

NOT FOR SALE

مِنْ خُلُقِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETS

عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ



by the honorable shaykh

‘ABD AL-‘AZĪZ AL-SADHĀN



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عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

The Characteristics of the Prophets

Translated by Ahmed Al Hoori

Edited by Dr Azhar Majothi

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETS

عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

A translation of *Min Akhlāq al-Anbiyā'*

Authored by the honorable Shaykh,
'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muḥammad al-Sadḥān

Forewords by the honorable Shaykhs
Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān and 'Abd Allāh al-Jibrīn

Translated by
Ahmed Al Hoori

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AS-SUNNAH AS-SAHIIHAH

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**THE PROPHETS MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK AND
THEIR EQUIVALENT NAMES IN THE BIBLE**

Ādam	Adam	Nūḥ	Noah
Dāwūd	David	Ṣālīḥ	...
‘Easā	Jesus	Shu‘ayb	Jethro
Hūd	...	Sulaymān	Solomon
Ibrāhīm	Abraham	Yaḥyā	John the Baptist
Ismā‘īl	Ishmael	Ya‘qūb	Jacob
Lūṭ	Lot	Yūnus	Jonah
Muḥammad	...	Yūsuf	Joseph
Mūsā	Moses	Zakariyyah	Zachariah

عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

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FOREWORD BY THE HONORABLE SHAYKH,
DR SĀLIH B. FAWZĀN AL-FAWZĀN

All praise belongs to Allāh; as for what follows:

I have read the treatise entitled *The Characteristics of the Prophets*, by Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Sadḥān. I found it to be a beneficial work on this topic, and excellent in its presentation and style. It encourages one to emulate the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام based of the saying of Allāh:

﴿فَبِهْدْيِهِمْ أَقْتَدِهِ﴾

So from their guidance take an example. [6:90]

May Allāh reward the author with goodness for what he wrote and benefit the people by it. And may Allāh send his peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and companions.

Written by Ṣāliḥ b. Fawzān al-Fawzān
Member of the Council of Senior Scholars

23/3/1428

FOREWORD BY THE HONORABLE SHAYKH, DR 'ABD ALLĀH B. 'ABD AL-RAHMĀN AL-JIBRĪN

In the name of Allāh, the most merciful, the entirely merciful. All praise belongs to Allāh the lord of the universe, and may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon the most honorable of the Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, upon all of his family and companions, and upon all of the Prophets and Messengers. As for what follows:

I have read this treatise which is related to the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, authored by Shaykh, Dr 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muḥammad al-Sadḥān, may Allāh grant him success and guide him in his endeavors. I found it to be a valuable and beneficial work on this honorable topic of good manners and its effects and impact; the author gathered in it what was easy for him from the great and lofty manners that the Noble Qurān and the authentic Prophetic Sunnah have denoted. He did well in choosing and selecting and thereby he profited and benefited. I recommend the distribution of this treatise and that people take benefit from it in order to bring about the emulation of these noble manners so that later generations will take those who have preceded them (the *Salaf*) as their role models, and that may be achieve the benefits, effects and results of these virtuous and lofty characteristics.

May Allāh grant this nation the success to achieve everything in which goodness and uprightness is found. And Allāh knows best, and may the peace and blessing of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his companions and all of the Prophets.

'Abd Allāh bin 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jibrīn

5/5/1428

INTRODUCTION

All praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the universe, and may Allāh grant peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his entire family and companions. As for what follows:

Without doubt, the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is a topic that is worthy of reading, discussing and listening to. All goodness lies in it, because the Prophets were those who conveyed the message of Allāh to their people; they were the chosen ones from Allāh's creation, and they each have a virtue and character that no-one can obtain. Rather, no-one can come near to anything like them, and that is a bounty from Allāh, He gives it to whomever He wills. I begin this work with preliminary issues pertaining to the topic, and these will clarify the importance of this topic in general, as well as the status of Prophethood in both general and specific terms.

ISSUE NO. 1

Indeed, among the names of Allāh the Most High is *al-Hakīm* (the all-wise), who puts all affairs in their correct place. And among mankind are those who possess wisdom, yet the wisdom of humans—no matter how sound it is—will always have deficiencies and shortcomings. As for the matter of Allāh's wisdom, then it is entirely complete and reaches the uppermost level:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

Indeed your Lord is all-wise, all-knowing. [6:83]

﴿وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾

And Allāh is all-knowing, all-wise. [4:17]

﴿وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

And He is all-wise, all-knowing. [43:84]

Allāh, the Most High, informs us by mentioning these attributes of His, and He has the most beautiful names and the highest attributes.

ISSUE NO. 2

From the wisdom of Allāh, the Most High, and His magnificent construction in creating mankind is that He has made some people superior in lineage, and He has made their languages and ethnicities different. The Most High says:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافَ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ
وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge. [30:22]

As such, among them is the leader and those who are led, the rich and the poor, the non-Arab and the Arab, and the honorable and the debased.

ISSUE NO. 3

In the varying conditions of people, and in the diversity of their lineage, understanding, knowledge, and financial status, etc. there is found great lessons, one of which is that life is not complete except by these things. If all of the people were rich, then many benefits would be lost, and likewise, if everyone was poor, many benefits would be lost. Yet Allāh the Most High states:

﴿وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا
سُخْرِيًّا وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ﴾

...and We have raised some of them above others in degrees [of rank] that they may make use of one another for service. But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate. [43:32]

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَمِنْكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَاللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

It is He who created you, and among you is the disbeliever, and among you is the believer. And Allah , of what you do, is Seeing. [64:2]

If you take a look at the state of people and consider their different eras and the distance between their regions in the world, their different languages and ethnicities, etc., you will find many differences: rich and poor, healthy and sick, leaders and followers, believers and disbelievers, etc.

ISSUE NO. 4

Besides the fact that the condition of people and their distinguishments vary, true superiority is based on faith (*īmān*) in Allāh. It does not matter how much the lineages of people differ, or the wealth of some of them over others, because the deciding factor is based on the superiority of faith.

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ﴾

Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. [49:13]

And people should compete with one another over (righteousness). Yet, we find that they judge each other with different scales, including that of lineage, wealth, children, and nationality. By these scales, some (see themselves as) more superior than others. In most of their sittings and gatherings, people will compare themselves using these scales, except what Allāh has willed otherwise. These scales have no worth if the true scale is absent. The scale of lineage has no weight if the individual possessing it did not use it in obedience to Allāh and if he did not use it to aid others in their obedience of Allah. This is why:

﴿فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ﴾

So when the Horn is blown, no relationship will there be among them that Day... [23:101]

Regarding the scale of wealth and children:

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ۚ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ﴾

The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children; but only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart. [26:88-89]

Regarding the scale of nationality and tribal affiliations:

﴿يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ○ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ ○ وَصَلْبَتِهِ ○ وَبَنِيهِ﴾

On the Day a man will flee from his brother. And his mother and his father. And his wife and his children. [80:34-36]

Consequently, the true scale and real superiority is:

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ﴾

Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. [49:13]

[The poet said] “And there is no deficiency found in the righteous slave, if he actualized piety even if he weaved or cupped.”

ISSUE NO. 5

Superiority in faith consists of two types:

1. The superiority of faith, i.e. the believers are distinguished (by faith) over the non-believers.

﴿وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

And you will be superior if you are [true] believers. [3:139]

2. Among the people of faith are those who are superior over other believers, due to a quality that Allāh has made exclusive to them and favored them with: knowledge.

And Allāh has combined both (types of) superiorities in Sūrah al-Mujādalah whereby He states:

﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ﴾

Allah will raise those who have believed among you...

[58:11]

This is first (type of) superiority in faith.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾

And those who were given knowledge, by degrees. [58: 11]

This is the second (type of) superiority.

In conclusion, the general superiority is for the people of faith over the disbelievers, and the second superiority is for the people of knowledge over the rest of the believers.

ISSUE NO. 6

The people with the exclusive (type of) superiority in knowledge and faith vary in levels between them. The scholars (for example) vary in levels between themselves. However, and without a doubt, there is a level that is hard to even hope for, let alone get close to: you are prevented from even reaching it. It is the level that Allāh has specified to some people among mankind. It is a level He has chosen a group of people for from among His creation: it is Prophethood and Messengership.

Such are those who are the blessed group among Allāh's Prophets and Messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, those who have reached a status in which Allāh has favored them over the rest of mankind, and not that they reached it alone nor got close to it by themselves. They are the blessed group that Allāh has chosen:

﴿اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ﴾

Allah chooses from the angels Messengers and from the people. [22:75]

﴿اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ﴾

Allah is most knowing of where He places His message. [6:124]

This blessed group,

﴿إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ ۝ وَإِنَّهُمْ عِندَنَا لَمِنَ الْمُصْطَفَيْنَ الْأَخْيَارِ﴾

Indeed, We chose them for an exclusive quality: remembrance of the home [of the Hereafter]. And indeed they are, to Us, among the chosen and outstanding. [38:46-47]

Allāh has aided the one who aided them and gave them shelter:

﴿إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهُدُ﴾

Indeed, We will support Our Messengers and those who

believe during the life of this world and on the Day when the witnesses will stand. [40:51]

And Allāh punished and shamed those who denied them and took them as enemies:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَهْتَهَرِيءَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ﴾

And already were messengers ridiculed before you, but those who mocked them were enveloped by what they used to ridicule. [21:41]

ISSUE NO. 7

Indeed the Prophets and Messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ differ in superiority amongst themselves:

﴿تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّن كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾

Those messengers - some of them We caused to exceed others. Among them were those to whom Allah spoke, and He raised some of them in degree. [2:253]

As such, the “foremost in conviction (*ūlū l-‘azm*)” are the greatest of all Messengers, and the best of them are the two “friends (*khalīlān*)” of Allāh: Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and our Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. And the best of these two “friends” is our Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ which makes him the greatest of all the Prophets and Messengers, by the favor of Allāh on him; upon him and all of the Prophets and

Messengers the best and purest peace and blessings!

ISSUE NO. 8

One of the great virtues of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and their high rank and honorable degree is that the natural disposition (*fitrah*) finds comfort in the truthfulness of their call, speech and teachings; sound minds are in agreement to the correctness of their speech and to the reality of their call, and the hearts are at ease and find comfort in the truth that they carried. This is because of what they each possessed of a great pedigree and honorable status, and because their call was to pure monotheism (*tawhīd*) which is the truest call while everything else is false (*bāṭil*).

