

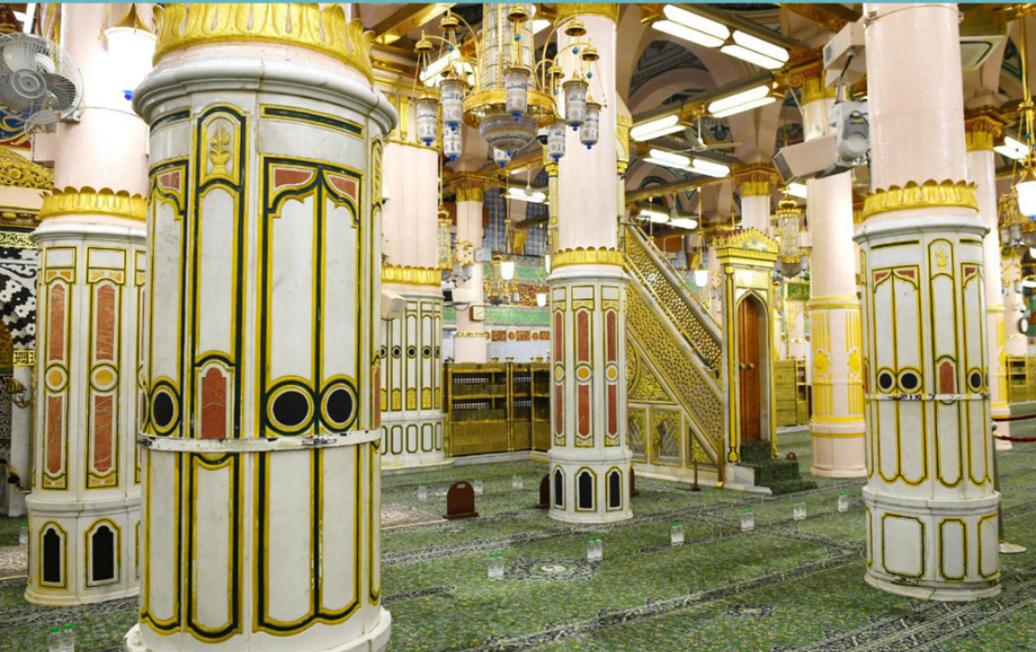


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A DAY WITH YOUR BELOVED ONE

(PEACE BE UPON HIM)



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In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful



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A Day with Your Beloved One (Peace be upon him)

All praise is due to God who has made following His chosen Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the direct way to earning His love. He says in the Qur'an: 'Say: "If you love God, follow me; God will love you and forgive you your sins. God is much-forgiving, ever-merciful'. (3: 31)

To place the love of any human being ahead of the love of His Messenger, Prophet Muhammad, is to forfeit one's faith altogether. The Prophet says: 'None of you truly attains to faith unless I am dearer to him than his parents, children and all mankind'. [Related by al-Bukhari].

Perfect peace and total blessings are due to Prophet Muhammad, the chosen messenger, the enlightening guide, the advocate bringing happy news who is a manifestation of God's bestowed mercy and blessings. Peace be upon him whenever night and day succeed each other, and at every time he is mentioned by good believers. Peace be

upon him as many times as the drops of rain, the leaves on trees and the grains of sand. And peace be also to members of his household, as well as the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who follow their good examples in all generations up to the Day of Judgement.

Prophet Muhammad has a special position in every believer's heart. Every true believer would have loved to be one of the Prophet's companions, attending him, looking at his blessed countenance, listening to his fine discourse, witnessing his perfect manners and how he worshipped God. A true believer would wish to sacrifice everything for seeing the Prophet. He said: 'Among those who love me best are some members of my community who will come after me. Each of them would wish to have seen me, even if he would sacrifice his family and wealth'.

[Related by Muslim]

People of the *tābi'īn* generation were of that type. Ibn Sīrīn said to 'Abīdah ibn 'Amr: 'We have some hairs of the Prophet which we received through Anas ibn Mālik'. 'Abīdah said: 'To have a single hair of his is far more precious to me than the entire world and all it contains'.

[Related by al-Bukhari].

Commenting on this, al-Dhahabī said: 'This scholar said this only fifty years after the Prophet had passed away. What should we say nowadays, if we were to get some of

his hair, with clear proof?’ Needless to say, such a proof is no longer possible. Al-Dhahabī also said: ‘It is confirmed that when he shaved his head [during his pilgrimage], his hair was distributed among his companions as a gesture of love. [Related by Muslim]. How I love to kiss one hair’.

Jubayr ibn Nufayl said: ‘We attended al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad one day. A man passed by and said to him: “Blessed are your two eyes as they saw God’s Messenger (peace be upon him). We would love to have seen and witnessed what you did”.’

When Thābit al-Bunānī saw Anas ibn Mālīk, the Prophet’s servant, he would kiss his hand. He said: I am kissing a hand that touched God’s Messenger’s hand. Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥārith did the same with Wāthilah ibn al-Asqa‘, and a number of *tābi‘īn* with Salamah ibn al-Akwa‘, kissing their hands as they had pledged allegiance to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī related the incident that the Prophet used to lean on a tree branch in the mosque when he delivered his Friday speech. He later stood on a platform so that he could be heard better. The branch felt it and it was heard making a noise similar to that of a she-camel when its calf was taken away. Everyone in the mosque heard this noise. The Prophet came down and held the branch with his hand and it stopped. [Related by al-Bukhari].

Al-Hasan commented saying: ‘Muslim! This is a piece of wood missing the Prophet. It behoves you to show a stronger desire to meeting him’.

With them, it was not a mere feeling of love and desire to meet him. It went further than that as they took action to implement his Sunnah and follow his practice. They thus hoped to attain a similar grade to what they had missed of meeting him. Abu Muslim al-Khawlānī, a prominent figure among the *tābi‘īn*, said: ‘Do Muhammad’s companions think that they can exclude us from him? We shall most certainly compete with them for him so that they would realize that they were succeeded by real men’. Thus, Abu Muslim felt that the Prophet’s companions could not take the Prophet for themselves. He wanted to compete with them in the way they loved him. It is an honourable competition, as there could be no monopoly of good deeds. Distinction is attained by action and manners. A competitor whose deeds slow him down in the race will not achieve an advanced position through his family and ancestors. Scholars said: If you find someone competing with you in matters of this world, let your competition be in matters of the next world. If you can take the lead in pleasing God, do not hesitate to do that.

People in the early generations of Islam, after the Prophet’s companions and their successors, the *tābi‘īn*, were keen

to follow the Prophet's Sunnah in all matters, of major and minor importance. Imam Ahmad, who was a leading authority on Hadith, said: 'Whenever I wrote down a hadith, I put it into practice. One day, I learnt a hadith that said that the Prophet gave Abu Taybah, who administered cupping to him, a dinar. When I needed cupping, I gave the man who administered it a dinar'. Imam Ahmad also said: 'If you can follow a hadith concerning anything you do, even scratching your skin, then do it'. This is only due to the fact that he was the most perfect of human beings, in all aspects. Imam al-Nawawī said: 'If you consider his physical appearance, he was the most handsome of people, and if you consider his manners, you see total perfection, and if you look at his kindness and benevolence to mankind, particularly Muslims, you realize that he set the ultimate example of care'. Undoubtedly, one of the best blessings we may have is to love Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Imam Ibn al-Qayyim said: 'When a person is sincere in all thoughts and acceptance of God's will, he will be granted the love of God's Messenger (peace be upon him). He will live such a spirituality that he makes the Prophet his leader, teacher and role model, because God made him His Prophet, messenger who guides people to Him. Such a person will then want to study his life right from the early stages, and how he received revelations. He will learn his manners, character, and how he approached everything,

as well as how he slept, woke up, moved, worshipped, treated his companions and how he conducted himself at home. He will thus feel as if he is with him and one of his companions'.⁽¹⁾

My advice to everyone who has missed out on being a companion of the Prophet is to stick to his sunnah and follow his practice. It is a splendid experience which you will highly appreciate if you live a day with your beloved Prophet, emulating him in every thing he says and does, following his guidance at every point. You shall experience a day of pure happiness, because you will be following the best one of all mankind, emulating him as if you are seeing him. Try it once and let the experience give its effect. When you have done that, I will wish you will emulate him in all your future days.

