

THE BOOK OF THE CONDUCT OF LIFE AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE PROPHETIC

CHARACTER BOOK 20 OF THE IHYA ULUM AL-DIN (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), Imam al-Ghazali (*edited for ICSJ Sunday School Sirah event 2019*)

In the name of Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate.

Praised be to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala/swt), who created the universe, embellished its form and order, and caused His prophet Muhammad - salallahu alayhi wa salam (saw)/may Allah praise him and grant him peace - to be well mannered; and Allah (swt) adorned his conduct and purified his qualities and character, selected him as His chosen and His beloved.

Verily one's external manner is the mark of one's inner manner... actions are the result of character. Indeed, actions are rooted and originate in the innermost thoughts of the heart. The innermost lights of the heart shine upon one's external behavior, adorning and embellishing it. He, whose heart is not humbled, his outward actions are not humbled; and he, whose chest is not the niche of the divine lights, there does not spread over his external features the beauty of the prophetic manner.

This book deals with the manners of living - the manner and character of the Messenger of Allah (saw) aiming to restore and strengthen our faith through the example of prophet's noble character; since he was the most noble of Allah's creations.

We will first discuss how Allah (swt) taught prophet Muhammad (saw) by means of the Qur'an, then summarizing the fine qualities of his character, his speech and laughter, his character and manner in regard to food and dress, his pardoning, his generosity, bravery and courage, modesty, his external countenance and appearance, and his miracles and signs which point to his truth.

The Account of Allah's Teaching Muhammad by the Qur'an

Rasulullah (saw) was very humble and he asked Allah continuously to adorn him with fine qualities of manner, and the noble qualities of character. While praying he used to say, "O Allah, embellish/beautify my external and internal character!" Allah answered his prayer; Allah's promise is: "If you call on Me, I will answer you" -by sending down the Qur'an, so that Muhammad's nature was the Qur'an.

Sad ibn Hisham said, "I visited Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), and asked her concerning the character of the Messenger of Allah. She said, 'Do you not read the Qur'an?!' I said, 'Yes.' Then she said, 'the moral character of the Messenger of Allah was the Qur'an.'"

Examples in regard to the Qur'an teaching the Prophet:

- "Show forgiveness, command what is just and avoid the ignorant."
- "Verily Allah ordered justice, the doing of good, and the giving of gifts, and He forbade wickedness, wrongdoing, and oppression."
- "Be patient in whatever shall befall thee; verily, this is a bounden duty."
- "And he who bears patiently and forgives- verily, this is a bounden duty."
- "Forgive them and overlook it. Verily, Allah loves those who act generously."
- "Let them rather pardon and pass over the offence. Do you not desire that Allah forgives you?"

- “Turn away evil by what is better, and lo! he who was thy enemy will be as though he were a warm friend.”
- “And who masters his anger and forgives others-Allah loves the doers of good.”
- “Avoid frequent suspicions, for some suspicions are crimes. Pry not, neither let one of you traduce another in his absence.”

When Muhammad’s two teeth were broken and he was wounded in the battle of Uhud, so that the blood flowed over his face, he wiped the blood saying, “How do a people who dye the face of their Prophet with blood succeed, while he calls them to their Lord!” Therewith Allah sent down the verse, “It is not your concern,” the Qur’an teaches.

Muhammad was the first one to receive the teachings and refining of human character. Then the light spread from him over the whole of creation, for he was taught by means of the Qur’an and he in turn taught the creation. For this reason, he said, “I was sent to complete the noble qualities of character.” When Allah (swt) perfected his character, He praised him and said, “Verily you are of a noble character.” Then the Messenger of Allah (saw) explained to mankind that Allah (swt) loves the fine qualities of character and detests the bad ones.