ISSUE NO. 9

Notwithstanding the great honor of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and their lofty degree (over the rest of mankind), they were human: they fell sick, became saddened, cried, experienced stress, and died.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِيْ اِلَيْهِمْ﴾

And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [Our message]. [16:43]

﴿فَلَعَلَّكَ تَارِكٌ بَعْضُ مَا يُوحَىٰ اِلَيْكَ وَضَائِقٌ بِهٖ
صَدْرُكَ﴾

Then would you possibly leave [out] some of what is revealed to you, or is your breast constrained by it...

[11:12]

﴿وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ﴾

And when I am ill, it is He who cures me. [26:80]

﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ﴾

And We already know that your breast is constrained
by what they say. [15:97]

As such, the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ are only human, they do not possess any characteristics of Lordship (*rubūbiyyah*) or Godship (*ulūhiyyah*).

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ أَفَإِنَّ مَتَّ فَهُمْ
الْخَالِدُونَ﴾

And We did not grant to any man before you eternity
[on earth]; so if you die - would they be eternal? [21:34]

﴿قُلْ لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ
وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ إِنَّا أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ قُلْ
هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

Say, [O Muhammad], "I do not tell you that I have
the depositories [containing the provision] of Allah or
that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an
angel. I only follow what is revealed to me." Say, "Is the
blind equivalent to the seeing? Then will you not give
thought?" [6:50]

ISSUE NO. 10

Though Allāh favored the Prophets ﷺ with special characteristics over the rest of mankind, these characteristics did not remove them from the realm of humanness. Allāh specified them with special qualities over that of the rest of mankind:

- Revelation (*wahy*);
- Infallibility (*iṣmah*);
- Their eyes would sleep but their hearts did not¹;
- They were given the choice at the time of death and asked “Do you want to remain living in this world forever or to die?”²
- They were buried in the places that they died in, and it has been related in a ḥadīth: “(The soul of) no Prophet is taken except that he is buried wherever he was taken.”³
- Allāh prohibited the earth from eating away at their bodies⁴;
- They remain alive in their graves in prayer.

ISSUE NO. 11

Just as the Prophets ﷺ have special characteristics over and above the rest of mankind, the best of them, being our Prophet Muḥammad

¹ In the lengthy ḥadīth of Anas (b. Mālik) ﷺ regarding *al-Isrā' wa 'l-Mī'rāj*, it states: “And likewise, the eyes of the Prophets sleep but their hearts do not.” Recorded by al-Bukhārī (7517).

² As related in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections (of al-Bukhārī and Muslim) in the ḥadīth of ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ, that the Prophet ﷺ said: “No Prophet fell ill except that was given the choice between this world and the hereafter.”

³ Recorded by Ibn Mājah (1628), on the authority of Abū Bakr ﷺ with a weak chain of narrators (*isnād ḍa’if*), however it has supporting evidences (*shawāhid*) which strengthen it to the level of authentic.

⁴ If one asks: “Is this not a quality that other than the Prophets ﷺ were also granted, i.e. the martyrs?” It is said in response: “Yes, however, this is a quality of all the Prophets ﷺ which is different for other than them. Since only some martyrs are blessed with this quality and not others.”

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, has special characteristics over the rest of the Prophets. He shares in the mutual characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ that have been mentioned above but he also has special characteristics that others did not.

In the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, he said: I heard the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying:

فُضِّلْتُ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ بِسِتِّ أُعْطِيتُ جَوَامِعَ الْكَلِمِ وَنُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ
وَأُجِلَّتْ لِي الْغَنَائِمُ وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ طَهْرًا وَمَسْجِدًا وَأُرْسِلْتُ إِلَى
الْخَلْقِ كَافَّةً وَخُتِمَ بِي النَّبِيُّونَ.

I have been given superiority over the other Prophets in six things: (i) I have been given words which are concise but comprehensive in meaning; (ii) I have been aided by the feeling (in the hearts of enemies) of fear (*al-ru'ab*): (iii) The spoils of war have been made lawful to me: (iv) The earth has been made for me clean and a place of worship; (v) I have been sent to all mankind; (vi) Prophethood ends with me.⁵

And in the ḥadīth reported by Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ،
وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهْرًا، فَأَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي أَدْرَكَتْهُ
الصَّلَاةُ فَلْيُصَلِّ، وَأُجِلَّتْ لِي الْمَغَانِمُ وَلَمْ يُحَلَّ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلِي، وَأُعْطِيتُ
الشَّفَاعَةَ، وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً، وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى النَّاسِ
عَامَّةً.

I have been given five things which were not given to any one else before me: (i) Allāh made me victorious (over my enemies) by fear (which strikes their hearts) by the distance of one month's journey; (ii) The earth has been made for me (and for my

⁵ Recorded by Muslim.

followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform *tayammum*, therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due; (iii) The spoils of war have been made lawful for me and it was not lawful for anyone else before me; (iv) I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Judgement); (v) Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind.⁶

Among the special qualities of our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

- He was given comprehensive speech (*jawāmi' al-kalim*) as mentioned above in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه. And some of the commentators said that *jawāmi' al-kalim* means that he would say a word or a sentence and it would consist of many tremendous and beautiful meanings;
- Allāh aided him and granted him victory him by causing fear (in his enemies' hearts) by the distance of one month's journey. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajar رحمته الله said regarding the abovementioned ḥadīth of Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه: "The understanding of it is that it was never for anyone other than him, this victory by fear by that time period or more than it; as for what is less than one month, then no. However, the wording in the narration of 'Amr b. Shu'ayb رضي الله عنه: 'I have been given victory over my enemy with fear, even if there was between me and them the distance of a month.' What is apparent is this is entirely exclusive for the Prophet ﷺ, and he only mentioned the distance of a month because there was never between his city and anyone from his enemies more than it. And this special quality was present for him always, even if he was by himself and without any soldiers. But does it apply to his nation after him? It does imply this."
- The spoils of war were made lawful for him and not for those (Prophets) who appeared before him;
- The earth was made for him and his nation a place of prayer and

⁶ Recorded by the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhārī and Muslim).

a means of purification, and not for those who appeared before him since they didn't use to pray except in their designated places of worship;

- He is the seal (*khātim*) of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and will have the most followers on the Day of Judgment;
- His message is for all of mankind, while every Prophet (before him) was sent to only his own people. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was sent to all mankind.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا﴾

And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. [34:28]

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا﴾

Say, [O Muhammad], "O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all..." [7:158]

- His everlasting miracle continues to exist, i.e. the noble Quran, and it is preserved by Allāh.

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian. [15:9]

ISSUE NO. 12

One of the dictates pertaining to the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they are the best of mankind. Being the best of mankind necessitates that their characteristics and morals are the finest, and their manners are the

best, in absolute terms. Thus, they are exemplifiers of good manners, virtues, noble qualities and honorable characteristics, may peace and blessings be on them all.

ISSUE NO. 13

Due to the great station belonging to the Prophets, and the tremendous nature of their manners, guidance and call, Allāh has ordered the greatest of them –our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ– to emulate the previous Prophets’ guidance by saying:

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهِهِمْ أَقْتَدِهٖ﴾

Those are the ones whom Allah has guided, so from their guidance take an example. [6:90]

Meaning: O Muḥammad ﷺ, take as an example the guidance of the Prophets before you.

ISSUE NO. 14

The Prophet ﷺ was steadfast in doing the above, and so he followed the guidance of his brethren, the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ (before him), and Allāh increased him in virtue (over them), making him the greatest of the Prophets in status, and his manners the greatest of manners and most noble. Allāh commended the Prophet’s speech:

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ﴾

Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. [53:3]

He commended the Prophet’s sight:

﴿مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى﴾

The sight [of the Prophet] did not swerve, nor did it transgress [its limit]. [53:17]

And He commended the Prophet's manners:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character. [68:4]

Some scholars among the Shafī'ī *madhhab* said: "When one reveres the greatness of another regarding any trait, it demonstrates his own superiority in that greatness. Then what can be said when the one who reveres is the *Greatest of the Great*, i.e. Allāh?"

ISSUE NO. 15

Allāh has ordered us to emulate our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾

There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often. [33:21]

He ordered us to follow the Prophet's ﷺ way and take him as a role model by emulating his guidance and honorable manners and attributes, all of which are exalted.

ISSUE NO. 16

The Religion of Islam gives great esteem to the issue of manners and this is done so in several ways. Allāh has praised His Prophet ﷺ for his great noble manners:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character. [68:4]

The Prophet ﷺ, though he was the best and greatest of all men in manners, would ask His Lord to grant him good manners:

وَاهْدِنِي لِأَحْسَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ لَا يَهْدِي لِأَحْسَنِهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“Guide me to the best of manners, for none can guide to the best of them but You.”⁷

اللَّهُمَّ كَمَا أَحْسَنْتَ خَلْقِي، فَحَسِّنْ خُلُقِي.

“O Allāh! Just as You have made me good in form, make me good in manners.”⁸

The religion of Islam has made good manners a means of nearness (to Allāh) that equal some of the greatest actions that draw one nearer (to Allāh). The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَدْرِكُ بِحُسْنِ خُلُقِهِ دَرَجَةَ الصَّائِمِ الْقَائِمِ.

“By a man’s good character, he attains the station of one who prays during the night and fasts during the day.”⁹

⁷ Recorded by Muslim (771) from the ḥadīth of ‘Alī ؓ and it begins with “When he (the Prophet ﷺ) would stand for the night prayer, he would say: ‘I have turned my face to the one who created the heavens and the earth...’”

⁸ Recorded by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (1/403) from the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ, and from ‘Ā’ishah ؓ (6/68 and 155).

⁹ Recorded by Abū Dāwūd (4798) and Aḥmad (6/187) from ‘Ā’ishah ؓ.

The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that the closest people to him on the Day of Judgement are the best of them in manners:

إِنَّ أَحَبَّكُمْ إِلَيَّ، وَأَقْرَبَكُمْ مِنِّي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَحْسَنُكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا.

“The most beloved of you to me and nearest to me on the Day of Judgement is whoever among you is best in manners.”¹⁰

There is a caution and warning from evil manners and bad character.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

وَاصْرِفْ عَنِّي سَيِّئَهَا، لَا يَصْرِفُ عَنِّي سَيِّئَهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“And turn me away from its evil (characteristics). None can turn me away from its evil except You.”¹¹

The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that manners have either a righteous or corrupting impact in deeds. He ﷺ said:

أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ ...

“The most beloved people to Allāh the Most High are the most beneficial to mankind...”