Important note: It is not permissible to specify a particular day believing that it has a special merit, unless there is clear text pointing to this. You may choose any day to start your companionship with the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, before we live a day with him, we need to mention what he looked like.



1 Ibn al-Qayyim, *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, Vol. 3, p. 268.



The Prophet's Appearance

God's Messenger (peace be upon him) was of average height, with broad shoulders. His hair was down to the level of the end of his ears. He had the most handsome face and the best manners. He was neither too tall nor short; neither too white nor too dark. His hair was neither too curly nor too flat. [Related by al-Bukhari].

He looked very handsome, white with a fine face, as though he was made of silver. He was of fine colour, and when he perspired, his sweat looked like pearls. He had a thick beard. Jābir ibn Samurah was asked whether the Prophet's face was like a sword. He answered: 'No, it was round, like the sun and the moon'. His mouth was broad, with long, open eyes. He had thin muscles on his heels. He was white and of fine build: neither fat nor thin, and neither tall nor short. He had large hands and feet, and his palms were flat. Anas said: 'I never felt silk or brocade to be softer than the Prophet's palm, and I never smelled musk or amber which was of better smell than the Prophet's. His

sweat was gathered in bottle and was considered the best of perfumes. [Related by Muslim].

Now we review at the Prophet's day, casting only a brief look, relying only on what is classified as authentic by the leading Hadith scholar of our time Shaykh Muhammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, and confining myself to the Six Hadith anthologies, except in rare cases.





Waking up, Ablution and Night Worship

When God's Messenger (peace be upon him) woke up, he would say: *al-ḥamd lillāh alladhī aḥyānā ba'da mā amātanā wa ilayhi nnushūr*, which means: 'All praise be to God who has given us life after having gathered our souls. To Him all shall be resurrected'. He began with brushing his teeth. He might recite the last eleven verses of Surah 3, Āl 'Imārīn, beginning with: 'In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the succession of night and day, there are indeed signs for men endowed with insight'. (3: 190)

He would then perform the ablution, i.e. wudu, doing it well. If he went to the toilet, he would say: *Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bika min al-khubth wal khabā'ith*, which means: 'My Lord, I seek Your shelter from all that is foul and evil'. When he came out, he would say: *ghufrānak*, which means: 'I seek Your forgiveness'. He might cleanse himself with water at times, or using three stones to cleanse

himself with, or use both water and solid objects at times. He would shield himself. He would not urinate standing, except in rare cases.

When the Prophet performed his ablution, he would economise with water. He started with washing his hands three times. He then rinsed his mouth and cleaned his nose three times, using three handfuls of water. He used half a handful for rinsing his mouth and the other half for cleaning his nose. He inhaled the water with his right hand and blew his nose using his left hand. He encouraged inhaling the water thoroughly unless one is fasting. Next he washed his face three times, from the point of his head hair down to his beard, which he might at times go through with his fingers. He would then wipe his head with both his hands, starting at the front, going right to the back and bringing them to the starting point. He followed that with wiping his ears, from inside and outside. He concluded with washing his feet three times, up to his ankles. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ‘Whenever any of you performs the ablution and makes it perfect, then says: *ashhadu an lā ilāha illa Allah wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhū wa rasūluh*, which means: “I bear witness that there is no deity other than God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is God’s servant and messenger”, all eight gates of Heaven will be opened for him to enter at any he wishes’. He might add: *Allāhumma ij‘alnī min al-tawwābīn waj‘alnī min al-*

mutatahirrīn, which means: ‘My lord, include me among your repentant servants who cleanse themselves’.

God’s Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ‘When a Muslim (or a believer) servant of God performs the ablutions and washes his face, his face will eject with the water (or with the last drop of water) every sin his eyes has gazed at. When he washes his arms, his arms will eject with the water (or with the last drop of water) every sin committed by his hands. When he washes his feet, his feet will eject with the water (or with the last drop of water) every sin to which he has walked. Thus, he ends free of sin’. [Related by Muslim].

The Prophet used to pray eleven *rak’ahs* of night prayer, i.e. *tahajjud*: ‘he would pray four *rak’ahs* and you need not ask about their length and perfection. He follows these with another four *rak’ahs* and you need not ask about their length and perfection. He then finishes with three *rak’ahs* of Witr prayer’. [Related by al-Bukhari].

At times he offered thirteen *rak’ahs* of night prayer. He would then lie down until his companion who calls for the obligatory prayers [the *mu’adhdhin*] came to alert him. He would rise and offer two short *rak’ahs*, i.e. the Fajr sunnah. He used to recite in these *rak’ahs* Surahs 109 and 112, respectively. Sometimes he reclined on his right side for a short period after offering these two *rak’ahs*.

When he heard the *adhān*, i.e. the call to prayer, he would repeat the same phrases. However, when the caller said: ‘come to prayer; come to success, i.e. *ḥay ‘ala al-ṣalāh; ḥay ‘ala al-falāḥ*’, he would say: *lā ḥawla walā quwwata illā billāh*, i.e. ‘No power operates except by God’s leave’. He has instructed all believers to supplicate God to bestow peace and blessings on His messenger. The Prophet said: ‘My intercession on the Day of Judgement is due to the one who says after hearing the *adhān*: *Allāhumma rabba hādhihi al-da‘wati al-tāmmah wal ṣalāti al-qā’imah āti Muhammadan al-wasīlah wal-faḍīlah wab‘athhu maqāman maḥmūdān alladhī wa‘adtah*, which means: “Our Lord, the Lord of this perfect call and the due prayer, grant Muhammad the *wasīlah* and perfect virtue, and raise him to the honourable station You promised him”.’ He also said: ‘Whoever says when he has heard the *adhān*, *ashhadu an lā ilāha illa Allah wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhū wa rasūluh; raḍītu billāhi rabbā wa bi Muhammadin rasūlā wa bil Islam dīnā*, which means: “I bear witness that there is no deity other than God, and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. I accept God as my Lord, Muhammad as God’s Messenger and Islam as my religion”, shall have his sin forgiven’. [Related by Muslim].

The Prophet then went to the mosque for the prayer. As he walked, he said: *Allāhumma ij‘al fī qalbī nūran, wa fī*

lisānī nūran, wa fī sam ‘ī nūran, wa fī baṣarī nūran, wa min fawqī nūran, wa min taḥtī nūran, wa ‘an yamīnī nūran, wa ‘an shimālī nūran, wa min amāmī nūran, wa min khalfī nūran, wa ‘azzim lī nūrā, which means: ‘My Lord, place in my heart light; in my tongue light; in my hearing light; in my sight light; above me light; beneath me light; to my right light; to my left light; in front of me light; behind me light; and grant me great light’. [Related by Muslim].

He also said: ‘Give those who walk to the mosques in the dark hours the happy news of having perfect light on the Day of Judgement’.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered the mosque, he would step in with his right leg first. He would say: *a ‘ūdhu billāhi al- ‘azīm wa sultānihi al-qadīm min al-shaytān al-rajīm,* which means: ‘I seek refuge with God the Supreme, and His all-time sovereignty, against Satan the accursed’. When he entered the mosque, he would say: *bismillāh wa salāmu ‘alā rasūl Allah allāhumma ighfir lī dhunūbī waftaḥ lī abwāba raḥmatik,* which means: ‘In the name of God, and peace be to God’s Messenger. My Lord, forgive me my sins and open to me the gates of Your mercy’. When he left the mosque, he would say: *bismillāh wa salāmu ‘alā rasūl Allah allāhumma ighfir lī dhunūbī waftaḥ lī abwāba faḍlik,* which means: ‘In the name of God, and peace be to God’s Messenger. My Lord, forgive

me my sins and open to me the gates of Your bounty'. He recommended that we should say when leaving the mosque: *Allāhumma i'ṣimini min al-shayṭān al-rajīm*, which means: 'My Lord, protect me against Satan the accursed'.