Once a companion/sahaba asked the Messenger of Allah, “Does Allah love the noble qualities of character?” And the prophet replied, ‘By Him in whose hands is my life, no one shall enter paradise except he who is of good character.’” And on the authority of Mu’adh ibn Jabbel it is related that Muhammad said, “Verily Allah encompasses Islam with noble qualities of character and with fine deeds.” Amongst these qualities are:

- having pleasant social relations,
- doing noble actions,
- being humble,
- bestowing favor,
- feeding others,
- extending greetings, (being the first to extend greeting),
- visiting the sick Muslim whether he be pious or profligate,
- escorting the janazah/funeral,
- protecting your neighbor whether he be a Muslim or a disbeliever,
- honoring the aged Muslim,
- answering the invitation to food,
- the inviting of others,
- bestowing pardon,
- making peace between people,
- being generous,
- nobility of character,
- forbearance,
- repressing anger,
- pardoning people,
- avoiding what Islam forbids (like wasting time, vanity, revenge, guile, slander, falsehood, greed, holding grudges, rudeness, deception, slander, forsaking blood kindred, bad moral character, haughtiness, boasting, self-conceit, arrogance, pride, immoderation, foulness of language, rancor, envy, injustice, oppression, and tyranny).

Anas ibn Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Muhammad did not call out ‘a fine counsel’ without having

induced and ordered us to follow it, nor did he call out 'fraud' or say 'vice' or 'disgraceful' but that he cautioned

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and prohibited us in regard to it." Mu'adh ibn Jabal said, "The Messenger of Allah commanded me saying, 'O, Mu'adh, I command you to fear Allah, to report truthfully, to fulfill the oath, to act loyally, to avoid perfidious actions, to care for the neighbor, to have mercy on the orphan, to be soft spoken, to extend greeting, to perform fine acts, to cleave to the faith, to study the Qur'an, to love the other life, to be anxious in regard to the reckoning, to act humbly; I forbid you to abuse the learned, to accuse an honest man of lying, to obey the sinner, to disobey a just man, to put a land in disorder; and I command you to fear Allah at every stone, tree, or village, and that you show repentance for every sin, secret or public." Thus the prophet taught the sahabas and urged them to be well mannered and to possess the noble qualities of character.

A SUMMARY OF HIS FINE QUALITIES OF CHARACTER

Muhammad was the most forbearing, honest, just, and chaste of men. No money was left with him in the evening. If something remained, and he would give this excess to whomever was in need of it. He patched his sandals and clothing, performed household duties, and ate meat with his family.

Muhammad was the most bashful of men and did not stare into anyone's face. He answered the invitation of the slave and the freeborn. He accepted presents, even if it was milk, or a leg of rabbit; he did not eat of that which was offered to him as charity. He did not consider himself too great to answer the [ordinary] people and the poor. He became angry for Allah and not for his own sake. He exacted the truth even though it brought harm to him and his companions.

Because of hunger he at times tightened a stone around his stomach. He often ate what was available, and did he refrain from lawful food. When available he ate dates, roast meat, wheat or barley bread, sweets or honey, milk, melon. He did not eat reclining... He attended feasts, visited the sick, attended funerals, and walked alone without a guard amongst his enemies.

He was the humblest of men, the most silent without being insolent, and the most eloquent without being lengthy. He had the most joyful countenance, none of the affairs of the world awing him.

Muhammad wore what was at hand-at times a cloak covering the whole body, at times a striped-cloth garment of Yemen, at times a gown of wool. He wore any permissible garment which was available. His signet was of silver which he wore sometimes on the little finger of his right hand, sometimes on that of his left hand.

He rode whatever was available for him. At different times he rode a horse, a male camel, a gray mule, a donkey; at times he walked on foot, barefoot without a cloak, turban, or cap.

He visited the sick in the farthest section in the city. He loved perfumes and disliked foul odors. He sat and ate with the poor. He showed regard to the people of virtue for their character and was close with the people of rank because of their piety. He did good for his family... He did not tyrannize anyone and accepted the excuse of him who begged his pardon.

He jested but he only spoke the truth. He laughed without bursting out into laughter. He witnessed the permitted games and did not disapprove of them. He raced sportingly with his family. Voices were raised against him, but he was patient.

His milk camels and sheep nourished him and his family with their milk; he did not eat better food, nor wear better clothes than the people of his household. A moment did not pass without his doing an action for Allah...

He went to the garden of his companions. He did not despise a poor man for his poverty and misfortune, and he did not fear a king because of his power; rather, he urged them equally to Allah.

