



PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ

*Mercy to the Worlds*

THE QUR'AN

*The Eternal Miracle*

Osman Nuri TOPBAŞ



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OSMAN NURİ TOPBAŞ





## FOREWORD

*Endless praise and thanks be to **Allah**, glorified and exalted be He, Who brought us into existence from nothing out of His grace and favour, rendered us one of **humankind**, the most honoured of creation, bestowed upon us the blessing of **belief**, favoured us with being part of the community of the **most beloved Messenger** among the 124,000 Prophets, and conferred upon us the honour of being the addressee of the **Illustrious Qur'an**, the most beautiful of words and the greatest of miracles.*

*Endless salutations and blessings be upon the **Messenger of Allah, Muhammad Mustafa**, upon him be peace and blessings – who revived hearts by leading humankind out of the darkness of the Era of Ignorance wherein they had lost their dignity and honour, into the luminous atmosphere of **Islam**, who built a **civilisation of virtue** out of a semi-savage society, and who was sent as a **mercy to the worlds** – upon his noble household and upon his Companions.*

The path of return to Paradise, the true home of our forebear Prophet Adam, peace be upon him, passes



through the acquisition of characteristics of servanthood decreed by Allah Almighty. In view of communicating these characteristics and instructing us in how these are to be acquired, our Lord has conferred upon us two great guides – the **Qur'an** and the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings.

The **Qur'an** is a Divine gift bestowed upon the Last Prophet and upon humankind as the sole means to being saved from the calamities into which intellectual faculties and inclinations of the heart that have not been trained by Divine revelation can drag human beings.

The **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is an inimitable favour sent by Allah, presenting in person precisely the way in which the Qur'anic laws and ethics are to be put into practice, and putting forth by means of his pure life Islam as the special religion of tranquillity and happiness.

For this reason, the most pressing task for humankind who are obliged to realise their reason and purpose for creation, or to know Allah Almighty as He ought to be known and to be the most excellent servant to Him, is to design their entire life in accordance with the mandates of the Qur'an and the *Sunna*, the practice of the Messenger of Allah. In other words, it is to take on the excellent character of the Qur'an and its living commentary, the Messenger



of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, and to represent the religion of Allah Almighty on earth.

As declared in a Qur'anic verse, the human being will be called to account on the Day of Reckoning for every kind of blessing and bounty bestowed upon them.<sup>1</sup> Thus, turning away from the two great blessings the **Qur'an** and the **Sunna** after having been honoured with them – may Allah protect us from that – in lieu of taking the luminous path shown by them, is a grave ingratitude and lack of appreciation which turns a person's eternal life into a deplorable term of torment.

Let us never forget that our preoccupation with the Qur'an and Sunna is the most salient measure of our love and devotion to Allah and His Messenger.

With this mind, we have compiled this humble book as a summary of various articles previously penned with the aim of reflecting on our love for Allah and His Messenger, and increasing our nearness to the Qur'an and our togetherness with Allah's Messenger with each passing day. May Allah the Exalted increase the effusion of blessings of the **Qur'an** and the **Sunna** in our hearts at every opportunity and enable us to duly benefit from these two eternal lights of guidance.

Even though we have come to the world fourteen centuries after that Prophet of Mercy, our greatest

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1. See Qur'an 102:8.

aspiration and ideal is to be worthy of being one of those to whom he himself refers as being his “*brothers and sisters*”. And to be a small droplet in the rains of mercy, blessing and guidance that began with the spring of his coming to earth and that has continued to our day. Indeed, as stated by that Sultan of Hearts, upon him be peace and blessings, in one of his Traditions:

*“The parable of my community is like that of (abundant) rain. It is not known whether the best part is when it begins to rain or when it ends.”* (Tirmidhi, Adab, 81/2869; Ahmad, III, 130)

**May Allah, glorified and exalted be He, include us among those happy servants who duly appreciate the Qur'an, the miraculous exposition, and the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, who is its living commentary, who spend their lives in the blessed climate of the Qur'an and the Sunna and who attain eternal deliverance.**

*Amin.*<sup>2</sup>

Osman Nuri Topbaş  
March 2016  
Üsküdar

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2. I would like to thank I. Hakkı Uzun and M. Akif Günay for their contribution to the preparation of this book and beseech my Lord to render their efforts a continuous charity in their name.



## MERCY TO THE WORLDS: Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

*“We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but as an unequalled mercy for all the worlds.” (21:107)*

*“It is with the truth that We have sent it down (this Qur’an, embodying the truth and for ever invulnerable to falsehood), and it is with the truth that it has come down. We have not sent you but as a bearer of glad tidings (of prosperity in return for faith and righteousness) and a warner (against the evil consequences of misguidance).” (17:105)*





## Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: Mercy to the Worlds

### Mercy to the Worlds

The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, is a **Radiant Lamp** (*siraj al-munir*) before all humanity, or a lamp of eternity illuminating all darkness.

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is a wonder of the art of the Divine power becoming manifest in humankind. He is the most perfect criterion and the nonpareil exemplar presented to humanity.