How the Prophet Offered His Prayers

Prayer was what gave the Prophet heart-felt pleasure. It comforted him and was an ever helpful resource when facing something of grave importance. When he wanted to pray, he would use his tooth stick, i.e. *siwāk*, for a quick brushing of his teeth. He placed some object in front of him as a screen when he prayed. He would stand at a short distance from that object, which could even be a spear. He ordered us that a worshipper should not allow anyone to pass across in front of him.

The worshipper may physically stop anyone crossing in front of him. He would face the *qiblah*, [i.e. the direction to the Ka‘bah in Makkah], then say *Allah-u akbar*, i.e. God is supreme. As he said it, he would raise his hands, keeping his fingers straight, to be level with his ears, while his palms turned towards the *qiblah*. He would place his right palm over the back of his left hand keeping both on his chest.

He would look at the place where his head will be in prostration. He continued to look at that spot throughout his prayer. He would begin by supplicating: *Allāhumma bā'id baynī wa bayna khaṭāyāya kamā bā'adta bayna al-mashriq wal maghrib; allāhumma ighsilnī min khaṭāyāya bil mā'i wal thalj wal barad; allāhumma naqqinī min al-dhunūb wal khaṭāyā kamā yunaqqa al-thawb al-abyaḍ min al-danas*, which means: 'My Lord, keep me as far from sin as the east from the west. My Lord, wash sin off me with snow, water and hale. My Lord, wash off my sins just like stains are washed off a white robe'.

The Prophet would then seek God's shelter, saying: *a'ūdhu billāh al-sami' al-'alim min al-shayṭān al-rajīm min hamzih wa nafkhih wa nafthih*, which means: 'I seek refuge with God, the All-Hearing, All-Knowing against Satan, the accursed: his whispers and exaggeration'. He then inaudibly recited *bismi-llāhi al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, "i.e. in the name of God, the Lord of Grace, the Ever-Merciful". The Prophet then recited aloud the first surah of the Qur'an, *al-Fātiḥah*, which is required to be recited in every *rak'ah*. He recited it very clearly, pausing at the end of every one of its short verses. He thus read *al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbil-'ālamīn*, "i.e. praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds", and paused; *Al-Raḥmāni al-Raḥīm* "i.e. the Lord of Grace, the Ever-Merciful", pause; *Māliki yawmi-ddīn* "i.e. Master of the Day of Judgement", pause, etc.

This was a feature of his recitation, pausing at the end of every verse. In his recitation, he elongated vowels. When he finished *al-Fātiḥah* he said: *Āmīn*, i.e. Amen. He said it aloud, elongating its vowels. He said that if one happens to say it at the same time as the angels, that person would have his past sins forgiven.

In the Fajr obligatory prayer, the Prophet recited after the *Fātiḥah* in each *rak'ah* one of the long surahs of *al-Mufaṣṣal*⁽¹⁾ (i.e. Surahs 50-77). Or he may recite 60-100 verses in each *rak'ah*, and at times he recites from other surahs, i.e. Surahs 2-49. In the Fajr prayer on Fridays, he recited in the first *rak'ah* Surah 32, Prostration, and in the second Surah 76, Man. In *Zuḥr* prayer, he used to recite about 30 verses in each of the first two *rak'ahs*, and about 15 verses in the last two. The 'Aṣr prayer saw the Prophet reciting around fifteen verses in each of the first two *rak'ahs* and around half that figure in the last two. At times, the Prophet only recited *al-Fātiḥah* in the last two *rak'ahs* of *Zuḥr* and 'Aṣr prayers. At times, he let worshippers closest to him hear which verses he recited. In *Maghrib*, the Prophet recited short surahs of *al-Mufaṣṣal*, i.e. Surahs 93-114, and on occasions he recited longer

1 *Al-Mufaṣṣal* refers to Surahs 50-114 of the Qur'an, with Surahs 50-77 described as 'long', Surahs 78-92 as 'middle length' and Surahs 93-114 as 'short', although the description does not apply to every surah in each section.

surahs, such as Surah 52, Mount Sinai, on one occasion, and Surah 7, The Heights, on another. In ‘Ishā’ prayer, the prophet recited surahs from the middle length *al-Mufaṣṣal*, i.e. Surahs 78-92.

When he finished reciting, the Prophet lifted his hands, said *Allah-u akbar* and bowed. During bowing, i.e. *rukū’*, the Prophet placed his palms on his knees as if he was holding them, with his fingers apart and his elbows leaning sideways.⁽¹⁾ The upper part of his body is kept straight, and his head neither fully raised, nor kept flat with his back, but taking a position in between. He would say three times *Subḥābn rabbi al-‘Azīm*, which means ‘Limitless in His glory is my Lord, the Supreme’. At times he would repeat this glorification more than three times, and at other times, he would add to it phrases like *Subbūḥ quddūs rabbul-malā’kati wal-rūḥ*, which means ‘Glorious, Holy, the Lord of the angels and the Holy Spirit’. And he would say: *Subḥānak allāhumma rabbanā wa biḥamdik. Allāhumma għfir lī*, which means: ‘All glory is Yours, God, our Lord and all praise is due to You. My Lord, forgive me’. He repeated this supplication often in his bowing and prostration. The Prophet also said: ‘I have been ordered not to recite the Qur’an during bowing or prostration. During bowing, glorify the Lord, and during prostration add your

¹ Needless to say, leaning one’s elbows sideways does not apply in congregational prayer.

supplication. It is more likely that your supplication will be answered'. [Related by Muslim].

As he then rose from bowing, the Prophet said *sami' Allah liman ḥamidah*, which means 'May God answer anyone who praises Him'. He again raised his hands as he stood erect and said *rabbānā wa lak al-ḥamd*, meaning 'our Lord, all praise belongs to You'. At times he said it without the conjunctive article *wa*. At other times he may add at the beginning the word *allāhumma* which is another word for 'our Lord'. The Prophet said: 'When the imam said *sami' Allah liman ḥamidah*, you should say *Allāhumma rabbānā laka al-ḥamd*. Whoever says it at the same time as the angels say it shall have his past sins forgiven'. He endorsed the addition said by one of his companions *ḥamdan kathīran ṭayyiban mubārakn fīh*, which means 'plenty of good and blessed praise'. He commented: 'I saw thirty-odd angels racing, each hoping to be the first to put it on record'. At times he added: *mil'a al-samāwāt wa mil'a al-arḍ wa mil'a mā shi'ta min shay'in ba'd*, which means: 'the fill of the heavens and the fill of the earth and the fill of whatever You like beyond these'.

He would then say *Allah-u akbar* and go down prostrating himself. He made sure that both his forehead and nose were well placed on the floor, placed his palms flat, with his fingers touching together and pointing towards the

qiblah. His palms will be either parallel with his shoulders or with his ears. His knees and the front parts of his feet sitting well on the floor, with his toes pointing towards the *qiblah*. His thighs touched neither his abdomen nor his shanks. He would put his arms away from his body so that the whiteness of his armpits would be seen by anyone behind him.⁽¹⁾

During prostration, the Prophet repeated three times the phrase: *subḥan rabbi al-a‘lā*, which means ‘limitless in His glory is my Lord the Most High’, and sometimes he repeated this phrase more than three times. He again said what we mentioned that he said during bowing. He also supplicated saying: *Allāhumma ghfir lī dhanbī kullah: diqqahu wa jullah; awallahu wa akhirah; wa ‘alāniyatahu wa sirrah*, which means: ‘My Lord, forgive me all my sin: small and large, first and last, public and private’. He also said: *Allāhumma laka sajadat, wa bika āmant, wa laka aslamat. Sajada wajhī lilladhī khalaqahū wa ṣawwarah wa shaqqa fīhi sam‘ahū wa baṣarah; fa tabāarak Allah aḥsan al-khālīqīn*, which means: ‘My Lord, to You I prostrate myself; in You I believe; and to You I submit myself. My face is prostrated to the One who created it and placed in it hearing and sight. Blessed is God the best of creators’.

