessed, and the monopolist is cursed.”¹²¹

Thus, you see the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) addressing major problems that had become widespread in his time, originating from self-love and worldly desires. He corrected them comprehensively, addressing all aspects with foresight, uprooting their causes, and not rushing the outcome. He took all necessary steps, never letting one problem distract him from another, and no problem seemed insurmountable to him. He was troubled throughout the night, knowing that every ailment has a cure, and his heart was bound to his Creator. He knew there was no refuge from God except to Him. When a problem seemed persistent and difficult to solve, it was a trial from God to see how people would act and a punishment for their transgressions. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) told us, if immorality becomes widespread in a community, God will afflict it with poverty,

¹²⁰ The hadith was narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (101) from Abu Huraira. Another report of the incident was narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musnad (721) from Abu Al-Hamra, who said: "The Prophet passed by a man who had food in a container. He put his hand into it and said, 'You have deceived him; whoever deceives us is not one of us.'"

¹²¹ Narrated by Al-Darimi in his Sunan (2563), Ibn Majah in his Sunan (2153), and Al-Bayhaqi in "Shu'ab Al-Iman" (10700) from Umar.

and the only cure for this poverty is to abandon the crime; otherwise, it will befall them in their souls and hearts, even if their hands are filled with gold and silver.

In conclusion, the English writer Bernard Shaw, in his book "Muhammad," says:

“The world is in dire need of a man with the thinking of Muhammad. This Prophet, who placed his religion in a position of respect and reverence, is the strongest religion in assimilating all other religions eternally. In my opinion, if he were to take charge of the world today, he would succeed in solving our problems in a way that ensures the peace and happiness that humanity yearns for.”

(3)

The Prophetic Advice

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not only a resolver of problems but also a social reformer with his own approach to life. He had a well-thought-out plan for building an ideal and virtuous society—a society that anyone would wish to live in. I will attempt to outline some of the Prophet's advice for developing an ideal individual and a virtuous society. Readers are encouraged to understand the Prophet's approach to building this society, and to consider whether he started from the top of the hierarchy or from its base. This question highlights the difference in thinking and knowledge between individuals.

Let us now examine how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) viewed the establishment of a virtuous society, starting from the development of the individual, his interactions with others, and his relations with all creatures around him.

Family Advice

The Prophet (peace be upon him) paid great attention to family life, as it is the cornerstone of a society. A happy family life leads to a happier social life. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of establishing a family before focusing on its happiness and continuity. He encouraged young people to marry to avoid the burdens of family life and its expenses, saying: “O young people, whoever among you can afford marriage should marry, for it is better for lowering the gaze and guarding chastity. And whoever cannot should fast, for it is a means of controlling the desires.”¹²²

¹²² Recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1905) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1400).

He warned against falling into the traps of Satan, fearing the costs of engagement and marriage, saying: “Three people are entitled to God’s help... among them is the one who marries seeking chastity.”¹²³

He then advised on choosing a good partner, emphasizing the importance of selecting a woman of good character for the sake of one’s children, saying: “A woman is married for four things: for her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religion. Choose the religious one, and you will prosper.”¹²⁴

He cautioned against being deceived by superficial qualities, saying: “Beware of the green and lush among the refuse.” The companions asked, “What is the green and lush among the refuse, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “A beautiful woman in a bad environment.”¹²⁵

He advised people to accept a suitor who is righteous and has made an effort to approach them after difficulty, saying: “When someone comes to you with whose religion and character you are pleased, then marry him. If you do not, there will be fitnah (trouble) on the earth and widespread corruption.”¹²⁶

¹²³ Narrated by Ibn Mubarak in his Musnad (225), Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (1655), Al-Nasa'i in his Sunan (3218), and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak (2678) from Abu Huraira, who reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "There are three whom Allah has obligated to help: the warrior striving in the way of Allah, the person marrying with the intention of maintaining chastity, and the slave seeking to purchase his freedom."

¹²⁴ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (4802) and by Muslim in his Sahih (1466) from Abu Huraira.

¹²⁵ Narrated by Al-Qudai in his "Musnad Al-Shihab" (957) from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri.

¹²⁶ Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (1085) and by Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir (762).