In the words of a verse from the Qur'an, he is a Prophet who has been sent "**as an unequalled mercy for all the worlds...**" (See Qur'an 21:107)

That is to say, Allah Almighty bestowed him, upon him be peace and blessings, as a mercy upon all



creatures, animate or inanimate – upon stone and soil, river and sea, the earth and heavens, time and space, and in particular, upon humankind.

### **Were it Not For Him**

Humankind has attained the boundless ocean of the All-Merciful's grace and forgiveness by virtue of the love of our Lord towards the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). As is stated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*“When Adam, peace be upon him, slipped into the error (which led to his descent upon earth), he said, ‘O Lord, I ask You, for the sake of Muhammad, to forgive me.’*

*Allah the Exalted said, ‘O Adam, how do you know of Muhammad when I have not yet created him?’*

*He said, ‘O Lord, When you created me and breathed into me out of Your Spirit, I raised my head and saw written on the pillars of the Supreme Throne, “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah,” and I knew that You would not attach to Your name any save the most beloved of creation to You.’*

*Allah the Exalted said, ‘You have spoken the truth, O Adam, for he is indeed the most beloved to Me of creation and as you have asked Me by virtue of him,*



***I have forgiven you. Were it not for Muhammad, I would not have created you.”*** (Hakim, Mustadrak, I, 672)

### **The True Day of Rejoicing**

As beautifully depicted by Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi:

*“Come, O heart, the true day of rejoicing is the day of reunion with Muhammad, as the light of the universe is from the light of his blessed existence.”*

### **Obedience to the Messenger is Obedience to Allah**

One who loves Allah and wants for Allah to love them must wholeheartedly obey the Eternal Pride of the Universe, as obedience to him is, in effect, obedience to Allah the Exalted. As is declared in a Qur’anic verse:

**“He who obeys the Messenger (thereby) obeys Allah.”** (4:80)

Again, as communicated in a Qur’anic verse, earning the love of Allah Almighty can only be acquired by way of love towards His Beloved Messenger:

**“Say (to them, O Messenger): ‘If you indeed love Allah, then follow me, so that Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.’”**(3:31)



## **The Messenger's Life is an Effective Commentary of the Qur'an**

It is declared in a Qur'anic verse:

**“The Trustworthy Spirit brings it down on your heart, so that you may be one of the warners (entrusted with the Divine Revelation), in clear Arabic tongue.”** (26:193-195)

That is to say, by descending upon the heart of the Messenger of Allah, the Qur'an found expression in his every state and manner and became imprinted on his words and actions, his conscience and consciousness, and upon every single corpuscule of his existence. In this way, the twenty-three year Prophethood of the **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, became manifested in the form of a living commentary of the Qur'an. Allah Almighty exhibited the Divine truths and virtues in his exemplary character. In this respect, the mysteries and wisdoms of the Qur'an can only be understood by means of benefiting from the spiritual tapestry of Allah's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings.

## **Human History's Inscription of Honour**

The only Prophet and the only human being throughout history about whose entire life each and every detail has been recorded is the **Messenger**



**of Allah, the Prophet Muhammad**, upon him be peace and blessings. Only a certain portion of the exemplary behaviour of the Messengers in the chain of Prophethood – each of whom served as a standard of leading humanity to truth and goodness – have been transmitted to our day. However, all the words, actions and even the inner world of the Prophet of the End of Time, upon him be peace and blessings, from the most simple to the most complex and finest, have been traced moment to moment and recorded in the form of an inscription of honour in the annals of history. What is more, by the special grace of Allah, these have been privileged with transmission from beyond the centuries all the way until the Last Day on earth.

### **Ocean of Virtue**

The exemplary character, manner and morality of the Messenger of Allah, the **Pride of the Universe** and the leader of the Prophets, upon him be peace and blessings, resembles a boundless ocean, while that of the other Prophets is akin to the rivers pouring into it. He possessed all the distinguishing qualities and virtues, known and not known, of all the reported 124,000 Prophets who came before him and represents the epitome of noble character and attributes. Over and above the advancement of humanity in thought



and manner of living until his era, he has been sent as the 'Prophet of the End of Time' who is to serve as the exemplar character to address their needs until the last day.

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, has said:

*"I have been sent to perfect good character."*

(Muwatta', Husn al-Khuluq, 8)

### **The Epitome of Noble Character**

Implied in noble character is to take on, or emulate the character of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings. His character is confirmed and extolled in the Qur'an in the following words:

**"You are surely of a sublime character, and do act by a sublime pattern of conduct." (68:4)**

As a matter of fact, when asked about the character of Allah's Messenger, 'A'isha, may Allah be well pleased with her, said:

*"His character was the Qur'an."* (Muslim, Musafirin,

139)



## Our Debt of Gratitude to Allah's Messenger

**Our love, respect and mannerliness towards the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, our following his elevated Sunna and our being closely acquainted with him is a trial of piety and God consciousness for our hearts.** (See Qur'an 49:3-4)

A heart that is not filled with feelings of gratitude before his struggle for the salvation and guidance of humankind from the moment of his honoured arrival to the world until his demise, is perhaps not be called a heart at all.

**Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi** says:

*“O you who is Muslim today! Had it not been for the endeavour and noble ambition of Ahmad, upon him be peace and blessings, in destroying the idols, you would have now been engaged in idol worship just like your forebears.”*

## The Monument of Reliance and Surrender

**The Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, endured endless hardship and suffering throughout his life. He himself said, *“...and I have been subjected to harm in the way of Allah, such that no one has been subjected.”* (Tirmidhi, Qiyama, 34/2472) Indeed,



he endured the greatest of suffering in being witness to the death of seven of his children. He was insulted and stoned at Ta'if. The torture and torment endured by the first Muslims grieved him greatly. His eminent Companions, his beloved uncle **Hamza** and **Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr** first and foremost, were martyred. The most precious students of the Qur'an were entrapped and killed in the Bi'r Ma'una and Raji' incidents.

But none of these tribulations were able to impair his stoicism and self-possession. He met all these in a state of great maturity and resignation. He paid no mind to any fleeting tribulation for the sake of earning the good pleasure and approval of His Lord. Despite his heart being seared with countless sorrows, he always had a smile on his face. No one would ever see him sullen face, scowling, or with a glowering countenance. Within the repose of togetherness with his Lord, he was constantly of cheerful countenance and used to reflect the smiling face of Islam no matter what the circumstances.

In short, Allah the Exalted rendered His beloved Messenger the most excellent example by putting him through the hardest of trials and tribulations in order for us to also maintain a state of reliance, surrender and resignation in the face of life's bitter and sweet surprises, hardship, anguish and suffering.





## Forever the Most Trustworthy, the Most Compassionate

Even those who denied the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah referred to that Sun of Guidance with the honorific *Al-Amin*, the Trustworthy. They affirmed the fact that he had never once lied. Even when fighting against him, they entrusted their most prized possessions to his care. They too benefited from his truthful, reliable and honest character. When the Makkan polytheists who had subjected the Muslims to a brutal boycott for three years themselves faced famine and hunger years later, they still took refuge beneath that Prophet of Mercy's wings of beneficence and kindness.

## He Always Kept His Word

The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, possessed such a state of steadfastness and truthfulness that even **Abu Sufyan**, who was one of the bitterest enemies of Islam at the time he had not accepted the Messenger's Prophethood, responded to Byzantine Emperor **Heraclius'** question, "Was he ever accused of lying?" saying, "Never. He always keeps his word."



## Even the Unbelievers Put their Trust in Allah's Messenger

One of the bitterest enemies of the Messenger of Allah, **Abu Jahl**, and his friends, once said to him:

“O Muhammad, by God, we do not belie you, for you are the most truthful person in our eyes. Rather, we belie what you have brought to us.”

In this way, they outwardly rejected this truth that they accepted in their conscience, purely on the basis of their vain desires. Allah, exalted and glorified be He, revealed the following verse from the Qur'an and thus unveiled their wretched state:

“(O Messenger!) **We know indeed that the things (lies, mockery, and slanders) that they say grieve you: yet, it is not you that they deny and give the lie to (they cannot very well call you a liar, since they themselves have called you ‘the trustworthy one’); rather, it is the signs and Revelations of Allah that the wrongdoers obstinately reject.**” (6:33)

## Allah's Messenger Fulfilled Trusts

During the Battle of Khaybar, a shepherd, a slave of a Khaybarite Jew, came to the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings. After conversing with him for a short time, he accepted Islam and



joined the Muslims. However, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ordered him to first return the flock with all the sheep and goats of his master, which he tended as a shepherd and to only then join the Muslim ranks. And what is more, he had done so at a critical moment, when the battle had dragged on and the Muslims had begun to experience food shortages. This command is, no doubt, a rather meaningful example of a sense of responsibility and the importance of fulfilling a trust.

### **Beware of the Rights of Your Neighbour!**

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, demanded that the rights of neighbours be observed. In one Prophetic Tradition he states:

*“Gabriel advised me in observing the rights of neighbours to such a degree that I thought he would order me to name them my heirs.”*(Bukhari, Adab 28; Muslim, Birr 140)

*“One is not a believer who sleeps while his neighbour is hungry.”* (Hakim, II, 15; Haythami, VIII, 167)

*“A non-Muslim neighbour (with whom there are no family ties) enjoys one right. A neighbour who is Muslim enjoys two rights (as they have a claim as a neighbour as well as a fellow Muslim). And the neighbour who is both Muslim and a relative enjoys three rights. They*



*have a claim as a neighbour, as a fellow Muslim and as a relation.”* (Suyuti, Al-Jami’ al-Saghir, I, 146)

It ought not be forgotten that peering through a neighbour’s window, tormenting them with the aroma of food coming from one’s house, or disturbing or offending them in any way constitutes a violation of the rights of neighbours.

### **The Bravest of Them All**

It is not possible to conceive of a hero greater than the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, for there was no incident throughout his life in which he was seen to have been overcome by fear or panic. He was patient and steadfast even in the face of the most extraordinary of situations. He would not be seized by fear or panic or act in an unbecoming manner.

‘Ali, may Allah be well pleased with him, the symbol of courage and heroism, says:

*“When the battle grew fierce, we would seek protection behind him...”* (Muslim, Jihad, 79)

### **The Prophet of Forgiveness and Mercy**

That Prophet of Mercy forgave both Wahshi who had killed his beloved uncle Hamza and Hind



who had instigated him, upon their acceptance of Islam. He even pardoned the ruthless enemy of Islam, Habbab ibn al-Aswad, when he came before him to profess his acceptance of Islam. Habbab had pursued the camel of his daughter Zaynab, who was pregnant at the time, pushed her off the camel and thus caused the death of both her unborn child and later her own death.