And at the end of the same ḥadīth he ﷺ said:

وَإِنَّ سُوءَ الْخُلُقِ يُفْسِدُ الْعَمَلَ كَمَا يُفْسِدُ الْخَلُّ الْعَسَلَ.

“...and indeed, bad manners corrupt deeds like the way vinegar spoils honey.”¹²

¹⁰ Recorded by Aḥmad (4/193) and Ibn Ḥibbān (5557, al-Iḥsān) from the ḥadīth of Abū Tha’labah al-Khushabī.

¹¹ Recorded by Muslim from the ḥadīth of ‘Alī, and it will follow shortly.

¹² Recorded by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (12/453) and Ibn Abī Dunyā in *Qaḍā al-Ḥawā’ij* (p. 47). Al-Albānī graded it sound (*ḥasan*) in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (906).

ISSUE NO. 17

From what has preceded regarding the great status of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the matter of their characteristics, and the high status and exalted levels of manners in Islam according to Allāh, it is appropriate for every Muslim:

- To focus on correcting his manners;
- Behave well in all of his dealings and gatherings;
- Bring to his attention the status of good manners;
- Know that good manners is a silent invitation (to Islam) for how many people have entered Islam because of a good show of manners, and how many people have hated Islam and increased in hatred for it due to an evil show of manners!

Thus, it is appropriate for every Muslim to give care to this issue of improving one's manners.

ISSUE NO. 18

Following these introductory issues, I finish with a final one: any characteristic that Allāh has mentioned about some of His Prophets عليهم السلام, then it is found in all of them because they emulated each other, and all of them observed the character of the one that preceded him. After presenting these eighteen introductory issues, I now present some of what Allāh the Most High has made easy (for me to gather) from the characteristics and manners of the Prophets and Messengers عليهم السلام. I recount them here, and with Allāh lies success:

FEAR OF ALLĀH

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was that they were the most fearful among mankind of their Lord. This is because they were the most knowledgeable of whom Allāh is:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ﴾

Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, and who have knowledge. [35:28]

The Prophets remain the most fearful among all mankind of Allāh. Whoever reflects over the noble verses (of the Quran) and the Prophetic reports about the Prophets will find tens, even hundreds, of examples (pertaining to their fear of Allāh).

ĀDĀM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Allāh said about him:

﴿ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلُّ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴾

And their Lord called to them, "Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan is to you a clear enemy?" [7:22]

As a result, he hurried (to repent):

﴿قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

They said, "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers." [7:23]

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Nūh requested his Lord to save his son (from the flood) but it became clear to him that the son was not given success to do what was right; Allāh made clear to Nūh that it was a mistake (to ask for his son's salvation), so he hurried, did not falter, and sought forgiveness of his Lord:

﴿وَنَادَى نُوحٌ رَبَّهُ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ابْنِي مِنِّي مِنْ أَهْلِي وَإِن
وَعْدَكَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنْتَ أَحْكَمُ الْحَاكِمِينَ ۝ قَالَ يُنُوحُ إِنَّهُ
لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي مَا
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنِّي أَعِظُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

And Nūh called to his Lord and said, "My Lord, indeed my son is of my family; and indeed, Your promise is true; and You are the most just of judges!" He said, "O Nūh, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, he is [one whose] work was other than righteous, so ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant." [11:45-46]

Nuḥ hurried out in a state of fear and apprehension with a desire to please Allāh, and in hope of escaping His punishment and anger:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

[Nuḥ] said, "My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers." [11:47]

YŪNUS (DHŪ 'L-NŪN) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He became angry and irritated with his people and did not practice patience. However, when he was cautioned by his Lord, he returned (to his people), hastened (to repent) and was not neglectful:

﴿وَدَا النُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَن لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

And [mention] Dhū 'l-Nūn (Yūnus), when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, "There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers." [21:87]

And in Sūrah al-Şāffāt:

﴿فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ ○ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِذٍ إِلَىٰ﴾

يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ○ فَنبذناه بالعرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ ○ وَأَنْبَتْنَا
عَلَيْهِ شَجْرَةً مِّنَ يَقْطِينٍ ﴿

And had he (Yūnus) not been of those who exalt Allah, he would have remained inside its (the whale's) belly until the Day they are resurrected. But We threw him onto the open shore while he was ill. And We caused to grow over him a gourd vine. [37:143-146]

Yūnus called on his Lord and singled Him out alone in worship, asking Him for rescue. In response, Allāh answered his call.

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Mūsā struck a man and the man died from the blow. In this instance, it became clear to Mūsā the error he made:

﴿قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ﴾

[Moses] said, "This is from the work of Satan. Indeed, he is a manifest, misleading enemy." [28:15]

He hastened (to repent), acknowledged that he wronged himself, and asked Allāh for forgiveness:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

He said, "My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, so forgive me," and He forgave him. Indeed, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. [28:16]

DĀWŪD عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Dāwūd was just like the rest of his brethren among the Prophets: quick to repent when Allāh tested him regarding the judgement between two adversaries:

﴿وَلَمَّا فَتَنَّاهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ۗ﴾

And David became certain that We had tried him, and he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing [in prostration] and turned in repentance [to Allah]. [38:24]

In any case, despite what the Prophets possessed of high, lofty stations and noble, honorable virtues, they were still the quickest amongst all of mankind to repent when it became clear to them that they had erred.

MANNERS WITH ALLĀH

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they were the greatest of all mankind with respect to their manners with Allāh.

One of the things that supports this is what Allāh has narrated in the Quran regarding 'Īsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ; Allāh said to him, while being fully aware of the reason:

﴿عَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّيَ إِلَهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ
قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ
إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ
مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عََلَمُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾

[Allah will say] "O Jesus, Son of Mary, did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah?'" He will say, "Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right. If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen. [5:116]

Thus, 'Īsā never said such things. His call, and the invitation of all of the Prophets, was to pure monotheism (*Tawhīd*) and the destruction of polytheism. Yet and still, 'Īsā followed the path of the Prophets in terms of good manners with their Lord.

Ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said: "and this is success in adhering to good manners while giving a complete answer."

NEVER TAKING REVENGE FOR ONESELF

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they did not take revenge for things done to them. Instead, their concern and goal was the pleasure of their Lord, so they would not take revenge except if the prohibitions of Allāh were transgressed, but as for themselves, then no.

YA'QŪB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When his sons came to know that their affair was exposed and of their mistake, and they found out that Yūsuf was alive and well and provided for (by Allāh) during (his absence), they returned to their father ashamed and distraught:

﴿قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ﴾

They said, "O our father, ask for us forgiveness of our sins; indeed, we have been sinners." [12:97]

And alongside the fact that Ya'qūb suffered tremendously from Yūsuf's absence and from the plot which his brothers carried out on him, followed by their lying about it all, alongside all of this:

﴿قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

He (Ya'qūb) said, "I will ask forgiveness for you from my Lord. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." [12:98]

Point of Discussion: Why did Ya‘qūb say “I am going to seek forgiveness (for you all soon)” and he didn’t say “I will seek forgiveness (for you all immediately)”?

Some interpreters of the Quran responded by saying he would delay his supplication for them until the last part of the night because it is more likely to be answered at that time. Due to this, Allāh has praised those seekers of forgiveness during the last hours of the night:

﴿وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ﴾

...and those who seek forgiveness before dawn. [3:17]

YŪSUF عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Likewise, Yūsuf did not take revenge on his brothers despite the severity of what they did, and while having the upper hand over them. The only thing he said after the brothers figured out who he was, is:

﴿قَالُوا أَيْنَكَ لَأَنْتَ يُوسُفُ قَالَ أَنَا يُوسُفُ وَهَذَا أَخِي
قَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّهُ مَن يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

They said, "Are you indeed Yūsuf?" He said "I am Yūsuf, and this is my brother. Allah has certainly favored us. Indeed, he who fears Allah and is patient, then indeed, Allah does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good." [12:90]

In response, his brothers said:

﴿قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَاطَرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَخَاطِبِينَ﴾

They said, "By Allah , certainly has Allah preferred you over us, and indeed, we have been sinners." [12:91]

Did Yūsuf take out his revenge? Did he scold them? Did he do any of that? Not at all! This is because these were Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ who possessed lofty manners. Rather, Yūsuf said:

﴿ لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يُغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ﴾

"No blame will there be upon you today. Allah will forgive you; and He is the most merciful of the merciful."

[12:92]

Moreover, Yūsuf's great manners reached greater heights when he gathered with his father and brothers and said:

﴿ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ السِّجْنِ ﴾

And He was certainly good to me when He took me out of prison... [12:100]

He didn't say "from the water-well" in order not to hurt his brothers' feelings. Then he said:

﴿ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ تَزَعَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي ﴾

...after Shayṭān had induced [estrangement] between me and my brothers. [12:100]

This, bearing in mind that Shayṭān did not entice him in this matter but rather he enticed his brothers (against him). Yet, all of this was part of avoiding any offence to his brothers' feelings. Thus, Yūsuf didn't

seek revenge for himself.

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

As for our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ said about him:

ما انتقم رسول الله لنفسه شيء قط، حتى تُنتهَل حُرْمَاتُ اللَّهِ.

The Messenger of Allāh did not seek revenge for what was done to him ever, not unless the prohibitions of Allāh were transgressed.¹³

Awful and offensive things would be done to the Prophet ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, yet he would pardon and offer excuses (for any mistreatment done to him) because he is as Allāh has stated:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character. [68:4]

Anas b. Mālik ﷺ said:

خرجت مع النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وعليه برد نجراني غليظ الحاشية، فجاء رجل، فجبذ البرد حتى أثر البرد في صفحة عنق النبي. ثم قال: يا محمد، مُر لي من مال الله الذي عندك! فالتفت إليه رسول الله ثم ضحك ثم أمر له بعتاء.

I walked out with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he was wearing a Najrānī cloak with a thick border. A man appeared and took hold of the cloak so much so that it bruised the neck of Prophet. The man said: “O Muhammad! Give me out of Allāh’s wealth what you possess!” The Messenger of Allāh turned to him

¹³ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ.

and smiled and directed that he should be given something.¹⁴

This man most definitely transgressed when he grabbed the cloak and was offensive due to his aggressive tone and sternness. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was entirely able to punish the man, set him straight and not give him anything. However, the Prophet ﷺ was as Allāh said about him:

﴿بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

...to the believers (he) is kind and merciful. [9:128]

In the *Musnad* (of Imām Aḥmad), it is related that when the Prophet ﷺ once distributed some of the spoils of war, he gave some to the new Muslims and left off the Anṣār. Some of them felt unhappy about this inside of themselves. When this news reached the Prophet ﷺ, he gathered the Anṣār having knowledge of what was said and with the ability to punish them for it. But look at the great manners and lofty character in what he said:

يا معشر الأنصار! ما قالة بلغتنى عنكم؟

O Anṣār! What are these words that have reached me about you all?