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Allah taught him all the fine qualities of character, the praiseworthy paths, the reports of the first and last affairs, and those matters through which there is [obtained] salvation and reward in the future life, and happiness and reward in the world. Allah (swt) taught him to cleave to that which is as obligatory and to forsake the useless. May Allah (swt) direct us to obey Muhammad in his commands and to imitate him in his actions. Amen!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) did not insult a Muslim, but that he atoned for this and bestowed mercy. He never cursed either a woman or a slave. While he was waging war, it was said to him, "Would you curse them (the enemy) O Messenger of Allah!" To which he responded, "I was sent to forgive not as a curser." Whenever he was asked to wish evil against anyone whether he be a Muslim, a disbeliever, a man of the common people, or a man of worth, he turned from wishing him evil to blessing him.

Muhammad never struck anyone except for the sake of Allah (swt); nor did he ever revenge himself for what was done to him except when the sanctity of Allah (swt) was violated. He never chose between two matters but that he chose the easier...

No person came to Muhammad but that he supported him in his need. Anas ibn Malik said, "By Him who sent him with the truth, Muhammad never said to me in regard to anything what he disapproved, 'why did you do it? Moreover, whenever his wives would rebuke me, he said, 'let it be'; it was written and fated (meant to be)."

It was his nature to be the first to extend greetings to whomever he met. He was patient with anyone who asked him for help... While handshaking, Muhammad (saw) was never the first one to release his hand. When he met one of his companions, he was first to commence handshaking; he then took his hand and clasped it, strengthening his grasp over his hand.

Muhammad did not rise or sit without the mentioning of Allah (swt). No one sat in his company while he was praying but that he shortened his prayer and came forth to him and said, "Do you need anything?" After fulfilling their needs, Muhammad returned to his prayer.

Muhammad sat most of the time with his feet together, grasping them like a cloth which is used as a support. His sitting place could not be distinguished from that of his companions because he sat in the last row of those assembled. He never was seen stretching his legs before his companions... Most of the time Muhammad sat facing in the direction of Mecca.

He used to show regard to his visitor to the point of often spreading his garment and seating upon it him who was neither a relative nor foster brother. He preferred his guest [over himself] by [offering him] the cushion on which he reclined; and if he refused, Muhammad urged him until he did accept it.

Muhammad regarded his friends as the most noble of men. He paid attention to all his guests. He sat facing them, listened, conversed, acted gracefully, being modest, humble, and sincere. Allah (swt) said, "By the mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently; had you been harsh and hard headed, they would have certainly dispersed from around you". (Quran, 3:159)

He called his companions by their nicknames (Kunya) so as to honor and conciliate them. He named whoever did not have a nickname and called him by it. He named the young boys, therewith softening their hearts.

Of all men he was the least angry and the readiest to be pleased. He was the most merciful, beneficial, and

useful of men towards his fellow men.

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No noise was raised in his company. When he got up, he said "Allah be praised, O Allah, I testify praising Thee that there is no God but Thou; I ask Thy pardon and repent to Thee." Then he said, "Jibril-may Allah bless him-taught me this."

The Prophet's Speech and Laughter

Of all men Muhammad had the most eloquent diction and the most pleasant speech. He said, "I am the most eloquent of the Arabs." He also said that the people of Paradise speak the dialect of Muhammad. His speech was concise; he was not a babbler. His speech was like a string of gems. Aisha said, "He did not construct his speech the way you do; he spoke little, and you speak a great deal." They said that of all men Muhammad's speech was most concise, this quality having been brought to him by Jibril. However, his speech expressed all that he wanted to say. He used to speak comprehensively and concisely, neither exceeding nor falling short. His sentences followed each other and were cohesive, so that his listener heard and understood him. He had a powerful and most melodious voice. He was long silent, and did not speak without necessity. He did not say that which was forbidden to say. He only spoke the truth. When he was silent, his companions spoke. One did not argue in his presence.

He was the most smiling and laughing of men in the presence of his companions, admiring what they said, and mingling with them. He often laughed so that his molar teeth showed. The laughter of his companions in his presence, in imitation of him and as a sign of their regard for him, was a smile. They said that he was the most smiling and agreeable of men except when a revelation (Qur'an) was revealed to him, when he mentioned the hour of the Resurrection, and when he preached a sermon.