During the conquest of Makka, when the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, possessed the opportunity and power to put the Makkan polytheists who had persecuted the Muslims for years on end to the sword in retribution, he asked the Makkans gathered at the Ka'ba:

*“O people of the Quraysh, How do you expect that I shall treat you now?”*

The Quraysh replied:

“We expect nothing but goodness to come from you. You are a noble man and the son of a noble man.”

Upon this, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

*“I say as Joseph said to his brothers: ‘No reproach this day shall be on you. May Allah forgive you; indeed, He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.’ (12:92) Go, for you are free.”*



Many lifeless hearts revived before such virtue and attained the felicity of belief with Islam's elixir of forgiveness and mercy.

### **A Heart Beating with Mercy**

As declared in a Qur'anic verse:

**“There has come to you (O people) a Messenger from among yourselves; extremely grievous to him is your suffering, full of concern for you is he, and for the believers full of pity and compassion.”**(9:128)

### **Allah's Messenger was in a Constant State of Supplication**

When the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, went to the city of Ta'if to convey the message of Islam, the ignorant, idol-worshipping and arrogant populace stoned him. The Angel of the Mountains came to the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, accompanied by Archangel Gabriel and said:

“Should you command it, I would crush the people between these two mountains (for what they have done to you).” The tender and loving heart of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, that overflowed with mercy and compassion could not bear this and he said:



*“No! I hope instead that Allah will bring forth from among their progeny people who will worship Him alone, and who will not associate anything (as partners) with Him.”* (Bukhari, Bad’u al-Khalq, 7; Muslim, Jihad, 111)

## Unequalled Refinement

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, the light of existence, neither caused offence to, nor took offence by anyone. He forever emanated the virtue of forgiveness. He did not hold the faults and shortcomings of others against them due to his sense of shame (haya’) before Allah and his elevated character. He would not refer by name to those who behaved in a manner with which he was displeased, merely sufficing to say, *“What is the matter with the people that they are doing such and such?”* Sometimes, he would ascribe the error to himself saying, *“What is it that I see you [doing such and such]?”* thus reproving in a gentle but earnest manner.

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, once ate a dish made of camel meat together with his Companions. Just as they were about to stand for the prayer, a smell that was the result of someone’s having passed wind became perceivable. So as not to embarrass that individual before the rest of the gathering, the Messenger of Allah, the Pride of Humanity, said, *“Let those who have eaten camel meat*



*perform the ablution.*” All the Companions performed the ablution. In other words, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ordered the whole gathering to perform their ablution once again in order to avoid embarrassing the particular individual concerned.

### **A Countenance Most Beautiful**

The blessed countenance of the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, which exuded trust and tranquillity to his surroundings, was the purest and most cheerful of countenances. This was owing to the fact that the immensurable beauty of his inner world had projected onto his outward form.

When the Messenger of Allah emigrated to the city of Madina, Jewish scholar **‘Abd Allah ibn Salam** inquired after him, curious as to his person, and upon seeing his blessed face, exclaimed, “One with such a face cannot lie,” and thus professed his acceptance of Islam.

Such was the beauty, stateliness, luminance and grace he possessed that there was no need for any further miracle or proof concerning his being a Prophet of God.





## Had They Seen His Blessed Countenance

The Mother of Believers ‘A’isha, may Allah be well pleased with her, describes the luminous countenance of **Allah’s Messenger**, upon him be peace and blessings, in the following words:

*“Had the women of Egypt seen the beauty of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, that captivating beauty of Joseph would have signified nothing in their eyes. Had the women who disparaged Zulaykha seen the luminous face of Allah’s Messenger, they would have stabbed their hearts instead of their hands.”*

## The Prophet of Mercy

‘A’isha, may Allah be well pleased with her, wife of the Prophet, relates several aspects of the boundless mercy and compassion of the Noble Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, as follows:

*“The Messenger of Allah never struck anyone with his hand, neither maid nor servant, but only, in the case when he had been fighting (on the battlefield) in the cause of Allah and he never took revenge for anything unless the things made inviolable by Allah were made violable; he then took revenge for Allah, exalted and glorified be He.”* (Muslim, Fada’il, 79)



### **A Generous One Unafraid of Poverty**

It is not possible to duly appreciate the position of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, in generosity and beneficence. His generosity surpassed even that of the honouring of a person who has no fear of poverty.

As reported by **Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah**, may Allah be well pleased with him:

*"It never happened that Allah's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, was asked for anything and he said, no." (Muslim, Fada'il, 56)*

### **If I Had as Much Gold as the Weight of Mount Uhud**

The **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, did not hold onto anything with respect to worldly possessions and would spend whatever he had in the way of Allah. This was a virtue pertaining uniquely to his person.

The Companion **Abu Dharr**, may Allah be well pleased with him, reports:

"I was once walking in the company of the Prophet on the stony grounds on the outskirts of Madina when the mountain of Uhud came into sight.