He didn't say "You have said such-and-such" despite them having said it! Then he said:

I swear by Allāh, if you had so wished, then you could have said the following words and you would have told the truth and been believed: 'You came to us disbelieved and we believed in you, in a weak state and we aided you, banished and we gave you shelter, poor and we enriched you!' O Anṣār, have you experienced

¹⁴ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of Anas ﷺ.

discomfort in yourselves because of a drop of this worldly life which I gifted to a people so that they may submit (to Allāh) while I left you all to your Islām? Are you not pleased, O Anṣār, that the people left with sheep and camels (from the spoils of war) but you returned with the Messenger of Allāh? I swear by the One in whose Hand is Muḥammad's soul, if it wasn't for the migration I would have been a man among the Anṣār; if the people took a path, and the Anṣār took a path, then I would most definitely take the path of the Anṣār! O Allāh! Have mercy on the Anṣār, the children of the Anṣār and on the children of the children of the Anṣār!

Upon this, the Anṣār cried until they wet their beards, and they said "We are pleased with the Messenger of Allāh as our portion!"¹⁵

¹⁵ *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad* (3/76) from the ḥadīth of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī 

THANKFULNESS TO ALLĀH

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they were the most grateful of all mankind.

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh has certainly described Nūḥ as being an extremely thankful slave when He said (in the Quran):

﴿ذُرِّيَّةً مِّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا﴾

O descendants of those We carried [in the ship] with Noah. Indeed, he was a grateful servant. [17:3]

İBRĀHĪM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh praised him when He said:

﴿إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○ شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعَمِهِ أَجْتَبَنَاهُ وَهَدَيْنَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

Indeed, Abraham was a [comprehensive] leader, devoutly obedient to Allah, inclining toward truth, and he was not of those who associate others with Allah. [He was] grateful for His favors. Allah chose him and guided him to a straight path. [16:120-121]

SULAYMĀN عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Allāh mentioned in His Book that Sulaymān said:

﴿رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ
وَالِدَيَّ﴾

"My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which
You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents..."

[27:19]

And Sulaymān also said:

﴿هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ
فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ﴾

"This is from the favor of my Lord to test me whether I
will be grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful
- his gratitude is only for [the benefit of] himself. And
whoever is ungrateful - then indeed, my Lord is Free of
need and Generous." [27:40]

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Allāh encouraged Mūsā to be thankful even though he was already one
of the thankful:

﴿قَالَ يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَتِي
وَبِكَلِمِي فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْتُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾

"O Moses, I have chosen you over the people with My
messages and My words [to you]. So take what I have

given you and be among the grateful." [7:144]

And Mūsā said:

﴿ كُنْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ۝ وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴾

That we may exalt You much. And remember You much. [20:33-34]

○ OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

He was the most thankful of all mankind to Allāh despite already having such an honorable status and great station. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to stand during the night (in prayer) until his feet blistered. When he was asked about this, "Why do you do so much while Allāh has forgiven your present and past sins?" He صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied by saying:

أفلا أكون عبداً شكوراً؟

Should I not be a thankful slave?¹⁶

Due to the great matter of giving thanks to Allāh, the Most High, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ encouraged his nation to show gratitude to Allāh. As such, one of the greatest virtues of this act of worship, i.e. gratefulness to Allāh, is that Allāh recompenses it with something greater than the original blessing itself. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

ما أنعم الله على عبد نعمةً فشكر الله عليها إلا كان الذي أعطى أفضل من الذي أخذ.

Allāh does not bestow a blessing upon a servant to which he

¹⁶ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of al-Mughīrah ﷺ.

Thankfulness to Allāh

responds with thanks to Allāh for it except that the thing (which Allāh) gives next is greater than what he originally received.”¹⁷

Meaning: the thing which Allāh gives due to having shown gratitude is greater than what the servant first received from the blessing (that he was initially grateful for).

¹⁷ Recorded by Ibn Mājah (3805) in the ḥadīth of Anas رضي الله عنه. Al-Būṣīrī graded it sound (*ḥasan*) in *al-Zawāʿid*.

HASTENING TO DO GOOD

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they were the quickest among mankind in doing good deeds. They never neglected doing them.

﴿ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَعَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴾

Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive. [21:90]

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

He said:

﴿ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

"...and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims."
[6:163]

ZAKARIYYAH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh said about him:

﴿ وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ ○ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَاهُ و

رَوْجَهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا^ط
وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴿

And [mention] Zakariyyah, when he called to his Lord, "My Lord, do not leave me alone [with no heir], while you are the best of inheritors." So We responded to him, and We gave to him Yahyā, and amended for him his wife. Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive. [21:89-90]

Due to this, Allāh has encouraged one to rush and compete in doing good deeds:

﴿سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ﴾

Race toward forgiveness from your Lord... [57:21]

﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ﴾

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord... [3:133]

Thus, competing and rushing to do good deeds is from the actions and characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

FULFILLMENT OF PROMISES

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they were the most trustworthy in fulfilling promises if they gave a covenant or made a pledge. And a covenant is one of two kinds:

1. The covenant with Allāh;
2. The covenant with people.

The Prophets were the most committed in fulfilling their covenants from amongst all mankind.

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِءَ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي قَالُوا أَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَأَشْهَدُوا وَإِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ﴾

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." [3:81]

Allāh placed upon the Prophets this covenant: if Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was commissioned (with the message of Islām) and one of them was

alive, he should follow him. And so the Prophets adhered to this and they fulfilled their covenant. As for what was between them and their peoples, then they were the most committed in fulfilling their covenants and because of that Allāh praised Ismā'īl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

﴿ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا ﴾

Indeed, he was true to his promise, and he was a Messenger and a Prophet. [19:54]

We benefit from this about the great lesson of fulfilling a promise. This is why the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ considered the breaking of promises to be one of the characteristics of the hypocrites whereby he said: “(There are) four (characteristics): whomsoever they are found in is a pure hypocrite, and whomsoever has one characteristic from them possesses a characteristic of hypocrisy until he leaves it off...” and he mentioned from amongst them: “when he makes a promise, he breaks it.”¹⁸

Based on this, it is necessary for the Muslim in general, and the student of knowledge in particular, to be the furthest from the people from such evil characteristics, and to be an example that is emulated in the fulfillment of promises.

And what is curious is that the Arabs during the pre-Islamic era (*jāhiliyyah*) used to consider the breaking of a promise to be among the most despised of matters.

‘Awf b. al-Nu‘mān said, even though the people during *jāhiliyyah* were ignoramus: “For a man to die from thirst is better for him than to be considered as someone who does not fulfil his promise”!¹⁹

And as for sayings which censure the breaking of a promise, then

¹⁸ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ.

¹⁹ *Adab al-Imlā’ wa ‘I-Istimlā’*, p. 41; *Tārikh Baghdād* (3/132); *Tajrid Asmā’ al-Shāhābah* by al-Dhahabī, p. 429.

there are many:

- It was narrated about Sulaymān, the son of Dāwūd عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَام, that he said to a son of his: “O son! If you make a promise, then do not break it, for if you do so you will trade love for animosity.”²⁰
- ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said Hārūn b. Sufyān al-Mustamlī said to him: “I said to your father, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal: ‘How do you recognize liars?’ He replied: ‘By their promises.’”
- And they (the *Salaf*) used to abstain from making promises due to the fear of breaking them. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Ḥanẓalī said: “I said to Qabīṣah: ‘Do you promise me?’ And he replied: ‘If you came to me and saw me, then you would have met me.’”²¹

And one of the beautiful passages of poetry that have been said regarding promises reads:

If you said regarding something “Yes”, then complete it, for verily “Yes” is a debt upon the free-man, and obligatory. And if not, say “No”, and relax and take ease in this, so that the people don’t say “You’re a liar.”

Another poet said:

If the calamities gather, stinginess is the most evil of them, but more evil than stinginess is the promiser who doesn’t fulfill (his promise). For there is no goodness in a word if it was a lie, and there is no goodness in a word if there was no action.

²⁰ *Adab al-Imlāʾ*, p. 41.

²¹ *Adab al-Imlāʾ*, p. 42.

UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHTS OF THE PARENTS

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was their understanding of the rights of the parents. Regarding this matter it can be said: there is no doubt that that many people have neglected the matter of being good to their parents and are lackadaisical regarding it, and this is something that is extremely dangerous. How many homes has disobedience to the parents destroyed? How many relationships between the spouses has it separated? How many people has it caused poverty? And how many people were punished in this life because of it? Even though to Allah, the right of the parents in the hereafter is great.

Without doubt, the Prophets of Allāh were the most excellent of the people to their parents.

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He said, and his parents were Muslim:

﴿رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ﴾

My Lord, forgive me and my parents... [71:28]

YAHYĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh said about him:

﴿وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا﴾

And (he was) dutiful to his parents, and he was not a disobedient tyrant. [19:14]

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 'EASĀ

He said:

﴿وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي﴾

And dutiful to my mother... [19:32]

SULAYMAN عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He said:

﴿رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى
وَالِدَيَّ﴾

**"My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which
You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents..."
[27:19]**

YŪSUF عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

He was excellent to Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

﴿فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ادْخُلُوا
مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ ۝ وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ﴾

**And when they entered upon Joseph, he took his parents
to himself and said, "Enter Egypt, Allah willing, safe
[and secure]." And he raised his parents upon the
throne... [12:99-100]**

Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was excellent to Ishāq عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. And Ismā'īl and Ishāq عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ were excellent to Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. And Ibrāhīm was excellent to his father in the best manner though his father was a disbeliever.

It could be said how can Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ be good to his father while his father followed a different religion than him? Verily Ibrāhīm proclaimed to his father and said:

﴿يَأْتِبِ إِيَّيَ قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا ○ يَأْتِبِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا ○ يَأْتِبِ إِيَّيَ أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا﴾

"O my father, indeed there has come to me of knowledge that which has not come to you, so follow me; I will guide you to an even path. O my father, do not worship Satan. Indeed Satan has ever been, to the Most Merciful, disobedient. O my father, indeed I fear that there will touch you a punishment from the Most Merciful so you would be to Satan a companion [in Hellfire]." [19:43-45]

So, is there any goodness towards a wrongdoer better than this goodness? And are there any expressions of sonhood towards the station of fatherhood more gracious, merciful, gentle and to the point than such words?