When he undertook an affair, he entrusted the matter to Allah (swt), renounced his strength and power, and asked for guidance, saying, "O Allah, show me the truth as truth, and allow me to follow it; show me what is false as false, and allow me to avoid it. Protect me... Cause my inclination to act in obedience to You, and may You be pleased with my soundness. Guide me correctly... verily You guide whomever You desire to the right path."

His Character and Manner in Regard to Food & Dress

The Messenger of Allah (saw) ate whatever was available. His most beloved food was that which was shared with other people. When the table was set, he said, "In the name of Allah, render the food favorable and praiseworthy and cause it to have the favor of Paradise." While he sat eating, he frequently joined his knees and feet just as he who prays, except that one knee was over the other knee and one foot over the other foot... He did not eat very hot food, in regard to which he said, "It is without blessing; verily Allah did not feed us fire, therefore cool it." He ate whatever was within his reach, eating with his three fingers. Sometimes he used a fourth finger but he did not eat with two fingers for he said, "That is the way Satan eats."

He ate bread made of barley and cucumbers with dates and with salt. His favorite fresh fruit were the melon and the grape. He ate the melon with bread and sugar; he often ate it with dates, using his two hands. One day, while he was eating the dates in his right hand and storing the date stones in his left hand, an ewe passed. Muhammad showed her the date stones, and the ewe began eating out of his left hand while he ate with his right hand. When he finished eating, the ewe left.

He frequently ate grapes; his most frequent food consisted of water and dates. He mixed milk and dates and

called them "the two best." His favorite food was meat, of which he said, "It is beyond fame; it is the lord of food in this world and in the next; and if I were to ask Allah to feed it to me every day, he would do so." He used to eat soup with meat and pumpkins. In regard to pumpkins, which he loved, he said, "It is the tree of my brother Yunus."

Aisha relates that Muhammad used to say, "O, Aisha, when you cook a stew, put in plenty of gourds, for verily it

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strengthens the heart of the grieved." When he ate meat, he did not lean over it. Instead he lifted the meat to his mouth and then bit into it with his front teeth. He ate bread and butter, and liked the forearm and shoulder of sheep meat. Of seasoning, he loved vinegar; of dates, he loved those of Medina (al-'Ajwa), which he named "The Blessed." He said, "It (the dates of Medina) is of Paradise and is a remedy for poison and magic." Of vegetables, he liked the endive, mountain balm, and garden purslane. He disliked the kidneys; he did not eat garlic, onions, or leek. The prophet never found fault with food. If he was pleased with it, he ate of it; if he disliked it, he neglected it; if he discarded it, he did not render it hateful to another person.

He used to wipe clean the dish with his fingers saying, "The last portion of food is very much blessed." When he finished, he said, "Praise be to Allah! Allah, Thou art worthy to be praised. Thou hast fed, sated, given drink, and quenched thirst; praise belongs to Thee, who cannot be denied, who is eternally present, and who is indispensable." When he ate bread and especially meat, he washed his hands vigorously and wiped his face with the excess water.

He used to drink in three portions, invoking Allah thrice. When he finished, he praised Allah thrice. He did not gulp the water.

In his house he was more modest than others; he did not ask them for food, nor did he annoy them with requests for food. He ate whatever they fed him, and drank whatever they gave him to drink. He often served himself.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) used to wear whatever was at hand: e.g., an outer wrapping garment, a long shirt gown (qamis), an upper gown with full sleeves (jubba), or other garments. He used to admire green garments. He wore white garments most frequently, saying, "Wear them while you are living and shroud yourself in them when you die." Muhammad wore a padded tunic for battle and for other occasions; he had two special garments for Friday prayer.

He used to wear a ring on his finger, and sometimes he went out with a string tied to his ring, thereby reminding himself of things. Muhammad used to put his seal on letters; he used to wear the cap (qalanis) beneath his turban ('imama) and without a turban.

When he dressed, he dressed from his right side saying, "Praise to Allah who clothed me with that which I conceal my nakedness and with which I adorn myself amongst the people." When he took off his clothing, he removed it from his left side. If Muhammad put on a new garment, he gave his shabby garment to a poor man and said, "There is not a Muslim who clothes another Muslim with his worn out clothes, doing so for the sake of Allah, but that he (the giver) partakes in the security, refuge, and benefit of Allah, whilst living or dead."

He had a mat (bed) of skins, which was stuffed with palm fibers; its length was approximately two cubits, and its width was approximately a cubit and a span. He had a wide outer garment ('aba'), which was spread out for him wherever it was carried and which he folded into layers. Muhammad slept on the ground with nothing else beneath him. If they spread out a bed for him, he reclined upon it; if not, he reclined on the earth.

It was Muhammad's habit to name his riding animals, his weapons, and his belongings. The name of his banner

was al-Iqab (the eagle); one of his swords was dhu' l-Fiqar (Zulfiqar). Other swords were called al-Midham, ar Rusub, al-Qadib, al-Battar; currently there are eight preserved swords of prophet Muhammad in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, Turkey. The handle of his sword was adorned with silver. Muhammad (saw) used to wear a belt made of skins in which were three rings of silver. The name of his bow was al-Katum (the unbroken), and the name of his quivers was al-Kafur. The name of his female camel was al-Qaswa' (the clipped ear); he also called al-'Adba'. The name of his she-mule was al-Duldul (the hedgehog); the name of his donkey was Yafur (gazelle); the name of the ewe whose milk he drank was 'ina (choice).

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Muhammad had a vessel for ablutions made of baked clay from which he washed and drank. The people sent to him their young children who had just reached the age of understanding. They visited the Messenger of Allah (saw); when they found water in the vessel they drank from it and wiped their faces and bodies with the water. In so doing they desired the blessing [therein] for themselves.

The Prophet's Pardoning

The Messenger of Allah (saw) was the most forbearing of men and most desirous of pardoning.

Once when the Messenger of Allah (saw) was in battle, and there was observed a carelessness amongst the Muslims, so that a man advanced against Rasulullah (saw) with a sword saying, "Who will defend you against me?" Muhammad said "Allah", and the sword fell from his hand. Seizing the sword Muhammad said, "Who will defend you against me?" And the man replied, "Be quick about it;" to which Muhammad said, "Say, I testify that there is no God other than Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah!" The man replied, "No, I only say that I will not fight you, nor will I be with you, nor will I be with a people who will fight you." Thereupon Muhammad released him. When Muhammad came back to his companions he said, "I come to you from the presence of the best of men."

Anas ibn Malik related that a Jewish woman brought the Prophet a poisoned ewe in order that he eat from it. She was then brought to the Prophet who asked her in regard to this matter. She said, "I desired to kill you;" then Muhammad said, "Allah did not empower you over that." Thereupon they asked, "Shall we not kill her?" and he said, "No."

Muhammad used to say, "Let no one of you inform me of anything [unfavorable] regarding one of my companions, for I like to go out to you with a sound heart."

The Messenger of Allah (saw) had thin skin and was delicate internally and externally, so that his anger and his pleasure was visible in his face. When he became very excited, he touched his noble beard frequently. He did not talk with anyone in regard to what he disliked. When he was visited by a person who was wearing a yellow dye, which he disliked, he did not say anything to him until he left. Then he said to certain person "Would you tell this man that he forego this (i.e. the yellow dye)." When a bedouin urinated in the mosque in his presence, and his companions intended to prevent him, Muhammad said, "Do not stop him." Then Muhammad said to him, "These mosques are not suited to serve as places of urination, excretion, or of any foul matter." In certain accounts it is stated, "Draw [people] close and do not scare [them] away."

One day a bedouin came to Muhammad and asked him for something. Muhammad gave it to him and said, "Have I done well by you?" To which the bedouin answered, "No, nor have you acted decently." Upon this reply the sahabas got angry and rose against the bedouin. At this point, however, Muhammad advised them to hold back. Later, Muhammad rose and went to his home and sent a further amount to the bedouin and said to him, "Have I done well by you? To which the bedouin answered, "Yes, may Allah reward you with well-being of family and tribe." In reply, the Prophet said to him, "You have made a certain statement and it has remained in the

minds of my companions. Hence would you like to say before them what you said before me, so that they would remove from their chests (hearts) what they have against you.” Thereupon the bedouin answered, “Yes.” When it was dusk or the next day, the bedouin came, and the Prophet said, “Verily this bedouin said what he said, and we increased his amount so that he asserted that he was pleased. Is that so? And the bedouin answered, “Yes, may Allah reward you with well-being of family and tribe.” Then Muhammad said, “Verily the narrative of myself and this bedouin is as the narrative of the man who had a female camel which only caused her to be more frightened. Then the owner of the camel called the people and said to them, ‘Leave me and my camel alone, for verily I am