The Messenger of Allah said, 'O *Abu Dharr!*'



I said, “I am here, at your service, O Messenger of Allah!”

He said, *‘It would not please me to have gold equal to the weight to this mountain (of Uhud) unless nothing of it, not even a single dinar remains of it with me for more than three days (for I would have spent all of it in Allah’s Cause), except that which I will keep for repaying debts.’*” (Muslim, Zakat, 32; Bukhari, Istiqrad, 3)

### **If You Can Give Nothing Else**

The poor, lonely and the forlorn would come to the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, in expectation of something to be given to them in the way of charity. There were times when Allah’s Messenger had nothing whatsoever to give. Moreover, he himself would go hungry most of the time. When the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, had nothing to give in way of meeting the expectations of the needy, he would be overcome with a sense of sorrow and would subtly turn his face away, for which Allah, glorified and exalted be He, admonished him:

**“But if you (must) turn away from those (who are in need, because you are yourself in need, and) seeking mercy from your Lord in hopeful**



**expectation, then (at least) speak to them gently and well-meaning [qawlan maysūran].”**(17:28)

### **Allah's Messenger Never Took a Liking to the World**

Despite the fact that the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, obtained worldly opportunities the likes not seen by any king in a short period of time and conquered hearts as an ideal guide for humanity, he took no liking to any of the great worldly bounties at his feet. On the contrary, he continued his humble existence. As was the case before, he led a simple and ascetic life in his modest mud-brick chamber. He slept on a mattress filled with the leaves of a date palm and wore simple clothing. His standard of living was lower even than society's weak. What is more, despite the fact that he could not find anything to eat sometimes, he would strap a rock to his stomach to suppress his hunger and would give thanks to his Lord.

‘A’isha, may Allah be well pleased with her, relates:

*Never had the family of **Muhammad**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, eaten to their fill with the bread of wheat for three successive nights, from the day of their arrival in Madina up until his death.”*



## The True Life is the Life of the Hereafter

One day, ‘Umar, may Allah be well pleased with him, came to the house of Allah’s Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings. He cast his eye around the room. Every corner of it was empty. The only piece of furniture in the room was a mat of woven palm leaf. The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, was lying upon it and it had imprinted itself on the body of Allah’s Messenger. All there was in the room was a little barley and an old waterskin hung up on a nail beside it. That was all. This was all the wealth and worldly possessions that the Messenger of Allah, the pride of humanity, possessed on a day when the entire Arabian Peninsula had surrendered themselves to him. ‘Umar, may Allah be well pleased with him, could not contain himself and was moved to tears before such a sight. The Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, asked:

*“What makes you weep, O ‘Umar?”*

‘Umar said, “Why shouldn’t I weep, O Messenger of Allah, when Caesar and Khosrau wallow in worldly bounties and the Messenger of Allah lives thus!”

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, consoled ‘Umar’s grieved heart and said:



*“Weep not, O ‘Umar! Would you not wish for this world (with all its blessings and pleasures) be their share in this life and the Hereafter be for us alone?”* (Ahmad, II, 298; Tabarani, al-Mu’jam al-Kabir, X, 162)

### **Allah’s Messenger Divided His Time into Three**

When the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, came to his felicitous home, he would divide his time into three, allocating one-third to worship, one-third to his family, and the other third to himself. The time that he set aside for himself he devoted to the people – from all echelons of society – and would not deprive anyone of his company. He conquered the hearts of all those around him.

### **The Felicitous Home of Allah’s Messenger**

The felicitous home of the Messenger of Allah was the happiest of all households. It exuded the fragrance of great happiness.

No woman could possibly love her husband like the Mothers of the Believers, his esteemed wives, loved the Messenger of Allah. And no man could possibly love his wife like the Messenger of Allah loved his wives. No child can love their father like Fatima loved her father and no father could possibly their child like



Allah's Messenger loved his children. Through the manner of nurture and education that the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, practised in his familial life, he established an exceptional bond of love in the hearts of his wives and children.

The Mothers of the Believers could only enter their chambers ducking their heads, as their chambers provided just enough room for them. Many days would pass before a fire was lit in that home and food made available. But existence in that happy household was felt with the savour of **contentment**, **patience** and **surrender** rather than with material provisions.

### The Best of You

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings attached utmost importance to the mutual rights and responsibilities of family members and sought for familial peace to be maintained under any circumstances. He says in this regard:

*"The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family."* (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 63/3895)

*"A believing man should not despise his believing wife. If there is any quality he dislikes in her, he will certainly be pleased with another."* (Muslim, Rada', 61)



### **Lest the Crystals Should Break!**

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, treated his wives with the greatest compassion and gentleness.

During a journey, an attendant by the name of **Anjasha** goaded the camels in the caravan forward by singing with his fine voice. In view of the possibility that the delicate constitutions of the females seated on the camels might be hurt, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, cautioned:

*“Anjasha, take care lest the crystals should break!”*

(Bukhari, Adab, 95; Ahmad, III:117)

### **A Matchless Court of Mercy**

The Prophet's circle of education and guidance was akin to a social complex which embraced people from every social strata and all segments of society. There, the weak and the powerful, the rich and the poor were no different with respect to truth and justice.