Some scholars of the Arabic language, may Allāh have mercy on them, said: the friend (*khalīl*) of Allāh (i.e. Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) was gentle with his father and spoke to him with the softest speech, and the friend of Allāh outwardly expressed his love to his father four times by saying:

﴿يَا أَبَتِ﴾

"O my father..." [19:43-45]

Thereby, he made clear to him his mistake and the severity of the horrible ending, and indeed, he possessed knowledge that was not apparent to his father, and he remained persistent with him. In fact, he used to seek forgiveness for him until Allāh prohibited him from doing so:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ أَسْتَعْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ﴾

And the request of forgiveness of Abraham for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became apparent to Abraham that his father was an enemy to Allah, he disassociated himself from him. [9:114]

○ OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

As for our Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he was excellent to his parents. It may be asked: how can that be while his parents passed away before he was commissioned (as a Prophet)? It is said in response: is it not the case that he sought permission from his Lord to visit the grave of his mother and so Allāh gave him permission? And he sought permission to seek forgiveness for her and Allāh refused, and so the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ cried so much so that he caused the people around him to cry?²² And the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was excellent to his uncles, and it reached us in a hadeeth:

²² Recorded by Muslim (976) in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ.

عم الرجل صنو أبيه.

The uncle of a man is the equal of his father.²³

Meaning: the uncle has the station of his father. And the Prophet ﷺ was the most excellent to his uncles since they took the station of his father [since he died before the Prophet was born]. The uncles of the Prophet were divided into three groups:

- Those who believed in him and aided him, like al-‘Abbās and Ḥamzah ﷺ;
- Those who aided him but did not believe in him, namely Abū Ṭālib;
- Those who took him as an enemy and waged war against him and harmed him, namely Abū Lahab.

Taking all of this into consideration, the Prophet ﷺ was excellent to them and eager for their guidance; he even waited by the death-bed of his uncle Abū Ṭālib until his he passed away while saying to him:

Oh uncle, say that there is ‘no god worthy of worship except Allāh’, a statement that I can argue with on your behalf to Allāh!

Do you not see this great dutifulness? The Prophet ﷺ stayed with his uncle until the end, until he passed away and then he said:

I will definitely seek forgiveness you as long as I am not prohibited from you.²⁴

²³ Recorded by Muslim (983) in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ.

²⁴ Agreed on (by al-Bukhāri and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of al-Musayyib ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ used to revere Ḥamzah and al-‘Abbās . He would honor Ḥamzah while he was living and before he was martyred, and he would honor al-‘Abbās and speak to him (by saying): “oh, my dear uncle!”; he would further accept his intercession, and this is one of the greatest acts of dutifulness from the Prophet ﷺ .

UTMOST CARE FOR CHILDREN, FAMILY AND PARENTS

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was that they were the most eager of people regarding their children, family and parents.

NÜH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

An example of his outstanding care for his family is that he didn't cease inviting his son, caring for his wellbeing and motivating him to board the ship of safety with him:

﴿يَبُنَيَّ اُرْكَب مَعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَعَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

"O my son, come aboard with us and be not with the disbelievers." [11:42]

And with all of this going on, Nūḥ did not leave his son and he persisted in calling him while being gentle with him in the hope that he may answer. Yet, the son continued in his disobedience and said:

﴿سَاوِيَ إِلَىٰ جَبَلٍ يَعْصِمُنِي مِنَ الْمَاءِ﴾

"I will take refuge on a mountain to protect me from the water." [11:43]

And out of the mercy of fatherhood and eagerness for his offspring, Nūḥ said:

﴿لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ﴾

"There is no protector today from the decree of Allah ,
except for whom He gives mercy." [11:43]

And Nūḥ stayed by him until they were separated:

﴿وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا الْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمَغْرُقِينَ﴾

And the waves came between them, and he was among
the drowned. [11:43]

IBRĀHĪM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From his eagerness for his family and offspring was that he supplicated to Allāh to bestow upon them what was bestowed upon him (i.e. Prophethood). Allāh states:

﴿وَإِذْ أَبْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۗ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۗ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

And [mention, O Muḥammad], when Ibrāhīm was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allāh] said, "Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people." [Ibrāhīm] said, "And of my descendants?" [Allāh] said, "My covenant does not include the wrongdoers." [2:124]

And Allāh states that Ibrāhīm said:

﴿رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةٌ مُسْلِمَةٌ لَكَ﴾

"Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You." [2:128]

In fact, Ibrāhīm's eagerness reached so far for his offspring that he supplicated to his Lord:

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ
الْأَصْنَامَ﴾

"My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols." [14:35]

And this is from the understanding of the friend (*khalīl*) of Allāh. In fact, this is from the greatest acts of righteousness performed by him: calling on his Lord to protect his offspring from falling into disbelief and the worship of idols. Ibrāhīm al-Taymī ؑ said: "Who is safe from being trialled after a friend of Allāh?"

YA'QŪB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He was extremely caring for his offspring; when Yūsuf informed him about his dream, Ya'qūb said to him, fearing that the family would divide:

﴿يَبْنِيَّ لَا تَقْضُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلَىٰ إِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُوا لَكَ كَيْدًا﴾

"O my son, do not relate your vision to your brothers or they will contrive against you a plan." [12:5]

When the sons of Ya'qūb wanted to return to Egypt another time,

Ya'qūb advised them and said:

﴿يَبْنِي لَّا تَدْخُلُوا مِن بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَأَدْخُلُوا مِن أَبْوَابٍ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٍ﴾

"O my sons, do not enter from one gate but enter from different gates.." [12:67]

Some of the interpreters of the *Quran* mentioned that he was afraid that they would be afflicted by the evil eye if they entered together through one door; this is an example of his care and his eagerness for his family's wellbeing.

Another example is when Allāh gathered them together, after what the sons did to Yūsuf and his younger brother, yet Ya'qūb didn't scold them. Instead, he showed them a great deal of attention and care to the extent that he did not cease advising them and nurturing them towards goodness until the departing of his soul:

﴿أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya'qūb, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Ibrāhīm and Ismā'il and Ishāq: one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." [2:133]

Pay attention to the words: "when death approached..." Meaning: while Ya'qūb was on his deathbed; he was still advising his children and

offspring with the most important thing to him: for his children to follow pure monotheism (*Tawhīd*) and have faith in Allāh. When he asked them and they answered that they would cling to the truth—the worship of Allāh alone and avoiding polytheism—, his heart was at ease and he passed away in peace.

YŪSUF عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Great was his eagerness to gather his family and household as mentioned above; he said to his brothers:

﴿وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

"...And bring me your family, all together." [12:93]

Yūsuf never blamed his brothers or scolded them. Instead, he praised Allāh that he rescued him from jail and bestowed His bounty upon him, reunited him with his family and brought his brothers together; Yūsuf didn't once mention to them the affair of the well.

ISMĀ'ĪL عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

He was like his father Ibrāhīm regarding his great care for his family. Allāh states:

﴿وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ
وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ○ وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ
وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا﴾

And mention in the Book, Ismā'il. Indeed, he was true to his promise, and he was a Messenger and a Prophet.

And he used to enjoin on his people prayer and zakah and was to his Lord pleasing. [19:54-55]

This is because those who have the most right over the caller to goodness is his family.

LŪṬ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When the angels came to Lūṭ and informed him that his people are going to be destroyed:

﴿رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

"My Lord, save me and my family from [the consequence of] what they do." [26:169]

Look at Lūṭ's mercy and fear over his family. Thereupon Allāh answered his supplication and said:

﴿فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝ إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَابِرِينَ﴾

So We saved him and his family, all; except an old woman among those who remained behind. [26:170-171]

And this woman was Lūṭ's wife, because she used to prompt his people to have enmity towards him and harm him.

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He used to care for his family before Prophethood and fear any harm befalling them:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ ۖ إِنِّي عَانَسْتُ نَارًا سَاءَتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا
بِخَبْرٍ أَوْ آتِيكُمْ بِشَهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ﴾

[Mention] when Moses said to his family, "Indeed, I have perceived a fire. I will bring you from there information or will bring you a burning torch that you may *taṣṭalūn*."

[27:7]

Taṣṭalūn means: warm up. So if this was his condition with his family before Prophethood, what do you think it would be like after Allāh chose him to convey His messages and speech? No doubt the affair would be greater and the effect would be larger.

زَكَرِيَّاهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From his great concern for his offspring is that he supplicated to his Lord to insure their goodness before they were conceived:

﴿رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ﴾

"My Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring. Indeed, You are the Hearer of supplication." [3:38]

Take notice of how Zakariyyah supplicated to his Lord before the coming about of his offspring to make them virtuous.

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

He was the most concerned among the people for his family, the greatest of them in caring for them, and the most eager in rectifying them. Due to this, Allāh states:

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا﴾

And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. [20:132]

The Prophet ﷺ was the quickest among men in fulfilling the commands of his Lord, and he used to say:

خيركم خيركم لأهله، وأنا خيركم لأهلي.

The best of you are the best to his family and I am the best of you all to my family.²⁵

No matter how much a person makes excuses about the many distractions that busy him from his family, his excuse is rejected. It is not accepted, because the Prophet ﷺ was the busiest of the people. He used to call the people to Allāh, teach the people, lead them in prayer, judge between them, give rulings, lead the battles and prepare the armies and smaller fighting units, visit the sick, meet with delegates and follow the burials, etc. Despite all of that, he ﷺ said: “The best of you are the best to his family and I am the best of you all to my family.”

From his care and concern for his family is that he didn't leave anyone without care, neither the young nor the old. For example, when al-Ḥasan ate a date-fruit from the charity, as he entered it into his mouth, the Prophet ﷺ said to him: “Spit it out, spit it out, Didn't you know that we don't eat from the charity?”²⁶

The Prophet ﷺ used to play with al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهما, and with Zaynab رضي الله عنها when she was a baby and say “Oh little Zainab!

²⁵ Recorded and graded authentic by al-Tirmidhī (3895) in the ḥadīth of ‘Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها.

²⁶ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه.