1 As the Prophet led the congregational prayer, he could do this, but it cannot apply to anyone in the congregation. It applies to a person who is praying alone.

He may also say during his prostration: *Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bi riḍāka min sakhaṭik; wa a'ūdhu bi mu'āfatika min 'uqūbatik; wa a'ūdhu bika minka lā uḥṣī thanā'an 'alayk, anta kamā athnayta 'alā nafsik* which means 'My Lord, I seek refuge with Your pleasure from Your wrath, and with Your blessing of safety from Your punishment, and with You from You: I cannot praise You enough, my praise is as You Yourself has praised Yourself'. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'The closest position a person may draw towards God is during prostration. Therefore, supplicate more'. [Related by Muslim].

He then lifted his head from prostration saying *Allah-u akbar* and moving to the sitting position, sitting on his left foot as he stretched it flat, while he kept his right foot in the vertical position except that the toes of his right foot pointed towards the *qiblah*. He placed his palms on his thighs or his knees. He would say: *rabbi ghfir lī warḥamnī wajburnī warfa'nī wahdinī wa'āfinī warzuqnī*, which means 'My Lord, forgive me; bestow mercy on me; support me; raise me; guide me; keep me safe and give me my provisions'. Sometimes he would say: *rabbi ghfir lī; rabbi ghfir lī*, which means: 'My lord, forgive me'. He might make this sitting as long as his prostration before he prostrated himself a second time, doing this time the same as he did in the first prostration. He then rose for his second *rak'ah*.

After the second prostration of the second *rak'ah*, the Prophet sat for *tashahhud*, placing his right palm on his right thigh or knee, pointing with his index finger towards the *qiblah*. He would move his index finger and look at it. He gathered together all his other right fingers, or he might join his middle finger and his thumb in a circle. He placed his left palm flat on his left thigh or knee. He would say the *tashahhud* in any of its forms, such as: *al-taḥiyyātu lillāh wal-ṣalawātu wal-ṭayyibāt*; *al-salām 'alayka ayyuhannabiy wa raḥmatullāh wa barakātuh*; *al-salām 'alaynā wa 'alā 'ibādillāh al-ṣāliḥīn*; *ashhad an lā ilāha illa Allah wa ashad anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasūluh*. This means: 'The best greetings and the best blessings are offered to God. Peace be to you, Prophet, together with God's mercy and blessings. Peace be to us and to all goodly servants of God. I bear witness that there is no deity other than God and I bear witness that Muhammad is God's servant and messenger'. He would then bless himself in one of the forms mentioned in hadiths, such as: *Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muhammad wa 'alā āli Muhammad, kamā ṣallayta 'alā Ibrāhīm wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīm; innaka ḥamīd majīd*. *Allāhumma bārik 'alā Muhammad wa 'alā āli Muhammad, kamā bārakta 'alā Ibrāhīm wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīm; innaka ḥamīd majīd*.⁽¹⁾

1 This part is not included in the first *tashahhud* of any three or four *rak'ah* prayer, as it belongs to the last *tashahhud*.

This means: ‘My Lord, grant peace to Muhammad and Muhammad’s household as you granted peace to Abraham and Abraham’s household. You are worthy of all praise and all glory. And bless Muhammad and Muhammad’s household as You blessed Abraham and Abraham’s household. You are worthy of all praise and all glory’.

When the Prophet rose for a third *rak‘ah* he would say *Allah-u akbar* lifting his hands. When he sat for the second *tashahhud*, he would do all that he did in the first one, but he would sit on his left buttock. He would keep his right foot vertical and bring his left leg under his right shank and thigh.⁽¹⁾ He said: ‘When you finish your *tashahhud*, you may appeal for God’s refuge against four things. Say: *Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu bika min ‘adhāb Jahannam, wa min ‘adhāb al-qabr, wa min fitnat al-mahyā wal-mamāt, wa min sharr al-masīh al-dajjāl*, then supplicate for yourself as you wish’. This supplication means: ‘My Lord, I seek refuge with You from the torment in Jahannam, and from the torment in the grave, and the trials of life and death and the evil of the Impostor’. The Prophet taught Abu Bakr to say: *Allāhumma innī ḡalamtu nafsī ḡulman kathīrā, wa lā yaghfir al-dhunūb illā ant, faghfir lī maghfiratan min ‘indik, warḡamnī; innaka anta al-ghafūr al-raḡīm*, which means:

1 This way of sitting may not be comfortable in congregational prayer, in which case the same way as the first *tashahhud* is recommended.

‘My Lord, I have wronged myself much by committing sin, and no one forgives sinful action other than You. Grant me Your forgiveness and bestow mercy on me. You are the One who is Much-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful’. He told Mu‘adh to say after every obligatory prayer: *Allāhumma a‘innī ‘alā dhikrika wa shukrika wa ḥusni ‘ibādatik*, which means: ‘My Lord, help me to remember You, thank You and worship You well’. The last thing the Prophet used to say after the *tashahud* and before he finished his prayer with salam was *Allāhumma ghfir lī mā qaddamt wa mā akhkhart, wa mā asrart wa mā a‘lant, wa mā asraft, wa mā anta a‘lamu bihī minnī; antal muqddim wa antal mu‘akhhir; lā ilāha illā ant*, which means: ‘My Lord, forgive me what I did earlier and later and what I did in private and public, and what I transgressed, and what You know better than myself. You are the One who puts ahead or last. There is no deity other than You’. The Prophet then finished his prayer with salam, turning his head to the right so as his right cheek is seen while saying *al-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāh*, then turning his head to the left so as his left cheek is seen while saying *al-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāh*.

Having finished his prayer, the Prophet said three times *astaghfirullāh*, which means: ‘I pray for God’s forgiveness’. He followed that by saying: *Allāhumma anta al-salām wa mink al-salām; tabārakta yā dhal-jalāl wal-ikrām* which means: ‘My Lord, You are peace and peace comes from You.

Blessed You are in Your majesty and Your benevolence'. He then said: *lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahū lā sharīka lah; lahul mulk wa lahul ḥamd wa huwa 'alā kulli shay'in qadīr. Allāhumma lā māni 'a limā a 'ṭayt wa lā mu 'ṭiya limā mana 't, wa lā yanfa 'u dha ljadd minka ljadd*, which means: 'There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, and He has the power to do everything. Our Lord, no one can withhold what You give and no one can give what You withhold. A person's resources are not useful without Your permission'. He also said: *lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahū lā sharīka lah; lahul mulk wa lahul ḥamd wa huwa 'alā kulli shay'in qadīr; wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illa billāh. Lā ilāha illa Allah wa lā na 'budu illā iyyāh; lahu al-ni 'matu wa lahu al-faḍl wa lahu al-thanā' al-ḥasan; lā ilāha illa Allah mukhliṣīna lahu ddīn wa law kariha al-kāfirūn*, which means: 'There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, and He has the power to do everything. No ability and no power works except by God's will. There is no deity other than God, and we worship none but Him, sincere in our faith in Him, however hateful this may be to the unbelievers'. He also said: *rabbi qinī 'adhābak yawma tab 'athu 'ibādak*, which means: 'My Lord, shield me from Your punishment on the day when You resurrect Your servants'. He recommended his community that after every

obligatory prayer they repeat each of the following three phrases 33 times: *subḥān Allah*, i.e. Limitless is God in His glory; *al-ḥamd lillāh*, i.e. All praise is due to God; *Allah-u akbar*, i.e. God is supreme. To complete one hundred they add: *lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahū lā sharīka lah; laḥul mulk wa laḥul ḥamd wa huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr*, which means: ‘There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, and He has the power to do everything’. He tells us that its reward is the ‘forgiveness of one’s sins even though they may be as many as the foam on the surface of the sea’. [Related by Muslim].

The Prophet said such supplication and glorification aloud, and he counted the glorifications on his fingers. He tells us that ‘a person who recites the Verse of the Throne [i.e. Verse 2:255] after every obligatory prayer is only stopped from entering Heaven by being alive’. He also instructed us to recite the last two surahs of the Qur’an after every obligatory prayer.