Just consider those who followed the Messenger of Allah: Among them one would see such dignitaries and eminent figures as the Abyssinian King **Negus al-Asham**, Byzantine governor of Ma'an **Farwa ibn 'Amr**, Himyar chief **Dhu al-Kila'a**, **Fayruz al-Daylami**,





the viceroy of Yemen, as well as governors of Oman ‘Ubayd and Ja’far.

Further consideration would reveal that in addition to these rulers and administrators were such downtrodden individuals as **Bilal**, **Yasir**, **Suhayb**, **Khabbab**, **‘Ammar** and **Abu Fukayha**, as well as such poverty-stricken, helpless women as **Sumayya**, **Lubayna**, **Zinnira**, **Nahdiya** and **Umm ‘Ubays**.

### **The Peerless Exemplar**

The noble character of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, constitutes the epitome of human conduct and behaviour, even with its expressions that lie within the scope of human conception. He is a model of excellence completing his mission of communicating the Divine message via illustrating by example. Allah Almighty has presented that noble human being to the rest of humanity as (in the words of the Qur’anic expression) *al-uswa al-hasana*, or “an excellent example”.

The Qur’anic verse in question reads:

**“Assuredly you have in Allah’s Messenger an excellent example to follow for whoever looks forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remembers and mentions Allah much.”**(33:21)



## **A Bouquet of Rare Roses**

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, has displayed an exceptional beauty and grace in every way, in all life's phases. Every human being can find the most perfect of actions in the elevated practice of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which they can hold up as an example. That is to say, the life of the Messenger of Allah, the pride of humanity, with all its colour, harmony and aroma, is akin to a bouquet composed of the most exceptional roses, such that the seeker can find the most beautiful of roses in that cluster.

The personage of the Noble Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, is like a clear and polished mirror. Every human being can behold his outer and inner, external and the inward, word and action, morality and character, and measure their own state and situation up against it. Reforming one's character in accordance with what one sees in this mirror and correcting his or her faults and shortcomings is the responsibility of every believer.

## **An Example to People From Every Walk of Life**

Allah Almighty elevated that Noble Messenger from the social position of greatest weakness and



helplessness – from the status of an orphaned child – to the highest position of head of state. And the Prophet displayed the most perfect standards of behaviour in all the echelons in between.

For this reason, notwithstanding their particular social rank, every human being can hold up the noble conduct and morality of that great Messenger as an example to themselves and endeavour to put it into practice to the best of their ability.

### **Behold Yourself in His Mirror**

If you are prosperous and wealthy, reflect upon the humility and generosity of that lofty Messenger who dominated Arabia in its entirety and endeared himself to all Arab notables and chiefs.

If you are one who is oppressed and wronged, take example from the life of the Prophet who lived under the rule and reign of the cruel and tyrannous polytheists in Makka.

If you are a victorious conqueror, draw lesson from the Prophet of courage and submission who overcame the enemy at Badr and Hunayn.

If – God forbid – you should ever face defeat, remember that resigned Messenger who patiently



and stoically walked among his fallen and injured Companions during the Battle of Uhud.

If you are a teacher, think about the Prophet who taught the Suffa Companions in the mosque, by transferring to them the spiritual luminance from within his delicate, subtle and sensitive heart.

If you are a student, imagine the Prophet who sat before archangel Gabriel, the Trustworthy, in great reverence and aspiration.

If you are a caller to goodness and a truthful guide, listen to the Messenger in his spiritual exchange with his Companions in the Prophet's Mosque and radiating wisdom in this way. Lend an ear and heart to his melodious voice!

If you wish to defend, convey and uphold the truth and if you have not even a single helper supporting you in this regard, look at the life of the Prophet who declared the truth to the oppressors in Makka when he was deprived of any help or support, and who invited them to belief.

If you have vanquished the enemy and announced the truth and brought falsehood to ruin, then picture the Messenger who, despite being a victorious commander on the day of Makka's conquest, entered



the city in great humility, as though in prostration on the back of his camel.

If you are the owner of a farm and wish to set everything in order, take example from the insightful Prophet who, after taking possession of the Banu Nadir, Khaybar and Fadak lands, appointed the most suitable individuals to oversee and administer them.

If you are forlorn, then contemplate the orphan and the apple of ‘Abd Allah and Amina’s eye, the beloved innocent.

If you are a young man or woman, pay heed to the life of the Prophet in waiting who tended the flock of his uncle Abu Talib in Makka.

If you are a merchant setting forth with trade caravans, lend a thought to the reputation and manner of the noblest personage in the caravans travelling to Damascus and Yemen.

If you are a judge in the position of pronouncing judgement, take into account the just and perspicacious conduct of the Messenger in the matter of putting the Black Stone in its place at the Ka’ba just as the Makkan chiefs were about to draw their swords.

And turning your gaze once more to Madina, look at that Prophet sitting in the Prophet’s Mosque who judges between the people in the fairest manner,



holding the impoverished and the affluent as equal before him.

If you are a spouse, take note of the gentleness and refinement, the profound feeling and mercy of that blessed figure who is the husband of Khadija and 'A'isha.

If you are a father, learn the manner in which that illustrious individual who is the father of Fatima the Luminous One and the grandfather of Hasan and Husayn approached his children and grandchildren.