Oh little Zainab!” over and over.²⁷ And if al-Ḥasan ﷺ climbed on the Prophet’s ﷺ back while he was in prostration, he would remain like that until al-Ḥasan climbed down safely.²⁸

Even when one son of the Prophet’s daughters became sick, she sent out for him but he excused himself, and she insisted on him to come until the Prophet ﷺ arrived and picked up the young boy while his soul was preparing to leave his body; then the Prophet ﷺ began to cry due to his mercy and compassion.²⁹

And from the Prophet’s ﷺ mercy and care towards his family is when his daughter Fāṭimah ﷺ asked him for a servant and no one came to her, so she informed ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ about the incident. Then ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ informed the Prophet ﷺ, so he visited the house of ‘Alī and Fāṭimah ﷺ and entered upon them and said: “Should I not guide you to something better than a servant? Both of you should exalt Allāh at night 34 times (i.e. by saying *Allāhu akbar*), praise Allāh 33 times (i.e. by saying *al-ḥamdu lillāh*), and sanctify Allāh 33 times (i.e. by saying *subḥān Allāh*). That will be better for you both than a servant.” The supporting proof in this is the Prophet ﷺ leaving his house to visit the house of ‘Alī and Fāṭimah ﷺ. This indicates the Prophet’s ﷺ great concern and eagerness for his family.

²⁷ Recorded by al-Diyā’ in *al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārah* (5/109), no. 1732-33, in the ḥadīth of Anas ﷺ. And in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (2/141), [al-Albānī] states: “It’s chain of narration is authentic, its reporters are trusted.”

²⁸ Recorded by al-Nasā’ī (2/229) and Aḥmad (3/493) in the ḥadīth of Shaddād ﷺ.

²⁹ The story is related by the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) in the ḥadīth of Usamah b. Yazīd ﷺ.

PATIENCE WITH PEOPLE'S QUESTIONS

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is their bearing the people's many questions with patience. It is incumbent upon the caller of goodness to have forbearance regarding people's questions, because in that is an abundance of good: it is a means of getting closer to Allāh; the caller is rewarded for it; it removes ignorance from the questioner; the reward will continue to benefit him if his answer is circulated.

So do not be neglectful regarding this and be eager—May Allāh protect you—and prepare yourself to be patient with people's questions; they only came to you for your knowledge and what Allāh has given you. Look into the biographies of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and, how they used to bear the people's questions with patience, regardless of whether questions were posed by disbelievers or Muslims, and even if those questions were to obtain a religious or worldly benefit. The Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ would bear with all of that because if the questions were from disbelievers then it was answered in the hope of their guidance, and if it was from the Muslims then it would be a cause of increase in learning a matter of their religion.

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh says about the people of Mūsā:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُثْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا

وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصَلِيهَا قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ
خَيْرٌ ﴿

And [recall] when you said, "O Mūsā, we can never endure one [kind of] food. So call upon your Lord to bring forth for us from the earth its green herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions." [Mūsā] said, "Would you exchange what is better for what is less?" [2:61]

Here they asked Mūsā, desiring a mixture of food, and they didn't ask him a knowledge-based question; still, he was patient and forbearing with the questions of the Children of Israel in hopes of their guidance.

When Allāh ordered the Children of Israel to slaughter the cow, Mūsā informed them of the command, and they asked him a number of questions and he brought clarity to them. As Allāh said:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُؤًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ۝ قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ﴾

And [recall] when Mūsā said to his people, "Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you take us in ridicule?" He said, "I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant." They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is." [2:67-68]

And Mūsā clarified this to them.

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لُونُهَا﴾

They said, "Call upon your Lord to show us what is her color." [2:69]

And Mūsā clarified this to them.

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا﴾

They said, "Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is." [2:70]

And Mūsā clarified this to them. He made clear to the Children of Israel all of that, doing so in hope of their guidance. Yet some of them rejected this, so the conclusion of their affair was destruction.

SĀLIH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

His people requested from him a proof (of Prophethood). While this is not an inquisitive question, they wanted a sign proving his truthfulness because they claimed he is a liar while knowing he was truthful, all in order to stump him:

﴿مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝ قَالَ هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ﴾

"You are but a man like ourselves, so bring a sign, if you should be of the truthful." He said, "This is a she-camel. For her is a [time of] drink, and for you is a [time of] drink, [each] on a known day." [26:154-155]

‘EASĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام:

Some of his people requested him to send down upon them a dinner-

spread from the sky, so he reminded them of Allāh and invited them to fear Him. Yet they were persistent, so 'Easā asked his Lord and said:

﴿اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا
عِيدًا لَأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَعَايَةً مِنْكَ وَأَرْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ
الرَّازِقِينَ﴾

"O Allah , our Lord, send down to us a table [spread with food] from the heaven to be for us a festival for the first of us and the last of us and a sign from You. And provide for us, and You are the best of providers." [5:114]

Look at how the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ answered their people, even if they were not that genuine, since the answer had a benefit which may lead to their guidance.

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

He would bear the questions of his people and their requests for his intercession or whatever they used to request for him to do, if it was possible and in it was a benefit. Questions posed to him were so abundant upon the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, but even so, he was the most welcoming of the people and the most patient.

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِةِ﴾

They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the new moons.

[2:189]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

They ask you, [O Muhammad], what they should spend.

[2:215]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ﴾

They ask you about the sacred month - about fighting therein. [2:217]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ﴾

They ask you about wine and gambling. [2:219]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى﴾

And they ask you about orphans. [2:220]

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ﴾

And they ask you about menstruation. [2:222]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ﴾

They ask you, [O Muhammad], what has been made lawful for them. [5:4]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ﴾

They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the bounties [of war]. [8:1]

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا﴾

They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the Hour: when is its arrival? [7:187]

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ﴾

**And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul.
[17:85]**

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقُرْنَيْنِ﴾

And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about Dhul-Qarnayn. [18:83]

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ﴾

And they ask you about the mountains... [20:105]

﴿يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ﴾

The People of the Scripture ask you to bring down to them a book from the heaven. [4:153]

These are just some of the questions, and the Prophet ﷺ would answer them with what Allāh taught him; if Allāh ordered him to abstain (from answering) then he would, and the following chapter makes this point clearly...

DEVOUTNESS AND CAUTION FROM SPEAKING ABOUT ALLĀH WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE

From the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was that they were the most devout and cautious people in not speaking about Allāh without knowledge. That is because speaking about Allāh without knowledge is from the greatest of the destructive sins, rather it is the most destructive. Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said:

Without a doubt, Allāh has forbidden making statements about Him without knowledge in matters of legal rulings and making judgments, and He has made it one of the greatest prohibitions. In fact, Allāh has given it the highest degree amongst them. He states: **"Say, 'My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.'"** [7:33] Allāh put these prohibitions into four categories, and He started with the lightest of them, that being immoral actions; secondly He mentioned what is greater in prohibition, that being sinful actions and oppression; thirdly, He mentioned what is greater in probation, that being Shirk (associating partners with Him), glory be to Him; fourthly, He mentioned what is greater in prohibition than all of that, that being the making of statements about Him without knowledge. And this (prohibition) is general and includes making statements about Allāh without knowledge regarding His names, attributes, actions, or His religion and legislation.³⁰

³⁰ *A'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn 'an Rabb al-'Ālamīn (1/38).*

The Prophets of Allāh عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were most definitely the furthest and most cautious of people in regards to speaking about Allāh without knowledge and from what bears witness to that:

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When Nūh asked Allāh for the salvation of his son, Allāh reproached him:

﴿فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنِّي أَعِظُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ۝ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

"...So ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant." [Nūh] said, "My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers." [11:46-47]

So Nūh called out to his Lord in fear, after he sought refuge in Him from speaking about things he has no knowledge about.

‘EASĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

When his Lord asked him, while He was fully aware of the answer:

﴿أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي إِلهِينَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ ۗ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ ۗ﴾

"...Did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah ?'" He will say, "Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right..."

[5:116]

This is because godship (*ilāhiyyah*) is a right belonging to Allāh, so it is not suitable for a creation to claim it.

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

His Lord disciplined him and said:

﴿قُلْ لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ إِن أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

Say, [O Muhammad], "I do not tell you that I have the depositories [containing the provision] of Allah or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me." Say, "Is the blind equivalent to the seeing? Then will you not give thought?" [6:50]

HOSPITALITY TO GUESTS

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they were the most hospitable towards guests.

IBRĀHĪM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allāh has conveyed to us Ibrāhīm's story with his guests; He states:

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيذٍ﴾

And certainly did Our messengers come to Ibrāhīm with good tidings; they said, "Peace." He said, "Peace," and did not delay in bringing [them] a roasted calf. [11:69]

And in another verse:

﴿فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ ○ فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ﴾

Then he went to his family and came with a fat [roasted] calf. And placed it near them... [51:26-27]

Some scholars have said that this verse has gathered the manners of hospitality and the foundation of generosity. This is because the guests came to Ibrāhīm unexpectedly, and the difference between one who prepares for guests before they come, and one to whom they visit unexpectedly, is obvious. As such, Ibrāhīm was the most

hospitable of people.

Also, the extent of the generosity of (Ibrāhīm) the friend of Allāh became evident when Allāh said about him: "Then he went (*rāgha*) to his family..." The word *al-rawaghān* is connected to speed, meaning that Ibrāhīm did not take long in serving his guests. "And came with a fat calf..." Meaning: Ibrāhīm didn't come forward with just a portion of the calf, and from the qualities of this calf is that it was fat. And in another verse: "a roasted calf." Meaning: Ibrāhīm grilled the meat on rocks. "And he placed it near them..." And this is from the perfection of hospitality, which is placing the food close to the guest. And it is known that customs of the people differ regarding this, however the point is that Ibrāhīm brought the food near to his guests and said: "Will you not eat?" as a means of offering, and this is from best manners of hospitality. Also in their greeting, when the guests said: "Peace (*Salāman*)." Ibrāhīm replied: "Peace (*Salāmun*)." This is a nominal sentence, meaning: "may the peace of Allāh be upon you always." Thus, he chose the best food, prepared in the quickest time, he placed it near them, he did not make them have to reach for it, and he presented it to them with the most gentle of phrases, just as he chose the best expression of welcoming his guests.