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gentle with her and have more understanding.’ He turned to the camel, took some sweepings for her, and returned her gently until she kneeled. Then he saddled her and sat upon her. Now, verily, if I forsook you when the bedouin said what he said, and you had killed him, he would have entered the Fire.”

The Account of His Great Generosity

Muhammad was the most generous of men. In the month of Ramadan, he withheld nothing. When describing the Prophet (saw), Ali (radiAllahu anhu) used to say, “Of all men, he was the most giving, the most open hearted, the most truthful, the most fulfilling of promise, the gentlest of temper, and the noblest toward family. Whoever saw him unexpectedly, was awed by him, and whoever was close to him, loved him.” Ali also said “I did not see his likeness before or after him.” Muhammad was never asked for anything, but that he gave it. When a man came to Muhammad asking for something, Muhammad gave him a flock which closed the breach between two mountains. Then the man returned to his people and said, “Accept Islam, for Muhammad gives the gift of one who does not fear poverty.” He never said, “No” when he was asked for something. On another occasion, a man came and asked him for something. Muhammad (saw), having nothing with him, said, “Buy, making me responsible, and when we will have something, we will pay for it.”

An Account of His Bravery

Muhammad was the most gallant and the bravest of men. Ali said, “You have indeed seen me at the Battle of Badr, when we were taking refuge in the Prophet of Allah, who was closest to the enemy. Muhammad was on that day the most courageous of men.”

When he ordered the people to fight, he tucked up his garments and went quickly. He was the bravest of men. The courageous person was one who was close to Muhammad in battle, because of Muhammad’s proximity to the enemy. Imran ibn al-Husayn said, “The Messenger of Allah did not come upon a squadron but that he was the first to strike.” When the enemies approached him, he would say “I am the prophet; there is no falsehood in what I say. I am the grandson of ‘Abd al-Muttalib.” There was not seen anyone who was more vehement than he.

An Account of His Modesty

Muhammad was the most modest of men. He used to visit the sick, follow the funeral bier, answer the call of the slave, and patch his shoes and garments. In his house he did the family duties together with the rest of the family. His companions did not rise for him because they knew that he disliked that. When he passed young boys, he greeted them. When a man frightened by the reverence of the prophet was brought to him, Muhammad (saw) said to him, “Be at rest. I am not a king. I am only the son of a woman of Quraysh, who ate dried meat.”

He sat amongst his companions conversing with them, as if he were one of them. When a stranger came, not

knowing which one of them was Muhammad, he asked concerning him until the companions asked Muhammad to sit in a way in which the stranger could distinguish him from the rest. Later he sat on a mud bench which they built for him.

No one of his companions called him but that he said, "At your service." When he sat with the people, if they spoke regarding the future world, he participated with them; if they spoke regarding food and drink, he did likewise; if they spoke regarding worldly matters, he did likewise, gently and modestly. At times, they would recite poetry before him and used to mention matters which occurred in their olden days. The prophet (saw) smiled when they laughed; and he did not restrain them except from that which was sinful.

The Account of His Countenance

There is a description of the Messenger of Allah (saw) wherein he is described as not being excessively short or tall. Rather, he was middle stature, when he walked by himself. However, there was not a tall person who walked with him, but that Muhammad appeared as tall as he. Whenever someone tall would stand by him, still he appeared as tall as him.

His complexion was clear/'adhar', neither brown nor very white, unmixed with red or yellow or any other color. Some described him as being of a reddish hue; and they explained, however, that only those parts which were exposed to the wind and sun, such as face and neck, were of a reddish color. However, the color of the parts of his body which were not exposed was pure white unmixed with any red tint.