When he finished his Fajr prayer, the Prophet said: *Allāhumma innī as’aluka ‘ilman naḥī ‘ā, wa rizqan ṭayyibā, wa ‘amalan mutaqqabbalā*, which means: ‘My Lord, I pray that You give me useful knowledge, goodly income and deeds You accept’. The Prophet also said: ‘Whoever says when he finishes Maghrib and Fajr prayers, before turning

away to leave: *lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahu lā sharīka lah; lahul mulk wa lahul ḥamd; yuḥyī wa yumīt; wa huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr*, which means: ‘There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, He gives life and causes death, and He has the power to do everything’; repeating it ten times shall be credited for every time ten good deeds, and ten evil deeds shall be wiped away from his record and will be granted ten extra grades. It will be a protection for him from every evil thing and from Satan the accursed. No sin will catch up with him, except associating partners with God. He will be one of the best people in deeds, except a person who says more and better than he has said.

God’s Messenger (peace be upon him) attended regularly to all five obligatory prayers. He tells us that God has made these obligatory to His servants every day and night. He also said that God erases a person’s sins when he offers his five daily prayers. Whoever offers these prayers with good ablution, proper devotion and prostration, they atone for what preceded them of sins, apart from major ones. He said that whoever abandons prayer altogether disbelieves.

The Prophet encouraged offering the obligatory prayer in congregation in the mosque. He said: ‘A person’s prayer with the congregation multiplies the reward of his same

prayer at home or at his workplace twenty-five times. That is because: when he performs the ablution well then goes to the mosque, having no purpose for going out except the prayer, then for every step, he is raised a grade and a bad deed is erased from his record. When he prays, the angels continue to bless him while he is in his worship place, saying: Lord, forgive him; Lord, bestow mercy on him. He will be considered to be engaged in prayer while waiting for the congregational prayer'. He expressed the desire to burn the homes of people who continuously stayed away from congregational prayer in the mosque. The Prophet said: 'Whoever prays 'Ishā' with a congregation is like one who spends half the night in worship and whoever also prays Fajr with a congregation is like one who spends the entire night in prayer'. He informed us that whoever prays 'Aṣr and Fajr will be admitted into Heaven.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) maintained offering the regular sunnah [i.e. recommended] prayers. Ibn 'Umar said: 'I learnt from the Prophet the offering of ten *rak'ahs*: two *rak'ahs* before *Zuhr* and two after it; two *rak'ahs* after *Maghrib* at home; two *rak'ahs* after 'Ishā' at home and two *rak'ahs* before Fajr prayer'. At times the Prophet offered four *rak'ahs* before *Zuhr* at home. In the two *rak'ahs* of sunnah prayer after *Maghrib*, he would recite Surahs 109 and 112. He also recited these two surahs at times in the sunnah prayer before Fajr, and at other times he recited in

the first *rak'ah* the verse: ‘Say [all of you], ‘We believe in God and in what has been revealed to us, and in what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants, and in what was given to Moses and Jesus, and in what all prophets have been given by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to God we have surrendered ourselves’. (2: 136)

And in the second *rak'ah* he recited the verse: ‘Say: People of earlier revelations. Let us come to an agreement which is equitable between you and us: that we shall worship none but God, that we shall associate no partners with Him, and that we shall not take one another for lords beside God. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we have surrendered ourselves to God’. (3: 64)

The Prophet also offered voluntary prayer in mid-morning, recommending Abu Hurayrah to offer this prayer. He tells us that it compensates for the body’s daily charity, which means that it is equal to giving 360 *sadaqahs* or charities. The Prophet also prayed four voluntary *rak'ahs* before the obligatory ‘Aṣr prayer, splitting them two and two. He said: ‘May God bestow mercy on a person who prays four *rak'ahs* before ‘Aṣr’.





The Prophet's Praises of God, Morning and Evening

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) completed his Fajr, i.e. dawn, prayer, he would remain at his place of prayer until sunrise. He would say: *Allāhumma bika aṣbaḥnā wa bika amsaynā, wa bika naḥyā, wa bika namūt, wa ilayka nnushūr*, which means: ‘Our Lord, by Your will we are in this morning, and by Your will we will be in the evening. By Your will we live, and by Your will we die, and to You all shall be resurrected’. In the evening, he would say the same, placing the phrase mentioning the evening first, and replacing the last phrase by *wa ilayk al-maṣīr*, which means ‘with You all journeys end’.

He also said: *aṣbaḥnā wa aṣbaḥ al-mulk lillāh wal ḥamd lillāh lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahū lā sharīka lah; laḥul mulk wa laḥul ḥamd; wa huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr; rabbi as’aluka khayr mā fī hādha lyawm wa khayra mā ba’dah, wa’ūdhu bika min sharr mā fī hādha lyawm was sharr mā*

ba 'dah; rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min al-kasal wa sū'ī lkibar; rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min 'adhabin fi al-nār wa 'adhabin fi al-qabr; which means: 'There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, He has the power to do everything. My Lord, I pray You to grant me of the best that is durig this day and the goodness of coming days, and I appeal to You for refuge from the worst that is on this day and the evil of coming days. I appeal to You for refuge from laziness and foul old age. My Lord I appeal to You for refuge from punishment in Hell and punishment in the grave'.

And he said: *aşbahñā 'alā fiṭrat al-Islam wa kalimat al-ikhhlās wa dīn nabīyyinā Muhammad wa millati abīnā Ibrāhīm ḥanīfan wa mā kāna min al-mushrikīn,* which means: 'We receive this morning holding on to the pure religion of Islam and the sincere word of faith, following the religion of our Prophet Muhammad and the creed of our father Abraham who turned away from all that is false and was not one of those who associate partners with God'. In the evening, he would say the same replacing the word *aşbahñā* by *amsaynā,* which means 'We receive this evening'.

He always said this supplication in the morning and the evening: *Allāhumma innī as'aluk al-'afwa wal 'āfiyah fil dunyā wal ākhirah; allāhumma innī as'aluk al-'afwa wal 'āfiyah fi dīnī wa dunyāy wa ahlī wa māli. Allāhumma stur*

'awrātī wa āmin raw 'ātī. Allāhumma ihfaznī min bayn yaday wa min khalfī wa 'an yamīnī wa 'an shimālī wa min fawqī. Wa a 'ūdhu bi 'aẓamatik an ughtāl min tahtī, which means 'Our Lord, I appeal to You for forgiveness and complete wellbeing in this life and the life to come. Our Lord I appeal to You for forgiveness and complete wellbeing in my faith and my life, and also in my family and property. Our Lord, cover up my shortcomings and grant me reassurance when I am scared. Our Lord, protect me from front and rear, right, left and from above me. I seek refuge with Your greatness against being harmed from beneath me'.

The Prophet repeated the following supplication three times in the morning and three times in the evening: *Allāhumma 'āfinī fī badanī, allāhumma 'āfinī fī sam'ī, allāhumma 'āfinī fī baṣarī, lā ilāha illā ant. Allāhumma innī a 'ūdhu bika min al-kufr wal faqr, allāhumma innī a 'ūdhu bika min 'adhāb al-qabr lā ilāha illā ant, which means 'Our Lord, give me good health in my body. Our Lord, give me good health in my hearing. Our Lord give me good health in my sight. There is no deity other than You. Our Lord, I seek refuge with You from disbelief and poverty. Our Lord, I seek refuge with You from the torment in the grave. There is no deity other than You'.*

The Prophet tells us that the following is the best appeal for forgiveness: *Allāhumma anta rabbi lā ilāha illā ant,*

khalaqtanī wa ana ‘abduk, wa ana ‘alā ‘ahdika wa wa ‘dika mastafa ‘t; a ‘ūdhu bika min sharri mā šana ‘t; abū ‘u laka bini ‘matika ‘alayya wa abū ‘u bidhanbī faghfir lī fa ‘innahū lā yaghfiru al-dhunūba illā ant, which means ‘Our Lord, there is no deity other than You. You have created me and I am Your servant. I am faithful to my pledge and promise to You as best I can. I seek refuge with You against the evil I have done. I acknowledge Your favours to me and I admit my sin. So forgive me, for none forgives sins except You’. He said that whoever says this supplication, believing in it, morning or evening and dies shall be in Heaven. The Prophet tells us that reciting the last three surahs of the Qur’an three times, morning and evening, suffices for everything. He also said that nothing will harm anyone who says the following supplication three times morning and evening: bismillāhi alladhī lā yaḍurru ma ‘a smihī shay ‘un fil arḍi wa lā fis samā’ wa huwa al-samī ‘u al- ‘alīm, which means, ‘In the name of God with whose name nothing on earth or in the sky can cause any harm. He is the One who hears all and knows all’.