LŪṬ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

When his guests arrived, his people came to him rushing intending evil. But the only care Lūṭ had was the guidance of his people and the protection of his guests:

﴿قَالَ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ ضَيْفِي فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ○ وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا
تُخْزُونِ ○ قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ○ قَالَ هَؤُلَاءِ
بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ﴾

[Lūṭ] said, "Indeed, these are my guests, so do not shame me. And fear Allah and do not disgrace me." They said, "Have we not forbidden you from [protecting] people?" [Lūṭ] said, "These are my daughters - if you would be doers [of lawful marriage]." [15:68-71]

Meaning: "If you want a legal marriage, then choose from the women of the town, because all of them are my daughters in Islām –since the Prophet is a father of all of the believers– or from my daughters in my house, I will give them to you in legal marriage. But fear Allāh regarding my guests and do not disgrace me." And this indicates how from the greatest forms of hospitality is defending your guests. Lūṭ further said to those who wanted to cross the boundaries with his guests: "These are my daughters, marry them legally, and stop doing these obscene and prohibited actions."

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

He was the most generous of the people regarding hospitality; rather, he used to prefer his guests over himself with food even if he only had a little. So what would the situation be if the food was plentiful?

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ went out one day and the noble companion Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه was sitting in the road, and the Messenger of Allāh knew he was hungry; Abu Hurairah states:

One day I sat by the path which they (the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions) used to take. When Abū Bakr passed by, I asked him about a Verse from Allāh's Book and I asked him only that he might satisfy my hunger, but he passed by and did not do so. Then 'Umar passed by me and I asked him about a Verse from Allāh's Book, and I asked him only that he might satisfy my hunger, but he passed by without doing so. Finally Abū 'I-Qāsim (the Prophet ﷺ) passed by me and he smiled when he saw me, for he knew what was in my heart and on my face. He

said, "O Abā Hurr (Abu Huraira)!" I replied, "At your service, O Allāh's Messenger!" He said to me, "Follow me."

He left and I followed him. Then he entered the house and I asked permission to enter and was admitted. He found milk in a bowl and said, "From where is this milk?" They (the family of the Prophet) said, "It has been presented to you by such-and-such man or woman." He said, "O Abā Hurr!" I said, "At your service, O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)!" He said, "Go and call the people of al-Şuffah to me." The people of al-Şuffah were the guests of Islam who had no families, or money, or anybody to depend upon, and whenever an object of charity was brought to the Prophet, he would send it to them and would not take anything from it, and whenever any present was given to him, he used to send some for them and take some of it for himself. The order of the Prophet ﷺ upset me, and I said to myself, "How will this little milk be enough for the people of al-Şuffah while I am more deserving of drinking from that milk in order to strengthen myself? But behold! The Prophet ﷺ came to order me to give that milk to them. I wondered what will remain of that milk for me, but anyway, I could not but obey Allāh and His Messenger so I went to the people of al-Şuffah and called them, they came and asked the Prophet's permission to enter. They were admitted and took their seats in the house.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "O Abā Hurr!" I said, "At your service, O Allāh's Messenger!" He said, "Take this (bowl containing milk) and give it to them." So I took the bowl (of milk) and started giving it to one man who would drink his fill and return it to me, whereupon I would give it to another man who, in his turn, would drink his fill and return it to me, and I would then offer it to another man who would drink his fill and return it to me. Finally, after the whole group had drunk their fill, I reached the Prophet who took the bowl and put it on his hand, looked at me and smiled and said. "O Abā Hurr!" I replied, "At your service, O Allāh's Messenger!" He said, "There only remains you and I." I said, "You have said the truth, O Allāh's Messenger!" He said, "Sit down and drink." I sat down and drank. He said, "Drink," and I drank. He kept on telling me repeatedly to drink, till I said, "No,

Hospitality to Guests

by Allāh who sent you with the Truth, I have no room for it (in my stomach).” He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Hand it over to me.” When I gave him the bowl, he praised Allāh and pronounced Allāh's Name on it and drank the remaining milk.³¹

Now, is there any generosity equal to the Prophet’s generosity?!

³¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6452) in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah .

MERCY TOWARDS PEOPLE IN NEED OF GUIDANCE

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام is that they were the most merciful of people towards those that they called to, hoping for their guidance. For the caller to Allāh, his concern is those he is calling to be rightly guided.

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

He expressed his love to his people out of compassion and fear for them:

﴿أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنْصَحُ لَكُمْ﴾

**I convey to you the messages of my Lord and advise
you... [7:62]**

In fact, he expressed to them his fear for them:

﴿يَقَوْمِ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ
عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

**"O my people, worship Allāh; you have no deity other
than Him. Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a
tremendous Day." [7:59]**

IBRĀHĪM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When the angels came to him and informed him that they were going to destroy the people of Lūṭ, Ibrāhīm argued with them so Allāh said about him:

﴿فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الرَّوْعُ وَجَاءَتْهُ الْبُشْرَى
يُجْدِلْنَا فِي قَوْمِ لُوطٍ ○ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّهٌ مُنِيبٌ
○ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَذَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ جَاءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ
وَإِنَّهُمْ عَائِدُهُمْ عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ مَرْدُودٍ﴾

And when the fright had left Ibrāhīm and the good tidings had reached him, he began to argue with Us concerning the people of Lūṭ. Indeed, Ibrāhīm was forbearing, grieving and [frequently] returning [to Allāh]. [The angels said], "O Ibrāhīm, give up this [plea]. Indeed, the command of your Lord has come, and indeed, there will reach them a punishment that cannot be repelled."

[11:74-76]

HŪD عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

His people harmed him and accused him of being foolish and they mocked him:

﴿قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ إِنَّا لَنَرُكَ فِي
سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ○ قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لَيْسَ
بِي سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○ أُبَلِّغُكُمْ
رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنَا لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ﴾

Said the eminent ones who disbelieved among his people, "Indeed, we see you in foolishness, and indeed, we think you are of the liars." [Hūd] said, "O my people, there is not foolishness in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I am to you a trustworthy adviser." [7:66-68]

Even so he gave them the good news of a reward if they obeyed him:

﴿وَيَقَوْمٍ أَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ ثَابَرُوا إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَى قُوَّتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا
مُجْرِمِينَ﴾

"And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength [added] to your strength. And do not turn away, [being] criminals."

[11:52]

What compassion and what mercy is like the mercy of the Prophets!

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
SĀLIH

He took the path of his brothers among the Prophets and so he called his people and warned them of the evil outcome of disobedience:

﴿وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلْنَا خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأْنَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْ سُهولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ
بُيُوتًا فَأَذْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا تَعْتَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ﴾

And remember when He made you successors after the 'Ād

and settled you in the land, [and] you take for yourselves palaces from its plains and carve from the mountains, homes. Then remember the favors of Allāh and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption." [7:74]

Yet they rejected and turned away, and even then, when he saw their rejection he only turned away from them and said:

﴿يَقَوْمَ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَّا تُحِبُّونَ التَّصْحِيْنَ﴾

"O my people, I had certainly conveyed to you the message of my Lord and advised you, but you do not like advisors." [7:79]

The point of evidence here is that verily the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were the most merciful among mankind towards their people.

COMPLYING WITH ORDERS AND REFRAINING FROM THE FORBIDDEN

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام is that they were the most compliant among the people in regards to what they commanded and the most distant from what they prohibited.

SHU‘AYB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Allāh has conveyed about Shu‘ayb that he said:

﴿يَقَوْمِ أَرَعَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَرَزَقَنِي مِنْهُ
رِزْقًا حَسَنًا وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا أَنهَلَكُم عَنْهُ إِنْ
أُرِيدُ إِلَّا الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ﴾

"O my people, have you considered: if I am upon clear evidence from my Lord and He has provided me with a good provision from Him? And I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden you; I only intend reform as much as I am able..." [11:88]

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَام

He said (according to the Quran):

﴿وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

" and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims."

[6:163]

Likewise, all the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ implied the following to their people: "If I have ordered you all with a command, then I am the first to act upon it and if I have prohibited you all from something then I am the first to stay away from it." And this is from the greatest of manners and the most honorable of them. As such, Allāh has blamed the one who acts contrary to what he has ordered the people with. And it is understood from this that the one who orders the people and complies by the same commands are praiseworthy.

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Most hateful it is in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do. [61:2-3]

﴿۞ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason? [2:44]

CONTINUALLY CALLING THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE TRUTH

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is their continuous call to the one who opposed them and their never falling into despair.

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He continued to call his people for 950 years while taking every means in going about that as Allāh has explained in Sūrat Nūḥ, and Nūḥ continued to call his son until the waves came between them.

OUR PROPHET MUHAMMAD عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

He continuously called his uncle Abū Ṭālib until the latter's soul departed, and while the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was by his deathbed saying to him: "Oh my uncle, say 'There is no god worthy of worship except Allāh', a statement I can plead for you by it with Allāh."³²

And the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ visited a young Jewish boy and called him (to Islam) so Allāh answered him and he died in a state of belief and so the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: "All praise belongs to Allāh the one who has saved him from the fire!"³³

³² Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of Musayyib ؓ as has preceded.

³³ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (1356) in the ḥadīth of Anas ؓ.

CONTINUALLY CARING FOR FOLLOWERS

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is the continuous care and concern for the people of faith from their households and their nations, and that was to increase them in firmness.

YA'QUB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

He had extreme care for his children and used to call them even though they were from the people of faith:

﴿أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَاللَّهُ أَبَايَكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." [2:133]

Even so, he wanted to increase them in firmness.

BEARING THE HARM CAUSED BY PEOPLE

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was their bearing the harm of their people with patience.

The people said about them that they were fools, poets, and insane. Yet and still, all the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were still the most welcoming of people and the most forbearing. Similarly, it is incumbent on the caller (to Islām) to bear the harm of the foolish ones so that they may achieve the reward from Allāh, and he should hope by that they will be guided and enter in to the call of goodness.

NEVER REJOICING AT THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISOBEDIENT

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is that they did not gloat towards the disobedient if the punishment befell them. This is because gloating is not an honorable act, and the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were the furthest people from gloating when punishments befell. Look at the affair of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and their condition when punishments befell those who opposed them.

THE PEOPLE OF SĀLIH عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

﴿فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جِثْمِينَ﴾

So the earthquake seized them, and they became within their home [corpses] fallen prone. [7:78]

Did Salih gloat or mock them? Allāh states:

﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ النَّاصِحِينَ﴾

And he turned away from them and said, "O my people, I had certainly conveyed to you the message of my Lord and advised you, but you do not like advisors." [7:79]

This was the highest level of sympathy.