He instructed that a virgin should not be married off without her consent, saying: “The virgin should not be married until she is consulted.”¹²⁷ He also advised that the new husband should be gentle in his demands, saying: “The most blessed women are those who have the least burden.”¹²⁸

After the marriage, he instructed the husband to be kind to his wife, saying: “The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family.”¹²⁹ He also said: “Treat women kindly,”¹³⁰ and emphasized gentleness with wives, saying: “Be gentle with the fragile vessels.”¹³¹

He also advised wives about their husbands, saying: “If I were to command anyone to prostrate to another, I would have commanded a woman to prostrate to her husband.”¹³² This prostration is one of honor, not worship, as mentioned in the Quran, and does not imply superiority in general.

He advised both spouses to maintain good relations and confidentiality, saying: “The worst person in the sight of Allah on the Day of Judgment is the man who has intimate relations with his wife and then reveals her secret.”¹³³

¹²⁷ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (6567) from Abu Huraira.

¹²⁸ Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad (25119) and by Al-Nasa'i in his "Sunan Al-Kubra" (9229) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

¹²⁹ Narrated by Ibn Asakir in "Kitab Al-Arba'in Fi Manaqib Ummahat Al-Mu'minin" (109) from Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him.

¹³⁰ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (1468) from Abu Huraira.

¹³¹ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (1468) from Abu Huraira.

¹³² Narrated by Al-Darimi in his Sunan (1505), Abu Dawud in his Sunan (2140), and Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (1159) from Abu Huraira.

¹³³ Narrated by Abu Awana in his "Mustakhraj" (4299) and by Al-Bayhaqi in "Al-Sunan Al-Kubra" (14213) from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri.

After that, he directed them towards increasing offspring, not for its own sake but as evidence of certainty in God and a lack of fear of a narrow livelihood. This was a necessary reaction from the Prophet (peace be upon him) towards a society that used to kill daughters out of fear of disgrace and sons out of fear of poverty. The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed them that daughters do not bring disgrace and are precious, comforting companions, and that sons do not lead to poverty as God is the Provider with great power. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Marry and reproduce, for I boast about you before the other nations on the Day of Judgment."¹³⁴

If God blesses them with offspring, they should honor and treat their children well, instilling values in them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Command your children to pray when they reach the age of seven, and discipline them for it when they reach ten, and separate them in their beds."¹³⁵ They should be treated equally in affection and tenderness, not differentiating based on gender. He said, "Treat your children equally in gifts; if I were to favor anyone, I would favor women."¹³⁶

From a social perspective, he advised people to have a clear heart in their dealings and to treat others with good intentions. He said, "The purity of heart cannot be achieved through actions alone,"¹³⁷ and to deal with people with kindness and gentleness. He said, "Gentleness never enters anything without adorning it, and it is never removed from anything without tarnishing it." He also said, "O Allah, whoever is in charge of my nation and makes things difficult for them, make things difficult

¹³⁴ Narrated by Abdul-Razzaq in his "Musannaf" (6/173) from Sa'id ibn Abi Hilal, as a marasil report. It is also mentioned by the compiler of "Musnad Al-Firdaws" (2663). Additionally, it is cited by Ibn Kathir in his "Tafsir" (6/51).

¹³⁵ Narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his "Musannaf" (3519), Ahmad in his Musnad (6689), and Abu Dawud in his Sunan (495).

¹³⁶ Narrated by Al-Harith in "Baghiyat Al-Bahith" (454) and by Al-Bayhaqi in "Al-Sunan Al-Kubra" (12126) from Ibn Abbas.

¹³⁷ Mentioned by Ibn Al-Hajj in "Al-Madkhal" to Maliki jurisprudence (1/61, 1/201).

for him; and whoever is in charge of my nation and is gentle with them, be gentle with him."¹³⁸

He advised against spying on each other, holding grudges, engaging in secretive disputes, or undermining others' sales. He also warned against placing oneself in a position of doubt, saying, "Satan flows through the son of Adam like blood," and against sitting in places where people dislike it, saying, "Beware of sitting in the pathways..."¹³⁹ He advised against deceit, saying, "Whoever deceives us is not one of us," and against belittling others, saying, "Perhaps a disheveled, dusty person who is pushed away from doors, if he swore by God, would be honored by Him."¹⁴⁰

He also advised not to belittle any act of kindness, no matter how small, saying, "Do not belittle any act of kindness, even if it is to meet your brother with a cheerful face,"¹⁴¹ and to cover others' faults, saying, "Whoever conceals a Muslim's faults in this world, God will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter."¹⁴² He also advised fulfilling people's needs, saying, "Whoever walks to fulfill his brother's need, God will walk to fulfill his need."¹⁴³

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also recommended forgiveness and turning away from others' faults, saying, "The strong person is not the one who overcomes others by force; rather, the strong person is the one who controls himself when he is angry." He advised about neighbors, saying, "O Abu Dharr! If you cook a stew, add plenty

¹³⁸ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (1828).

¹³⁹ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (2333) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2121) from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri.

¹⁴⁰ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (2622) from Abu Huraira.

¹⁴¹ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (2626) from Abu Dharr.

¹⁴² Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad (16959) from Muslamah ibn Mukhallad.

¹⁴³ Narrated by Al-Khara'iti in "Makarim Al-Akhlaq" (91) and by Al-Tabarani in "Al-Awsat" (4396) from Ibn Umar and Abu Huraira, who both reported: "We heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'Whoever walks to fulfill the need of his Muslim brother until it is completed, Allah will shade him with seventy thousand angels who will pray for him...'"

of water and take care of your neighbors."¹⁴⁴ He also emphasized the importance of hospitality, often feeding his guests with his own hands, and said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should honor his guest."¹⁴⁵

He recommended visiting the sick to support them through their illness. Al-Bara' bin Azib (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) commanded us to visit the sick.¹⁴⁶

These are just a few examples of the many recommendations that have become models of virtue. The Prophet (peace be upon him) established a virtuous and ideal society through his noble character and attributes, guiding everyone who wants to live in such a community. He paved the way to the path, showing how to reach it, and expressed it in the language of humanity, not just prophethood, so that all people could follow him and adhere to his commands.

While these recommendations for interacting with people are ideal, they are no more perfect than his recommendations for dealing with the surrounding universe. He advised on the treatment of animals even before the advent of human rights organizations. When asked by his companions about raising livestock and whether there is a reward for watering and feeding them, he replied, "In every moist liver there is a reward."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (2626) from Abu Dharr.

¹⁴⁵ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5672) and by Muslim in his Sahih (47) from Abu Huraira.

¹⁴⁶ The report is narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (5175): "The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to do seven things and prohibited us from seven things: He commanded us to visit the sick, follow the funeral procession, respond to the sneezer with 'Yarhamuk Allah' (May Allah have mercy on you), fulfill oaths, help the oppressed, spread greetings of peace, and answer the invitation. He prohibited us from using gold rings, silver utensils, garments with embroidery, silk brocade, and the like."

¹⁴⁷ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (2234) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2244) from Abu Huraira.

This means that rewards are not limited to caring for livestock but extend to caring for all animals and treating them gently, as long as they are not harmful animals that cause harm to others. He strictly forbade the mistreatment of animals, saying, "A woman was punished in Hell because of a cat she had confined; she did not feed it, nor did she let it find food from the insects on the ground."¹⁴⁸

The Prophet (peace be upon him) defended animals and their rights. Abdullah bin Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) on a journey when he went to relieve himself. We saw a partridge with two chicks, so we took the chicks. The partridge came and began fluttering around. The Prophet (peace be upon him) came and asked, 'Who has distressed this bird by taking her young? Return her young to her.' He also saw a colony of ants that we had burned and said, 'Who burned this? We said, 'We did.' He said, 'It is not right to punish with fire except the Lord of the Fire.'"¹⁴⁹

He also found a camel that was suffering from heavy burdens and lack of food, and said to its owner, 'This camel has complained to me that you are starving and overworking it.'¹⁵⁰

Even concerning animals that Islamic law permits slaughtering and eating, he recommended performing the slaughter swiftly to avoid causing the animal distress. He said, "When you slaughter, do it well; and when you kill, do it well. Let one of you sharpen his blade and give his slaughtered animal comfort."¹⁵¹ By "killing" here, he meant killing a predatory animal that poses a threat to people on their way, so it should be done in the best manner without torturing it by confinement until death.

¹⁴⁸ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (3318) and by Muslim in his Sahih (2619) from Abu Huraira.

¹⁴⁹ Narrated by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (2675).

¹⁵⁰ Narrated by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (2549) and by Abu Ya'la in his Musnad (6787) from Abdullah ibn Ja'far.

¹⁵¹ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahih (1955) from Shaddad ibn Aws.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also recommended environmental conservation. He forbade cutting down trees even during wars, advising his companions to avoid cutting down trees, killing children, women, elderly people, or monks in their monasteries during conflicts.