The Prophet taught Abu Bakr to say morning and evening: *Allāhumma ‘ālim al-ghayb wal shahādah, fāṭir al-samāwāt wal arḍ, rabba kulli shay ‘in wa malīkah, ashhadu an lā ilāha illā ant; a ‘ūdhu bika min sharri nafsī wa min sharri al-shayṭān wa shirkih; wa an aqtarifa ‘alā nafsī sū ‘an aw ajurrahū ‘alā Muslim, which means: ‘Our Lord, You know*

all that is beyond the reach of our perception and what we witness. You are the Originator of the heavens and earth, and the Lord and Sovereign of everything. I bear witness that there is no deity other than You. I seek refuge with You from the evil of myself and the evil of Satan and his disbelief, and from causing harm to myself or causing it to any Muslim'. He advised his daughter Fāṭimah to say morning and evening: *yā ḥay yā qayyūm, bi raḥmatik astaghīth; aṣliḥ lī sha'nī kullah wa lā takilnī ilā nafsī ṭarfāt 'ayn*, which means: 'You are the Ever-Living, the Eternal Master. I beseech You by Your mercy to put all my affairs to right and not to abandon me to my own devices for even a wink of an eye'.

He said: *subḥān Allah wa biḥamdih*, which means 'Limitless is God in His glory and all praise is due to Him', and added that whoever says it one hundred times morning and evening, no one will have better credit than him, except one who says the same or more. He also said that it wipes away sins, even though they are like foam on the surface of the sea. He further said: *lā ilāha illa Allah waḥdahu lā sharīkalah; laḥul mulk wa laḥul ḥamd; wa huwa 'alā kulli shay'in qadīr*, which means: 'There is no deity other than God, the One God who has no partner. To Him all dominion belongs and to Him all praise is due, and He has the power to do everything'. He added that whoever says this one hundred times a day, it is equal to freeing ten slaves and being credited

with one hundred good deeds and having one hundred bad deeds erased from his record. It will be his protection from Satan during that day until night time. No one will have more to one's credit except one who has done more than that. He also said: 'Whoever prays God to grant me peace ten times in the morning and ten times in the evening shall have my intercession on the Day of Judgement'.

In the morning only

God's Messenger said: 'Whoever says in the morning *raḍītu billāhi rabbā wabil Islam dīnā wa bi Muhammad nabiyyā*, I guarantee that I shall take him by the hand right into Heaven'. This means: 'I happily acknowledge God as my Lord, Islam as my faith and Muhammad as my Prophet'.

In the evening only

God's Messenger said that whoever says this supplication three times in the evening, he shall not be harmed by any poisonous creature: *a'ūdhu bi kalimāt Allah min sharri mā khalaq*, which means: I seek refuge with God's perfect words from the evil of His creation.





With Food and Drink

In day to day life matters, the Prophet would set an example to be followed. With regard to food, he never refused what was available and did not go to the trouble of fetching what was missing. Whatever wholesome food was put before him, he would eat, unless it is something that he disliked. In such a case, he simply abstained from eating it, without prohibiting it. He never criticised food. He either ate of it if he liked it, or else he would not eat it. He praised the food he ate, in order to please whoever served it.

It was his custom to eat of whatever was available. If he had nothing, he would patiently endure. On occasions, he tied a stone on his abdomen to silence the pangs of hunger. He might spend a whole day feeling very hungry and he could not have even low-grade dates to eat. Three new moons may be sighted, signalling the passage of two months, without a fire being lit for cooking in his home. When he came home, he might ask whether there was any

food available. If he was told there was none, he would say: ‘Then I am fasting today’. He used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays, and fast three days a month.

The Prophet used to mention God’s name before starting to eat and he praised God when he finished. He would say: *al-ḥamd lillāh ḥamdan kathīran ṭayyiban mubārakan fīh, ghayra makfīy wa lā muwadda‘ wa lā mustaghna‘* ‘anhu rabbunā, which means: ‘God is praised: plentiful, goodly and blessed praise. He gives plenty and needs nothing. No one can dispense with His bounty or feel in no need of the favours of God, our Lord’. He said: ‘When one eats some food and then says *al-ḥamd lillāh alldhī at‘amanī hādhā wa razaqanīh min ghayr ḥawlin minnī wa lā quwwah*, which means ‘All praise be to God who has given me this food and provided it for me, as I have neither ability nor power’, shall be forgiven his past sins’.

He used to take a bite with three fingers, and he would lick his fingers at the end before wiping them. He instructed us to eat with our right hands, and informed us that Satan ate and drank with his left hand. The Prophet never ate in the reclining position. Mostly, his food was placed on the floor. He instructed his followers not to drink in the standing position. He mostly drank when sitting. He would take a breath three times away from his cup, saying that it is more satisfying and pleasant.

The Prophet used to supplicate for any person who gave him something to eat and drink, saying: *Allāhumma aṭ'im man aṭ'amanī wasqī man saqānī*, which means: 'My Lord, feed whoever feeds me, and give a drink to whoever gives me a drink'. He would supplicate for his hosts saying: *Allāhumma bārik lahum fī mā razaqtahum waghfir lahum warḥamhum*, which means: 'My Lord, bless whatever you have given them, forgive them and bestow mercy on them'.





The Prophet's Clothes, Walk and Ride

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) put on his robe, he used to say: *al-ḥamd lillāh alladhī kasānī hādhā al-thawb wa razaqanīh min ghayr ḥawlin minnī wa lā quwwah*, which means: ‘All praise be to God who has given me this garment and provided it for me, as I have neither ability nor power’. If he wore a new article, he would specify it saying whether it is a turban, robe or garment, then say: *Allāhumma laka ḥamd kamā kasawtanīh; as’aluka khayrah wa khayr mā ṣuni’a lah wa a’ūdhu bika min sharrih wa sharr mā ṣuni’a lah*, which means: ‘All praise be to You, my Lord, as You have given it to me. I appeal to You to grant me its goodness and the goodness of whatever it is made for, and to protect me from its evil and the evil of what it is made for’.

The type of clothes the Prophet preferred were a robe and a cotton cloak with red stripes. His preferred colour was

white. He said: ‘Your best clothes are the white ones. Wear these and wrap your dead in them’. He disliked totally red garments and discouraged wearing them.

The Prophet cursed the man who wears women’s clothes, and the woman who wears men’s clothes. Once he saw ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr wearing two garments dyed with saffron. He said to him: ‘These are worn by unbelievers; do not wear them’. He prohibited wearing eye-catching clothes and forbade men to wear silk and gold jewellery. He prohibited dragging one’s robe in arrogance, and dropping one’s robe too low, saying: ‘Whatever is lower than one’s heels of the lower garment is in the Fire’. He wore his lower garment down to the middle of his shins. When he wore his robe, he would start with the right side. He said: ‘When you put on your clothes and perform your ablution, start with the right side’. When he took off his clothes he started with the left side.

He did the same when he put on his shoes. He said, referring to the right foot: ‘Let this be the first to put on and the last to take off’. He instructed his followers not to walk wearing one shoe only. Sometimes, he walked barefoot. His walk was with strong strides, as if he was walking downhill. He lifted his feet well above the ground.