THE PEOPLE OF SHU‘AYB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

﴿فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جِثْمِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَعْنُوا فِيهَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا كَانُوا هُمُ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

So the earthquake seized them, and they became within their home [corpses] fallen prone. Those who denied Shu‘ayb - it was as though they had never resided there. Those who denied Shu‘ayb - it was they who were the losers. [7:91-92]

The point of evidence here is:

﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رَسُولِي رَيْبًا وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَكَيْفَ آسَىٰ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾

And he turned away from them and said, "O my people, I had certainly conveyed to you the messages of my Lord and advised you, so how could I grieve for a disbelieving people?" [7:93]

Therefore, it is incumbent upon you, oh the one who calls to goodness, if you see one who is trialed, then praise Allāh (for having guided you and saved you from a similar trial). The Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: "Whoever sees an afflicted person and says:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَافَانِي مِمَّا ابْتَلَاكَ بِهِ وَفَضَّلَنِي عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ تَفْضِيلًا.

Never Rejoicing at the Punishment of the Disobedient

‘All praise belongs to Allāh the one who has saved me from what you have been afflicted with and who has favored me over many from whom He has created with a great favor,’ that affliction will not befall him.”³⁴

³⁴ Recorded by al-Tirmidhī (3432) in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ.

DILIGENCE IN STAYING AWAY FROM THINGS WHICH LEAD TO IGNORANCE

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was that they were the most eager of people in staying away from everything that led to ignorance.

NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When he asked his Lord for salvation on behalf of his son, due to the fact that he did not know his son's condition, his Lord prohibited him:

﴿قَالَ يَنْوُحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ
فَلَا تَسْأَلُنِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنِّي أَعِظُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ
مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

**He said, "O Nūḥ, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, he is [one whose] work was other than righteous, so ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant."
[11:46]**

When Nūḥ came to know that his Lord prohibited him, he strived to stay away from all means that led to ignorance, so:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ
عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

He said, "My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers."

[11:47]

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

When he ordered his people to slaughter the cow;

﴿قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

They said, "Do you take us in ridicule?" He said, "I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant." [2:67]

Thus, mockery is a form of ignorance, and in this is an example of staying away from the means that lead to ignorance.

EAGERNESS FOR THE INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was that they were the most eager of people to increase in knowledge.

Because of this (eagerness), Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ traveled to Khadr عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ so that he may increase by him in knowledge. And Allāh ordered his Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to ask Him for an increase in knowledge, whereby He said:

﴿وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا﴾

...and say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge."

[20:114]

And so the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to ask his Lord for beneficial knowledge.

RELIANCE AND TRUST IN ALLĀH AND HAVING GOOD THOUGHTS OF HIM

From the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was their great trust in Allāh and their good thoughts of Him. The Prophets were the best of those who harbor good thoughts about Allāh. The Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

قال الله تعالى: أنا عند ظنِّ عبدي بي، إن ظنَّ خيراً فله، وإن ظنَّ سوءاً فعليه.

"Allāh has said: 'I am as my servant thinks of Me; if he thought good then it will be for him, but if he thought evil, then it will be against him.'"³⁵

SHU'AYB عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From his great thoughts about his Lord and his strong certainty that Allāh was going to give him victory and get revenge on the disbelievers is his saying:

﴿عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ
وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ﴾

"...Upon Allah we have relied. Our Lord, decide between us and our people in truth, and You are the best of those who give decision." [7:89]

³⁵ Recorded by Imām Aḥmad (2/391) in the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ.

MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From his great thoughts about Allāh, was the certainty that Allāh was going to aid the believers and destroy the disbelievers whereby he said:

﴿اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"Seek help through Allah and be patient. Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah . He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous." [7:128]

And in Sūrat al-Shu‘arā’:

﴿فَلَمَّا تَرَآءَ الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ
قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ﴾

And when the two companies saw one another, the companions of Mūsā said, "Indeed, we are to be overtaken!" [Mūsā] said, "No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me." [26:61-62]

In conclusion, what has been mentioned is a little out of a great deal, so may the highest level of peace and blessing be upon them and our Prophet!

THE BENEFITS OF EMULATING THE PROPHETS

Given the fact that the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were the greatest of people in totality, naturally they had the best, purest, and loftiest characteristics and manners. Every Muslim should strive to emulate something from these great characteristics. This is especially true for those who call the people to goodness, they should be foremost in conducting themselves in accordance with these characteristics. This is because calling the people to goodness is the service of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

If the caller of goodness treads the path of the characteristics of the Prophets in his own call then he has picked from the garden of their characteristics and manners an abundance of fruit; from them:

- An increase in love of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ: That is because if the Muslim studies the great characteristics of the Prophets and how they were the greatest role models with their gentle words and perfect actions, despite what came their way of denial from the deniers and harm, etc.; when a Muslim reflects on these things, it will cause his love for the Prophets to grow, and his desire of hearing their biographies and qualities to increase and he will hate their enemies and those who hate them.
- Complying with the command of Allāh towards His Prophet Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

﴿فِيهِدْنَاهُمْ أَقْتَدَهُ﴾

So from their guidance take an example. [6:90]

We are ordered to emulate our Prophet ﷺ as Allāh has said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾

There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often. [33:21]

And the emulation of a Muslim of the Prophet ﷺ is an emulation of all of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

- An increase in faith: That is because the characteristics of the Prophets gather the virtues of actions and statements, and acting upon one virtuous action raises the faith of the servant, so what about many virtuous acts? Notwithstanding those virtuous actions being from the actions of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and their sayings!
- Staying far away from the trickery of the Shayṭān and what he beautifies of bad actions and statements: If the servant emulated the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ then if the Shayṭān tried to mislead him in exhibiting bad manners, the servant will remember that the Prophets are the furthest of people from that so he will wake up and prevent himself from acting upon these insinuations.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَآئِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ﴾

Indeed, those who fear Allah - when an impulse touches them from Satan, they remember [Him] and at once they have insight. [7:201]

- Their great dealings with those being called: The Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ conveyed the message of Allāh to their people and they motivated them to do good, they warned them from evil, they bore their denial in hopes of their guidance, and they did not gloat when the punishment fell upon them. These Prophetic characteristics, if the callers to goodness remember them, and act upon them, then their reward will be great and their benefit will be much, and they will be role models for other than them in all of their affairs.
- Their great dealing with their closest relatives, beginning with their parents and children. The Muslim is diligent in being dutiful towards his parents just as the Prophets were, he also connects the ties of kinship and expresses his love towards them just as the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ did.
- Here it is appropriate to say: the one who has neglected his parents based on the claim that he needs to be free for da'wah or seeking knowledge, then verily such excuses are weak and rejected. This is because the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were the most eager people to invite (others to Islām) and yet and still, they were the most dutiful of people towards their families and the most caring to their children and their households. Negligence of parents and children opposes the command of Allāh and is foreign to the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. That's why even with all of the things that busied the Prophet عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ such as meeting delegations, leading armies, visiting the sick, preparing burials, distributing the spoils of war, charity and zakat; with all of this, he was superb in taking care of his family and homes, and so he said: "The best of you are the best to his family and I am the best among you to my family."
- Embedding the meaning of a role model in our souls: If the Muslim strives to understand these noble characteristics and

honorable and special qualities and how they affect the one who does them, the one who acts upon them and the one who hears about them, the true meaning of what a role model is will become firmly embedded in him. Then, he will adopt that character and that guidance so that he may benefit himself firstly and benefit other than him secondly. This is because an example by action is a very effective form of da'wah, then what if he combined it with an example of beautiful speech and fine expressions?

Recognizing deficiencies in oneself: This is because the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ is like a clear mirror making clear to the one who looks into it the good of his affairs and the evil of them. If an individual presented his characteristics and dealings to the mirror of the characteristics and manners of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, he will know, rather, he will be certain of what he needs to be consistent in and what he needs to avoid, because all of the different circumstances of his life and the different phases of his society have transpired during the Prophets' lives and they were greater and more severe; yet and still, they never abandoned the best of manners in their times of ease and times of hardship, be it with the common people or the elite.

Warning from self-amazement, ostentation and distancing one from what leads to them both, and clinging to the path of sincerity for the sake of Allāh: The caller to good, if the people began to flock towards him and his following became a lot then it is possible that he will become amazed at himself and begin to desire to hear their praises of him, and this is from the greatest means of Shaytān's trickery. However, if he remembers the characteristics of the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and how they were the most sincere to Allāh, even when they had the great miracles Allāh manifested at their hands and which

amazed their people and destroyed the claims of the deniers; even when Allāh sent down upon those who opposed the Prophets different punishments; even with all of that, they still were the most sincere of the people and furthest from falling into ostentation and showing off.

Defending them and not being lackadaisical regarding those who insult any of them, even in a minor way: *The rational individual stays away from accusing a Muslim who hides his sins and is not pleased with that, so what is the case for someone who's virtue became widespread amongst the Muslims? What about their scholars? Rather, if it was from the religion to defend the scholars of the Sunnah who were known for their knowledge and virtue, then what do you think the affair is of the role models of the scholars and their counterparts, namely: the Prophets of Allāh and his Messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ?*

Staying away from what leads to disparity and a warning from the trickery of Shayṭān and his discouragements: If you gave advice to someone and he rejected it and didn't accept it, then do not give up hope for him or anyone else who has a right to be advised. Rather, stay consistent in advising the negligent ones while using knowledge and being gentle. And if it was decreed that most of them do not listen to you then remember that some Prophets were not followed except by a few of their people even with their long lives of calling, such as Nūḥ:

﴿وَمَا ءَامَنَ مَعَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ﴾

But none had believed with him, except a few. [11:40]

In fact, some Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were not answered at all when they invited other as is confirmed in the ḥadīth:

Some nations were displayed before me. A Prophet would pass in front of me with one man, and another with two men, and another with a group of people. and another with nobody with him...³⁶

Even with all of that, the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ continued in their call to their people in the best manner and with the most truthful intentions. Then what about the one who drowns in a sea of hopelessness and discouragement from the first time or first couple of times?

Oh Allāh! We ask You by Your most beautiful names and high and lofty attributes to guide us to the best of characteristics and manners; no one can guide to them except You. And we ask You to remove from us the evil of them, no one removes them except You!

Oh Allāh! Just as you have beautified our creation, beautify our characteristics and manners!

Oh Allāh! We seek refuge in You from lowly characteristics and manners, desires and diseases (spiritual and physical).

وصلى الله و سلم على نبينا محمد وآله وصحبه وجميع الأنبياء وتابعيهم
يا إحسان إلى يوم الدين

³⁶ Agreed on (by al-Bukhārī and Muslim) from the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās .