

He Who Touches Our Hearts Guides Our Days by Shaikh Ahmad Kutty

The Prophet Muhammad, *Rasulullah*, serves as the perfect exemplar of moral and spiritual excellence. This simple statement alone guarantees my love for him. His concrete examples of virtue - at once versatile and wide sweeping - serve as perennial sources of inspiration.

As a child I was initiated into the treasury of Prophetic wisdom in the *maktab* as we, with the great passion that accompanies youth, memorized the statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him). On proceeding towards higher studies, the seeds of love for the Prophet (p), thus planted, grew greater in intensity until it became a life-long passion. Now, not a day in my life passes without exposure to the veritable treasury of his wisdom.

Through my studies, I am humbled by the sheer magnitude of efforts made by countless men and women whose lives had been transformed by the messenger of mercy-men and women who devoted their lives to preserving, scrutinizing, transmitting, commenting upon the Prophetic traditions. The volume of works analyzing Prophetic traditions, inferring, and commenting upon them-- spanning a vast array of disciplines-- instills a deep sense of awe for the Prophetic model. It makes one wonder whether there is another personage comparable in history. I would venture so far as to state that there *cannot* have been.

This constant and consistently nurtured exposure to Prophetic wisdom has had an invigorating effect on me: I have chosen it as the model upon which I strive to mold my personality, alter my thinking, shape my vision and my communion with Allah and thus, my attitude towards God's creation, the small and the big. No matter which station of life I turn to, I always find Prophetic examples motivating me to aspire for greater and greater perfection. In what follows, I shall list a few aspects of the spiritual and moral nourishment that sustains me as I face daily challenges:

- 1) As I open my eyes from a good night's sleep, the Prophet's example of pouring his heart in praise for Allah prompts me to repeat after him, "Thank you Allah for (Your) gift of life, health, and (for honoring me with), Your remembrance!" and as I head to the washroom, his constant reminders about oral hygiene, cleanliness, and purification act as a stimulus for me to keep myself clean and tidy;
- 2) My morning chores begin with prayer. The words of the Prophet that he would readily part with the treasure of the whole world for the opportunity to pray two *rak'ahs* of *fajr* echo in my mind. His long morning meditations/affirmations counting Allah's blessings fill my heart/soul with a healthy spiritual nourishment - empowering and buoying me to tackle the challenges ahead of me;
- 3) The Prophet follows me to the breakfast table, where he coaches me to invoke God, and thank Him for His gifts, and to practice moderation in consumption. He shakes me out of my complacency to never allow myself to take God's blessings for granted and to remember the less fortunate;

- 4) The Prophet's constant reminders about charity and charitable living and the spectacle of him being moved to tears upon seeing a group of emaciated men and women appearing before him, and his consequent sermon reminding the companions of the oneness of the human family prompts me to be charitable and generous;
- 5) His never ending humor and jovial chats with his family and children, the children rushing out to welcome the Prophet, his stepping down from the *mimbar* to shower his grandson with kisses, he being moved to cut short his prayers upon hearing the cry of an infant and his commiserating with a little child mourning the loss of his pet bird...these images accompany my interactions with my family;
- 6) As I head to my study, his exhortations about the value of knowledge and his prayer, Lord increase my knowledge, stimulates me. His prayers to God against knowledge that profits not and hearts that are not humble before the awe of Allah ensure that our hearts melt in the hands of religion and not the other way around;
- 7) As I head to the classroom to share my limited knowledge, once again, the Prophet serves as an excellent model of teacher/communicator. His use of humor, his manner of teaching and illustration, his tailoring of the message to the audience, his use of concrete examples to explain deep spiritual truths, and his boundless compassion and patience as a teacher - these all keep me on my toes;
- 8) When I take a stroll in the park or walk on the nature trail, my heart lifts remembering his teachings of how the whole of creation, including the little ants in their holes, pray for the seeker and teacher of wisdom. His statement that those who remember Allah are greeted by all creatures - as they themselves are busy with the glorification of the Most High - move me to move my lips in *dhikr*. Furthermore, his repeated exhortation to be charitable even to the tiniest of creatures serves as a constant reminder on how to treat all of God's creation;
- 9) The Prophet's examples as a *da'iyyah* stress the values of integrity and credibility as the pillars of character. His credentials as the most trustworthy person in Makkah and that he was known as the asylum of the weak and destitute warn me against confusing Islam with dry theology devoid of compassion. This serves me well as I encounter and interact with the diversity of lives, lifestyles and worldviews in the multicultural community and nation I live in;
- 10) I conclude with the words of his young companion Anas: Once a man approached the Prophet, asking, "when is the hour?" The Prophet asked him, "what have you prepared for it?" The man said, "I am not ready for it with much prayers, charities, or fasts, but surely I love Allah and His Messenger" to which the Prophet replied, "You will join those you love!" Anas comments: "We (the companions) never rejoiced as much as we did on that day that we heard those words." Anas further added: "I love Allah and His Messenger, and I love Abu Bakr and Umar; therefore, I hope to be reunited with them (in *jannah*), although I cannot claim to have such works to my credit as they have to theirs."

I pray to Allah to implant in our hearts true love for Allah and His Messenger. May the All-Compassionate bless us all with the honor of being reunited in the company of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be Allah's choicest blessings and peace-*aameen*.