

Let's meet Muhammad (part 2 of 2)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

The Prophet Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) led a simple life without any extravagance or lavishness. He put this worldly life behind his back and turned away from it. He considered it to be a prison, not Paradise!

Had he wished, he could have had anything he desired, for the keys of its treasures were presented to him, but he refused to accept them.

He did not exchange his share of the Hereafter with this worldly life. He knew that it was a corridor, not a permanent residence. He understood fully well that it is a transit station, not a leisure park. He took it for its real worth - a summer cloud that would soon disperse.

Yet, Allaah says that He enriched him from poverty:

["Did He not find you poor and enrich you?"]¹

'Aaishah², his wife, said:

"A month would pass while the family of Muhammad would not light fire in their homes. They subsisted on two things - dates and water. Some Ansaar³ who were his neighbours would send milk from their sheep, which he would drink and then give to his family."⁴

She said the family of Muhammad never ate bread to their satisfaction for three consecutive days from the time of his arrival at Madinah until he passed away, which amounts to about 10 years!

With all this, he would stand up in the middle of the night to offer his gratitude to his Lord by praying the nightly prayer of Tahajjud. He would pray for so long that his feet would swell! When he was asked why he worshipped Allaah so much, his response was:

"Shall I not be a thankful slave of God?"⁵

¹ Qur'aan [93:8]

² 'Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (May Allaah be pleased with her)

³ Ansaar: those Muslim residents in Madinah who accepted the Emigrants (or Muhaajiroon) of Makkah and helped them to become adjusted into their new homes.

⁴ Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

⁵ Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

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Umar, one of his close friends, remembering the days he passed being hungry said that sometimes the Prophet did not even have old dates to satisfy his hunger!

Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, another companion, said that once, when the Prophet awoke from his sleep, the marks of the mat made out of date palm leaves on which he used to sleep were etched on his body. Ibn Mas'ood complained:

“My father and mother be ransomed for you! Why did you not let us prepare something (softer) for you from which you could protect yourself?

He replied:

‘I have nothing to do with this world. I am in this world like a rider who stops under the shade of the tree for a short time and, after taking rest, he resumes his journey again, leaving the tree behind.’”⁶

Various conquerors in the annals of history are known for spilling rivers of blood and erecting pyramids of skulls. Muhammad, (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*), is known for his forgiveness. He never took revenge from anyone who wronged him to the point he never struck anybody with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant, unless he was fighting in the Path of God to defend the faith.

His forgiveness could be seen on the day he entered Makkah as a conqueror after eight years of exile.

He forgave many of those who persecuted him, and forced him and his family in exile for three years, who had called him a lunatic, a poet, and a possessed person. He pardoned Aboo Sufyyaan, one of the most evil of people who plotted to persecute him day and night, along with his wife, Hind, who mutilated the dead body of the Prophet's Muslim uncle and ate the raw liver after ordering Wahshee, a fierce slave known for his fighting skills, to kill him, which later led them to accept Islaam. Who else could be on such an exalted standard of character but the noblest and most truthful Messenger of God?

Wahshee, a slave from Makkah, won his freedom in the early years of Islaam from his owner in return for killing Hamza, the uncle of the prophet, whose body was then mutilated. When Islaam reached Makkah, he ran away to another city, Ta'if. Eventually Ta'if also succumbed to the Muslims. He was told that Muhammad forgives anyone who accepts Islaam. Even though the crime was so great, Wahshee gathered his courage and came to him and announced his Islaam, and Muhammad forgave him! He even forgave Wahshee's former owner, Hind, the woman who had mutilated the dead body of Hamza and chewed his heart and liver because of her great hatred for Islaam!

⁶ Al-Tirmidhee

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His forgiveness even extended to Habbar. When his own daughter, Zaynab, was migrating from Makkah to Madinah, the Makkan pagans tried to stop her forcibly. Habbar was one of them. He made the Prophet's pregnant daughter trip from the camel. As a result, she lost her baby! Running away from the guilt of his crimes, Habbar left for Iran, but Allaah turned his heart towards the Prophet. So he appeared before the noble Prophet, acknowledged his guilt, bore the testimony, and was forgiven by the Prophet!

Pointing his finger at the moon, Muhammad split it into two halves. In one night, he travelled from Makkah to Jerusalem, led all the Prophets in prayer, and then ascended beyond the seven heavens to meet his Lord. He cured the sick and the blind. The demons would leave the possessed by his command, water flowed from his fingers, and his food could be heard glorifying Allaah.

Yet he was the most humble of men.

He sat on the ground, ate on the ground, and slept on the ground.

A companion narrated that if a stranger were to enter a gathering where he was present, he would not be able to differentiate the Prophet from his companions due to his humbleness.

Anas, his servant, swore that in his nine years of service, the noble Prophet never chastised him or blamed him for anything.

Those with him described him as being so humble that even a little girl could hold his hand and take him wherever she wished. He used to come to the weak among the Muslims in order to visit the sick and attend their funeral processions. He used to stay at the back of the caravan to aid the weak and pray for them. He would not hesitate to walk with a widow or a poor person, or even a slave until he had met their needs. He even responded to the invitation of slaves to eat nothing more than barley bread with them.

He was the best of men to his family. Aisha described his humility:

“He used to remain busy serving and helping his household, and when the time for prayer came he would perform ablution and go for prayer. He would patch his own sandals and sew his own garments. He was an ordinary human being...milking his sheep, and doing his own chores.”⁷

Indeed he was the best of all people to his family. His personality was such that people were not driven away from him!

He was the bravest, the most fearless, and the most courageous of all men in the battlefield. The knight of the Ansaar, al-Bara' exclaimed with surprise:

⁷ Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree

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“When the battle grew fierce, we sought protection at the side of the Prophet and the bravest of us was he who kept pace with him in the onslaught.”⁸

The brave man of Arabia, Alee - the Conqueror of Khaybar - described the valour of the Prophet:

“You should have seen me on the day of the Battle of Badr, as we sought protection at the side of the Prophet. He was the closest of us to the enemy and he had the greatest taste of the battle on that day!”⁹

Such was the noble Prophet of Allaah who we must love more than our own selves and whom God has described as:

[“Indeed in the Messenger of God you have a good example to follow.”]¹⁰

God swears for his moral perfection:

[“Noon. By the pen and what the angels write. You (O Muhammad) are not, by your Sustainer’s grace, a madman! And, verily, for you shall be a reward unending - for behold, you are at an exalted standard of character.”]¹¹

Everything about him - his qualities, character, sayings, and exemplary life - encourages a person to have faith as the Qur’aan declares:

[“Indeed in the Messenger of God you have a good example to follow.”]¹²

⁸ Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

⁹ Shar al-Sunnah

¹⁰ Qur’aan [33:21]

¹¹ Qur’aan [68:1-4]

¹² Qur’aan [33:21]