In short, whatever your rank or title, whatever your state or circumstance, at each and every minute of every day, you will find the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, as your most perfect master and your most excellent guide.

Such a master is he, that by way of his Sunna can you correct all errors. That you may put all your affairs into order and reform your state and circumstance and that you may, by virtue of his light and guidance, disentangle yourself from life's unforeseen storms and dangers and thus find true happiness.

### **The Prophet's Teacher is Allah Almighty**

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, received instruction from no mortal.

*By stating, "My Lord educated me, and so made my*



*education most excellent,”* (Suyuti, al-Jami’ al-Saghir, I, 12) he affirmed that his sole teacher was Allah the Exalted.

For this reason, he stood as the paragon of the entire spectrum of disciplines addressing the human being and analysing the human soul, some of which are known in our day as psychology, pedagogy and social anthropology.

### **The Product of Which Education System?**

The faithful friends of the **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, strove to be in his company at every opportunity. Some of them even devoted themselves to following him like his very shadow. The imprint of love that Allah’s Messenger left on hearts was so powerful that the Companions emulated each and every one of his actions, even if they could not immediately comprehend its wisdom.

Which system of education was the spiritual training of the Companions a product of? Which educator, which psychologist could provide this instruction? Could all the psychologists, sociologists, pedagogues, social anthropologists, social engineers, philosophers and the like in the world today bring about even a small society adorned with elevated attributes of a quality to match that of the Age of Happiness?



## **The Fire will not Burn the Heart that is Filled With Him**

The more the heart of a believer is filled with love for the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, the more it grows distant from Divine punishment. As is declared in a Qur'anic verse:

**“But God would not punish them so long as you were among them...”** (8:33)

A believer whose heart burns with love for Allah's Messenger must forever follow in his footsteps and must remain devoted to his elevated Sunna.

## **Whoever Revives My Tradition**

The **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, wished for every single member of his community to be with him in Paradise. He would therefore forewarn and counsel all people in accordance with their own individual level.

**Anas ibn Malik**, may Allah be well pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, said:

*“Dear Anas, if you are able every morning and evening to remove any rancour from your heart towards any other (especially without harbouring even the slightest hatred or coldness towards any believer), then do so.”*





*“Dear Anas, this is my Tradition and whoever revives my Tradition has loved me, and whoever loves me will be with me in Paradise.”* (Tirmidhi, ‘Ilm, 16/2678)

### **The Fibres of a Rope**

‘Abd Allah ibn al-Daylami, may his secret be sanctified, illustrated the importance of adherence to the Prophetic Practice in the following words:

*“...The beginning of the end of the Religion will transpire with the abandonment of the Sunna. Like the coming loose of the fibres of a rope, the Religion will vanish with the relinquishment of the Prophetic Practices one by one.”* (Darimi, Muqaddima, 16)

This means that the receding of the Sunna from our lives one after another – may Allah protect us from that! – renders our eternal deliverance to be hanging by a thread.

### **The Need for Adherence to the Sunna**

Allah, exalted and glorified be He, commands adherence to His Beloved Messenger as follows:

**“Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it willingly; and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it. Keep from disobedience to Allah in reverence for Him and piety. Surely Allah is severe in retribution.”**  
(59:7)



**“O you who believe! Obey Allah (in all His commandments) and obey the Messenger (in his execution of Allah’s commandments and in his own directives), and do not let your deeds go to waste.”**(47:33)

**“Whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger (as they must be obeyed), then those are (and in the Hereafter will be, in Paradise) in the company of those whom God has favoured (with the perfect guidance) – the Prophets, and the truthful ones (loyal to Allah’s cause and truthful in whatever they do and say), and the witnesses (those who see the hidden Divine truths and testify thereto with their lives), and the righteous ones (in all their deeds and sayings, and dedicated to setting everything right). How excellent they are for companions!”** (4:69)

### **The Impossibility of Complete Comprehension of Allah’s Messenger**

It is not possible for us to fully comprehend **the Pride of Humanity, the Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, within the limits of human intelligence and capacity. This is because the impressions obtained from this realm fall short of duly describing and perceiving him. Just as it is not possible to fit the ocean in a single cup, it is not possible to fully comprehend the ‘Muhammadan light’ (al-Nur al-Muhammadi).



## The One Sent Bespeaks the Might of the Sender

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, is a Divine masterpiece with no equal, possessing perfect countenance and character. In this respect, no human being has the capacity to describe his greatness as it deserves to be described.

On one of his military expeditions, **Khalid ibn Walid**, may Allah be well pleased with him, once put up camp with a Muslim tribe. The tribal chief asked him, “Could you describe to us the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace?”

Khalid ibn Walid, may Allah be well pleased with him, said, “Describing the beauty of Allah’s Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, is beyond the bounds of possibility. I am incapable of describing him (as he deserves to be described).”

The tribal chief said, “Describe him as best as you are able, in a few words.”

Khalid ibn Walid, may Allah be well pleased with him, replied:

**“The one sent bespeaks the might of the sender.”<sup>3</sup>**

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3. Munawi, V, 92/6478; Qastalani, *al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyya*, Istanbul, 1984, 417.



In other words, as the sender is the Lord of the Worlds, just consider the glory and honour of the one who is sent!