When he rode his mount, and put his foot in the stirrup, he would say *Bismillāh*, i.e. ‘In the name of God’, and when

he was seated on its back, he would say, *al-ḥamd lillāh*, i.e. all praise be to God. He would then say *subḥān alladhī sakhkhara lanā hādhā wa mā kunnā lahu muqrinīn; wa innā ilā rabbinā lamunqalibūn*, which means ‘Limitless in His glory is He who has made all this subservient to our use. We could not have done it by ourselves. To our Lord we shall most certainly return’. He would then repeat each of these two phrases three times: *al-ḥamd lillāh; Allah-u akbar*. He finished by saying: *Allāhumma innī ḡalamtu nafsī fighfir lī, fa innahū lā yaghfiru al-dhunūb illā ant*, which means: ‘My Lord, I have wronged myself; forgive me; for no one forgives sins except You’.





Interacting with People

God's messenger (peace be upon him) had the best looking face and was the best of people in his manners. He was neither vulgar nor abusive. He was not quarrelsome in the market place. He did not respond to a bad action with a similarly bad one, but he forbore and forgave.

Never did God's messenger take revenge for himself. Only when something God has forbidden is violated he would be very angry. Whenever he was given a choice between two alternatives, he would choose the easier, unless it was forbidden. God's messenger (peace be upon him) never hit anything with his hand, nor ever hit a woman or a servant. He only fought for God's sake.

Anas ibn Malik reports; 'I served the Prophet for ten years. He never said to me, "ugh". Nor did he ever say, about something I did: "Why did you do this?" Nor about something I omitted: "Why have you not done that?"'

Whenever the Prophet shook hands with someone, he would not withdraw his hand until the other man withdrew his hand. He would face his interlocutor fully making him feel that he is the one the Prophet loved best. Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullah said: ‘Never did God’s messenger deny me entry [to see him] since I embraced Islam, and he always smiled when he saw me.’ ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith said: ‘I never saw anyone smiling more than God’s Messenger (peace be upon him)’.

The Prophet used to be relaxed in his speech, so that a person could even count his words. His speech was very clear, understood by everyone who heard it. He did not run on without pause. Rather, he would repeat a sentence three times so that it would be understood. When he heard something wrong about someone, he would not say: ‘How come that so-and-so says this or that’. Rather, he kept his identity unknown, saying: ‘How come that some people say this or that’. He praised and glorified God in all situations. His companions reported that they might count the Prophet seeking God’s forgiveness a hundred times in one session. He would say: *rabbi ghfir lī wa tub ‘alayy; innaka anta al-tawwāb al-rahīm*, which means: ‘My Lord, forgive me and accept my repentance. You are the One who accepts repentance, the Ever-Merciful’. He said: ‘By God, I seek God’s forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times every day’. The supplication he said

most frequently was: *rabbānā ātinā fid-dunyā ḥasanah, wa fil-ākhirati ḥasanah, wa qinā ‘adhāba nnār*, which means: ‘Our Lord, grant us what is good in this world and what is good in the life to come and protect us from the torment of the Fire’. Also, *yā muqallib al-qulāb thabbit qalbī ‘alā dīnik*, which means: ‘You who turn hearts over, keep my heart firmly adhering to Your faith’. He ended his session by saying: *subḥānak Allāhumma wa biḥamdik; ashhadu an lā ilāha illā ant; astighfiruka wa atūbu ilayk*, which means: ‘Limitless are You, God, in Your glory and all praise is due to You. I bear witness that there is no deity other than You. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance’.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was more modest than a virgin who is still in her private room. If he disliked something, we realized that by his facial expression.

God’s Messenger was the most generous of people. He never said ‘No’ to anyone’s request. He would give like one who entertained no fear of poverty. He said: ‘If I had [the weight of] Uhud in gold, I would not like that after three nights I would still have one dinar of it, except one I keep to repay a debt’.

The Prophet was the most clement and forbearing of people. A Bedouin would pull him hard by his robe, leaving a mark on his neck, and would speak to him in a

harsh manner. The Prophet merely turned to him, smiled and ordered that he is given some money.

The Prophet was the most courageous of people. Al-Barā' ibn Mālik, who was famous for his bravery, said: 'When battle was hard in earnest, we used to seek protection by God's Messenger (peace be upon him). Only the brave among us would come close to him in battle, as he was very close to the enemy'. [Related by Muslim].

The Prophet was the ultimate resort of his companions when they faced a pressing need. He might repay their debts, as he did with Bilāl, and get a bachelor young man married. He went to plead Jābir's case with a Jew, requesting the latter to delay Jābir's repayment of his debt, speaking to the Jew three times. A woman might come to him complaining about her husband and he listens to her. A man might complain to him about his camel which was getting rebellious, and he goes with him to look at the camel, and the camel complains to the Prophet that his owner works him hard and gives him little food. [Related by Ahmad].

Even animals complained to God's Messenger, sure of redress. God tells the truth as He says: 'We sent you as a manifestation of Our grace to all the worlds'. (21: 107)

The Prophet was humble. He did not hesitate to accompany

a widow or a wretched person to accomplish what they needed. A woman said to him that she needed his help concerning something. He said to her: ‘Mother of so-and-so, choose a street and I will come to you to attend to your need’. He went to her and accomplished what she needed. He might be invited to a meal of some barley bread and bad smelling fat, and he accepted. He said: ‘If a small piece of meat is given to me as a gift, I would accept it, and if I am invited to it, I would accept’. [Related by al-Bukhari].

His body armour was given to a Jew as a pledge, and he could not redeem it before his death.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) used be very kind to children and would play with them. Anas ibn Mālik said: ‘I never saw anyone more compassionate to children than God’s Messenger (peace be upon him)’. He greeted children when he passed by them.





The Prophet at Home

His homes were built of brick with roofs made of bare palm branches. They were narrow. When the Prophet wanted to prostrate himself during his night prayer, he needed to prick ‘Ā’ishah, who was asleep, and she would draw up her legs. Then when he stood up, she stretched them back. When someone entered, he could touch the ceiling by raising his hand. When the Prophet came in, he started by brushing his teeth and greeted whoever was inside.

He said his greeting softly so as not to wake up a sleeping person, but anyone who was awake would hear him.

He said: ‘When a person enters his home, he should say: *Allāhumma innī as’aluka khayr al-mawlawj and khayr al-makhrāj; bismillāh waljnā wa ‘ala Allah rabbinā tawkkalnā*, which means: “My Lord, I request you the best entry and the best exit; in God’s name we enter and we place our trust in God our Lord”. He then greeted his family.

The Prophet said that if a person does not mention God's name when coming in or eating, Satan will take part in their night stay and their food. When the Prophet left home, he said: *bismillāh; tawakkaltu 'ala Allah; allāhumma innā na'ūdhu bika min an nazilla aw naḍill aw nazlim aw nuḍlam aw najhal aw yujhal 'alaynā*, which means: 'In God's name. In God we place our trust. Our Lord, we seek Your shelter against slipping into error or going astray or doing injustice or being unjustly treated or being abusive or being treated with abuse'. He tells us to say: *bismillāh, tawakkaltu 'ala Allah; wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illa billāh*, which means: 'With God's name, I place my trust in God, and no power or force operates except by God's permission'. He said that when one says these words, he will be told that he has been guided right, taken care of and protected. Satan will move away from him.

'Ā'ishah was asked what did the Prophet do at home. She said: 'He would attend to his family's needs, then when he heard the call to prayer, he would leave'. She also said: 'He was an ordinary person, checking his clothes, milking his sheep and serving himself'. He was the kindest of people to his family and the most pleasant to live with. He would listen to 'Ā'ishah talking at length, without interrupting her; rather, he would speak kindly to her. He raced with 'Ā'ishah on occasions, and she won once while he won the next time. When she expressed her desire to

watch some Abyssinian people dancing on the Eid day, he let her stand behind him and look over his shoulder, until she had enough. He was easy to deal with. When she liked something, he allowed her that. Once, he sat by his camel, bending his leg so that his wife, Şafiyah, stepped on his knee to ride the camel. He was patient with his wives when they showed jealousy and he treated them most kindly.

His mattress and his pillow were made of hide and filled with fibre. On some occasions he slept on a straw mat which left its mark on his side. When he went to bed at night, he would blow on his two joined hands and read the last three surahs, and would then go with his two hands over whatever they reached of his body, starting with his head and face and the front of his body. He repeated this three times. He used to say: *al-ḥamd lillāh alladhī aṭ‘amanā wa saqānā wa kafānā wa āwānā; fakam mimman lā kāfiya lahu wa lā mu’wī*, which means: ‘All praise is due to God who has given us food and drink, giving us enough and providing us with shelter. Many are those who do not find enough or a shelter’. When he lay in bed, he placed his right palm under his right cheek and said: *Allāhumma qinī ‘adhābak yawma tab‘athu ‘ibādak*, which means: ‘My Lord, protect me from Your punishment on the Day when You resurrect Your servants’. He also said: *bismik allāhumma amūtu wa aḥyā*, which means: ‘with Your name my Lord I die and live’.

The Prophet slept on his right side and said: *Allāhumma aslamtu nafsī ilayk; wa wajjahtu wajhī ilayk; wa fawwaḍtu amrī ilayk; wa alja'tu ḡahrī ilayk; ragħbatan wa rahbatan ilayk; lā maljā wa lā manjā mink illā ilayk; āmantu bikitābik alladhī anzalt wa binabiyyik alladhī arsalt*, which means: ‘My Lord, to You I submit my soul; to You I turn my face; to You I assign all my affairs; in You I seek my refuge; in hope and fear of You; for neither refuge nor safety from You can be given except by You; I believe in Your Book which You have revealed and in Your prophet whom You have sent’. The Prophet said: ‘Whoever says these phrases at night then dies, he shall have died in the pure faith’. He also said: *Allāhumma khlaqt nafsī wa anta tawaffāhā; laka mamātuhā wa mahyāhā; in ahyaytahā faħfazhā, wa in amttahā faghfir lahā; allāhumma innī as'aluk al-'āfiyah*, which means: ‘My Lord, You have created my soul and You gather it. You determine its death and life. If You keep it alive, protect it, and if you let it die, forgive it. My Lord, I appeal to You for wellbeing’. The Prophet did not go to sleep without reciting Surah 32, Prostration, and Surah 67, Dominion. He recommended reciting the Verse of the Throne (2:255) and the last two verses of Surah 2. He tells us that they are sufficient for anyone who recites them.

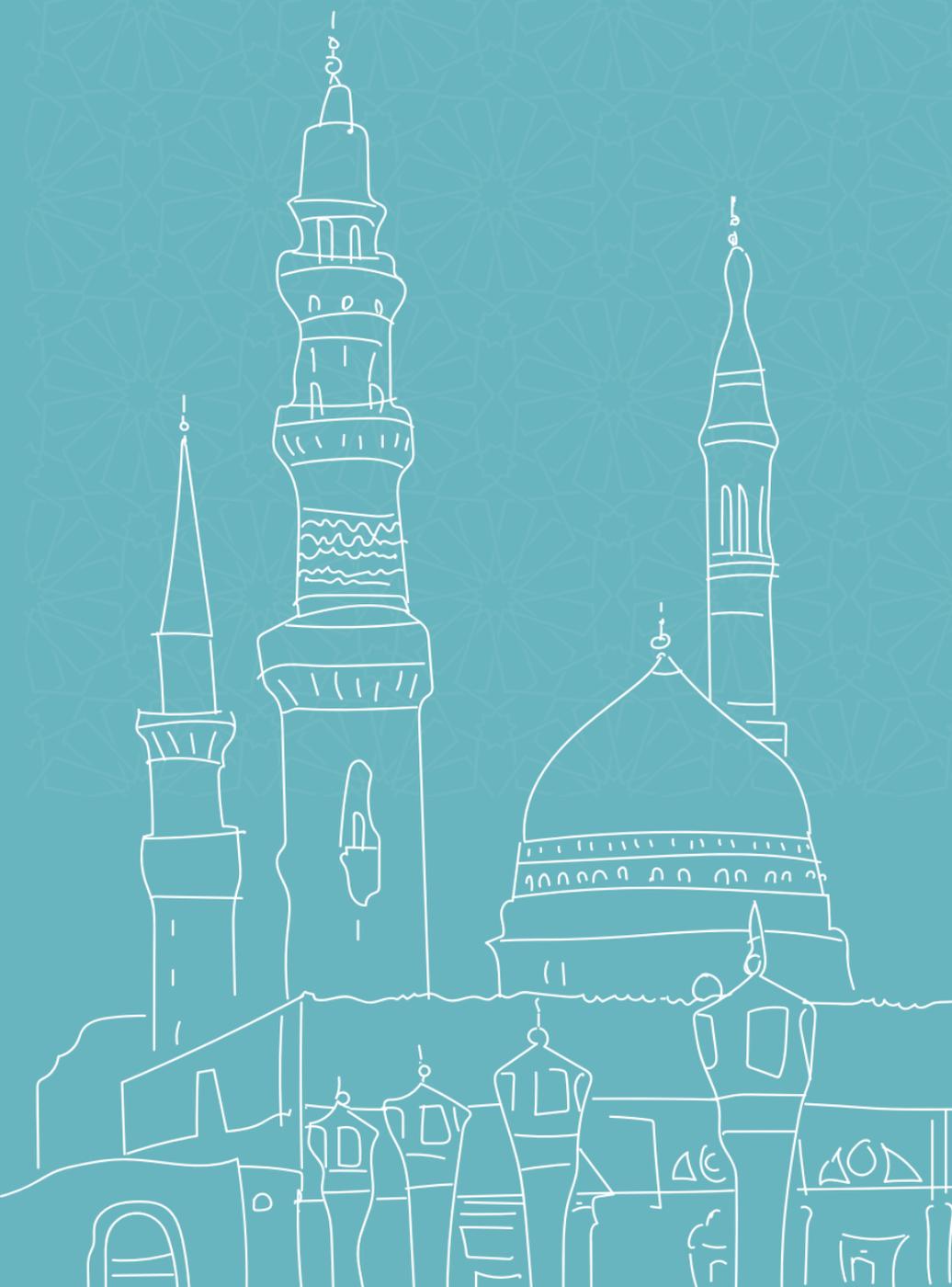
The Prophet also recommended saying: *bismika rabbi waḍa'tu janbī wa bika arfa'uh; fa'in amskata nafsī farħamhā, wa in arsaltahā faħfazhā bimā taħfazū bihī*

'ibādak al-ṣālihīn, which means: 'With Your name my Lord I lay myself and with Your help I arise. If you gather my soul, bestow mercy on it and if you leave it alive, protect it as You protect Your devout servants'. And also *Allāhumma 'ālim al-ghayb wal shahādah, fāṭir al-samāwāt wal arḍ, rabba kulli shay'in wa malīkah, ashhadu an lā ilāha illā ant; a'ūdhu bika min sharri nafsī wa min sharri al-shayṭān wa shirkih*, which means: 'Our Lord, You know all that is beyond the reach of our perception and what we witness. You are the Originator of the heavens and earth, and the Lord and Sovereign of everything. I bear witness that there is no deity other than You. I seek refuge with You from the evil of myself and the evil of Satan and his disbelief'.

Our Lord, bestow peace on Prophet Muhammad, his household, wives and offspring as You bestowed these on Abraham and his household. You are worthy of all praise, glorious. And bestow blessings on Prophet Muhammad, his household, wives and offspring as You bestowed these on Abraham and his household. You are worthy of all praise, glorious. Our Lord, since we could not look at Your Messenger, our beloved, or sit with him and enjoy his companionship in this life, do not deprive us of this in the life to come. Grant us proximity to him in Heaven and allow us the pleasure of looking at him and talking to him. Allow us to be at his pool and let him give us with his blessed hand a drink so that we would never feel

thirsty afterwards. Grant us his intercession on the Day of Judgement. Our Lord, guide us to adhere to his sunnah and to emulate him in all matters, large and small. Let him and his sunnah be dearer to us than our parents, children and all mankind. Give him the best reward on our behalf, and reward him as You best reward a prophet on behalf of his community. Give him *al-wasīlah* and the perfect virtue. And raise him to the honourable station You promised him. You are always true to Your promise.





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