His beads of sweat on his face were like pearls; they were more fragrant than the most pungent musk. As for his hair, he had beautiful curly hair, which was neither lank nor short and woolly. When he combed his hair, it appeared as streaks of sand. It is said that his hair touched his shoulders; whereas, most of the reports state that his hair reached the lobe of his ear... The total number of white hairs on his head and his beard did not exceed 17.

Muhammad (saw) was the most handsome and luminous of men. No one described him but that he likened him to the moon on the night of Badr. His anger and pleasure were seen in his face because of the purity of his skin. His friend Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (rA) described him as "Loyal, pure, calling to good, as the moonlight of Badr, darkness was removed from him."

Muhammad (saw) had a wide forehead and very long arched eyebrows. The brightness [of the gap] between his two eyebrows was as if the space was made of pure silver. His eyes were very wide, black pupil with a reddish tint. He had long eyelashes so that one was almost dubious of their length. The upper part of his nose was hooked, i.e., his nose was not humped. There was a space between his teeth, i.e., they were separated; and when he showed his teeth while laughing, they flashed like lightning.

He had the most beautiful lips and the most delicate closed mouth of all. He had broad even cheeks. He was not long or round faced. He had a thick beard which he let grow. He clipped his mustache. He had the most beautiful neck of all, a neck that was neither long nor short. However, that part of his neck which was exposed to the sun and wind was like a kettle of silver mixed with gold, glistening because of the whiteness of the silver and the redness of the gold.

Muhammad (saw) had a broad chest, and his skin did not overlap. His chest was like a mirror in its evenness and the moon in its whiteness. Between his navel and upper chest there was a single hair which was stretched like a

sword, with no other hair on his chest or stomach. He had three belly folds; one of them was covered by the waist band, while the other two were visible. He had big, hairy shoulders; his chief bones were well covered with flesh. He had a wide back; between his shoulder blades there was the “seal of prophecy,” which was adjacent to his right shoulder.

He was bulky of upper arm and forearm, and the bones of the forearm were long. He was broad of palm and long of extremities. His fingers were as rods of silver. His palm was softer than silk; it was (his palm) as the perfumed hand of a perfumer, whether he did or did not perfume it. If someone shook his hand, when night fell the odor was still present. Muhammad put his hand on a boy’s head, and this boy distinguishable from his fellows by the odor of his head.

His walk: The Prophet used to walk fast, leaning forward slightly, as if he were walking downhill.

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Muhammad used to say, “I most resemble Adam, and my father Ibrahim most resembled me in external appearance and moral nature.”

The Account of His Miracles

Know, that if one witnessed Muhammad’s qualities and heard about his character, deeds, qualities, habits, natural disposition, his ruling, his dealings with the various types of people, together with what is related of his wondrous answers in regard to perplexing questions, there could not remain the slightest doubt or suspicion that all this was not acquired by human means. Rather, all this cannot be conceived except by seeking heavenly help and divine power. Prophet Muhammad’s good qualities and his virtues were absolute testimony of his truth, so much so that when an Arab saw him, he would say “By Allah, this is not the face of a liar.”

Allah (swt) bestowed all the fine qualities of character upon Rasulullah (saw), even though he was unlettered, did not occupy himself with learning, did not examine books; he was an orphan, and was regarded as weak amongst the chiefs of the Arabs. So, from where did he obtain the fine qualities of character and manner, the knowledge of the workings of jurisprudence (besides the other sciences), not to mention his true knowledge of Allah (swt), His angels and His books, the special properties of prophecy, were it not by revelation?

We will also mention some well-known prophetic miracles whose reports are spread widely. Allah (swt) changed the customary course of events through the agency of prophet Muhammad (saw) in the following events:

- The moon was split when he was asked for a sign (in Mecca).
- He fed the great party of men in the house of Jabir [ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Ansari].
- He fed the great party of men in the house of Abu Talha [Zayd ibn Sahl].
- He fed the great party of men at the battle of Khandaq /the Ditch.
- Once he fed eighty people from four mudd (5 1/2 pints) of barley and a baby goat. • He fed more than eighty men from four round loafs of barley.
- He fed the army from a small quantity of dates which the daughter of Bashir [ibn Sa’d] carried in her hand; moreover, after they all ate and were satiated there still remained an excess.
- They washed from a small bowl, which was so narrow that Muhammad could not stretch his hand inside. • The water emerged from between his fingers, and the whole thirsting army, drank. • There being no water, he caused the water of ablution to pour forth at ‘Ayn Tabuk, and another time at the well of Hudaybiya so that they both swelled with water. Furthermore, the army at ‘Ayn Tabuk which numbered in the thousands drank until they quenched their thirst; whereas 1,500 companions drank

from the well of Hodaybiya, a well which previously had no water.

- He threw a handful of dust against the army (foe) and their eyes were blinded; the Qur'an was revealed in regard to that stating, "You did not throw when you threw, but Allah threw."
- When the platform was made for him, the beam, by which he supported himself while speaking, squeaked, so that all of his companions heard what seemed like a camel sound. Thereupon Muhammad grasped the beam, and it became silent.
- Muhammad related the affairs which were beyond the reach of sensual or mental perception. • He warned 'Uthman [ibn 'Affan] that a calamity would overtake him, after which he would enter Paradise. • Muhammad related concerning a man who fought for the sake of Allah that he was of the people of Hell; this became evident because that man killed himself. Now these are all divine matters which the prophet came to know by Allah's teaching and revelation.
- Suraqa ibn Malik went after prophet Muhammad. But the feet of his horse sank, and the dust followed him in his steps until he asked for help. Then Muhammad wished him well and freed his horse; at the same time, he told him that he would wear on his forearms the bracelets of Chosroes; and it was so.

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Book 20 of the Ihya Ulum al-Din of Imam al-Ghazali (edited)

- He attacked one hundred of the Quraysh who were awaiting him. He cast dust over their heads and they did not see him.
- He called two trees; thereupon they came to him and joined; then he ordered them, and they separated. • Muhammad was of medium-stature, but when he walked with tall people he was as tall as they. • Muhammad was fed a poisoned shoulder with the result that the one who ate it with him died; however, Muhammad continued to live for forty years thereafter. Moreover, the poisoned shoulder spoke to him informing him that it was poisoned.
- The earth was rolled up for him and he was shown its eastern parts and its western parts. Muhammad reported that a king of his nation would reach those areas.
- He told his daughter Fatima that she would be the first of his family to reach him (i.e., die); and it was so. • Muhammad told his wives that she who had the longest of hand in regard to alms, i.e., most generous, would be the first to reach him (die). And it was Zaynab bint Jahsh.
- He stroked the udder of a barren ewe which gave no milk, and she gave milk; this was the cause of Ibn Mas'ud becoming a Muslim. Muhammad did this another time in the tent of Umm Ma'bad the Khuza'ite. • The eye of a certain of his companions was dislodged and fell. Thereupon Muhammad restored it with his hand, and it became the handsomer and sounder of his two eyes.
- Muhammad spit into the eye of 'Ali who had an eye sickness at the battle of Baybar and it became sound; then Muhammad dispatched him with the banner.
- They used to hear the food, which was before Muhammad, praise Allah.
- The foot of a certain of his companions was smitten. Muhammad rubbed the foot with his hand, and from that moment it was well.
- The provisions of the army with Muhammad having become small in quantity, Muhammad called for all that remained. When the very small quantity was collected, he blessed it and ordered them to take of it: This they did, and there was not a vessel in the camp but that it was full.

The Qur'an is the greatest everlasting miracle among mankind. The Messenger of Allah (saw) contended with the orators of the people and with the eloquent men of the Arabs by means of the Qur'an; the Arabian Peninsula at that time was filled with thousands of them (oratory which their method of boasting and vying). Rasulullah (saw) asked them to produce its likeness, or ten suras or even one sura like the Qur'an, if they doubted him. He said to them "Say, indeed, if mankind and the Jinn should conspire to produce the like of this, they could not produce its likeness, even if they helped one another," saying that to baffle them. But they were unable to match or to dispute

the Quran's pure language and its beauty.

How great is the salvation of one who believes prophet Muhammad (saw), has faith in him, and follows him in regard to all his doings! We ask Allah (swt) to help us imitate his character, actions, qualities, and sayings, through His grace and the ampleness of His generosity. Amin!