He encouraged planting trees even in the most challenging and constricted circumstances, saying, "If the Hour (the Day of Judgment) comes and one of you has a sapling in his hand, let him plant it." A sapling refers to a young tree, and this rule also applies to seeds that grow into trees.

He prohibited polluting water, air, and roads with urine, feces, or other waste, saying, "Beware of those who curse." When asked what "the ones who curse" were, he replied, "Those who relieve themselves in the path of people or in their shade."

Our master Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade urinating in stagnant water and encouraged cultivating and inhabiting land, saying, "Whoever revives a dead land, it is his." He also advised against causing discomfort to others with unpleasant odors, whether from an individual, a house, a street, or a city, saying, "Whoever eats garlic or onion should not approach our mosque."

He advised against wasting natural resources, even if they are abundant, so that one learns to live a frugal life, avoiding greed. He prohibited wastefulness with water, even if one is near a flowing river.

He also advised craftsmen about their trade, saying, "Craftsmanship is a protection from poverty,"¹⁵² and it is also a way to contribute to the world. He urged them to master their craft, saying, "Allah loves that when any of you does a job, he should perfect it,"¹⁵³ and he encouraged professionalism, creativity, and beautifying their work after completing it, saying, "Indeed, Allah is beautiful and loves beauty."¹⁵⁴

Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) built an ideal and virtuous city and a great empire that ruled the world with justice and mercy in a few short years.

The world-renowned writer Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) said: "Muhammad can be proud of having liberated a downtrodden, bloodthirsty nation from the claws of the devils of vile customs and opened the way to progress and advancement for them. Indeed, Muhammad's Sharia will prevail in the world because of its harmony with reason and justice."

Saint Hilaire said: "Muhammad was the head of the state and was attentive to the life and freedom of the people. He punished individuals who committed crimes according to the circumstances of his time and the conditions of those barbaric groups among whom the Prophet lived. The Prophet was a proponent of the religion of the one God, and in his invitation, he was gentle and merciful even with his

¹⁵² Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1410) and Ahmad in his Musnad (7490) from Abu Huraira: The Messenger of Allah said: "By the One in Whose Hand my soul is, it is better for one of you to take his rope, go to the mountain, gather firewood, and carry it on his back to sell it, and then eat from it, than to ask people who may give him or not." Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (1966) from Al-Miqdam, may **Allah** be pleased with him: The Messenger of Allah said: "No one has ever eaten food that is better than eating from the work of his own hands. Indeed, the Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) used to eat from the work of his own hands."

¹⁵³ Narrated by Abu Ya'la in his Musnad (4386) from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her.

¹⁵⁴ Narrated by Ahmad in "Al-Zuhd" (285) and by Muslim in his Sahih (91) from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud.

enemies. His personality possessed two of the greatest qualities that a human soul can have: justice and mercy."

May Allah send blessings upon our master Muhammad, his family, and his companions.

Conclusion

This work is my initial writing about the noble and esteemed status of our Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The book consists of reflections on the greatness and magnificence of his attributes and actions. I wrote and published it hoping that Allah may forgive me, my parents, and my loved ones through it, and perhaps grant me a place in the heart of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) because of it.

My sins in this world are many,

And I have no deeds in the Hereafter to save me.

I have come to you with the belief in the oneness of God,

Accompanied by love for the Prophet; this is enough for me.

I was blessed by the generous Lord to write this book during my military service with the valiant Egyptian Armed Forces, specifically in the beloved and precious Sinai—may Allah protect it from all harm. Praise be to Allah, He granted me the opportunity to combine the struggle of the sword with that of the pen.

If you find anything good, it is from Allah alone, the Most Generous, with no partners. If you find any errors or shortcomings, they are from the humble servant, attributed to time constraints and the lack of references.

I was eager to print it quickly out of fear of the end of life and the approaching destiny. I wished to present it as an intercessor for myself and my parents before Allah. If Allah grants me life, I will add much more and write extensively about the best of creation, peace be upon him, if Allah wills.

Finally:

O you who looks upon what I have gathered,

And finds yourself repeating your gaze upon it,

I ask Allah, if you see any mistakes,

To cover them up, for the best of people is the one who conceals.

May Allah send peace, blessings, honor, and blessings upon the best of creation, the Beloved of Truth, our master and lord Muhammad, and upon his family and companions altogether.

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