### The Miracle of the Companions

As a result of the spiritual training of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, the people of the Age of Ignorance steeped in the darkness of tyranny and wrongdoing, who tore their daughters away from the hearts of their mothers as it were, and buried them alive, became Companions of refined sensibility and feeling heart and established a civilisation of virtue upon which humanity still looks in wonder and admiration.

One of the most prominent personalities of Islamic jurisprudence, **Qarafi** (d. 684) states:

*“Had the Prophet possessed no other miracle, the Companions educated by him would have been sufficient as proof of his Prophethood.”* (Qarafi, Al-Furuq, Darussalam, 2001, IV:305)

### The Pride of Humanity

A council of scholars and thinkers who convened in the Dutch city of The Hague in the middle of the previous century identified the world's hundred great men. The Christian selection committee were



forced to select, on the basis of the key moral criteria that they themselves had established, the **Prophet Muhammad**, upon him be peace and blessings, as the greatest personality.

Even those who did not believe in his Prophethood confirmed the virtue, superiority and success of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace.

### The True Genius

On the basis of the Prophet's success in his mission, French historian and thinker **Lamartine** expresses what great genius **Allah's Messenger**, upon him be peace and blessings, possesses, in the following words:

*“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astonishing results are the three criteria of a human genius, who could dare compare any great man in history with Muhammad?”*

*The most famous men created arms, laws, and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes.*

*This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples, dynasties, but millions of men in one-*



*third of the then inhabited world.”* (Alphonse de Lamartine, Histoire de la Turquie)

### **The Conceding of Consciences**

The virtue and intelligence of the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be blessings and peace, was affirmed and acknowledged even by those who did not believe in his Prophethood.

Of the Prophet's birth, English writer **Thomas Carlyle** wrote:

*“It was as of a birth from darkness into light.”*

*“No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting.”*

Similarly, **Lafayette**, one of the leading figures paving the intellectual groundwork for the 1789 French Revolution, examined all legal systems prior to the publication of the famous ‘**Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen**,’ and upon seeing the superiority of Islamic law, proclaimed:

*“O Muhammad! No other has ever been able to match you in the realisation of justice...”*



## A Person Will Be With Those Whom They Love

The Prophet's Companion **Thawban**, may Allah be well pleased with him, was once immersed in thought while looking at the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings. The Messenger of Allah, the mercy to the worlds, noticed his sudden change of countenance and asked compassionately:

*“What is it that perturbs you, O Thawban?”*

Thawban, a devotee of Allah's Messenger, replied:

“May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! Thought of separation from you weighs down on me such that every moment I spend removed from your light becomes for me sorrow. When my state in this world is thus, I am grieved to think about what it will be in the Hereafter. For there you will be in the company of the Prophets, while I know not where I will be or what will become of me. And if I cannot enter Paradise, I will be separated from you eternally. This thought grieves me greatly, O Messenger of Allah!”

Upon this, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, *“A person will be with those whom they love,”* and thus gave him these glad tidings. (Bukhari, Adab, 96)



## Love Demands Sacrifice

It is not enough to say, “I love Allah and His Messenger.” If we do indeed love them, then we need to question the extent of our mercy and our compassion, and the nature of our moral conduct. How much of the Prophet’s characteristics and qualities are present in us? Are we able to free ourselves of self-centredness and selfishness? Do we possess a spirit of altruism and concern ourselves with the plight of others? Does our love reflect upon our demeanour and actions? Or does our love consist merely of an empty claim remaining unfulfilled and unrealised.

## So As Not to Face Separation

Great hadith scholar **Imam Nawawi** strove to emulate the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, with such meticulousness that he refrained from eating a watermelon throughout his entire life for fear of acting in a manner contrary to the method and manner of Allah’s Messenger, as he did not know how Allah’s Messenger had eaten one.

## Harmonising Everything With Him

The friend of Allah **Ahmad Yasawi**, a luminous crescent for that Sun of Guidance, gave up travelling about the earth after reaching sixty-three years of





age because the Messenger of Allah had passed away when he was sixty-three years old. For the ten years until his own death, he continued communicating the message of Islam in a vault-like chamber.

### **The Sole Concern of Allah's Messenger was His Community**

**Allah's Messenger**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, states:

*"Beware, I am the means of security for you during my life while after my death, I will beseech Allah in my grave saying, 'O Lord, my community, my community,' until the Trumpet is blown..."* ('Ali al-Muttaqi, Kanz al-'Ummal, XIV:414)

### **He is Very Close to Us, But Are We Close to Him?**

**The Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, says:

*"My life is a great good for you: you bring up new matters and new matters (Divine Revelation and Judgement) are brought up for you. And my death is a great good for you; your actions will be presented to me and if I see goodness I shall praise Allah and if I see evil I shall ask forgiveness of Him for you."* (Haythami, IX:24)



This is his closeness to us. So how close are we to him?

### **The Level of Our Connection**

Love stems from a correlation between the qualities of one who loves and the one who is loved.

One who loves possesses the same feelings as the one they love and they strive to maintain a state that is identical to their beloved. They seek to take on the hue and harmony of their beloved.

As a result, we ought to question the level of our connection and correlation with the Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace, with respect to worship, worldly matters and morality, as it is his intercession on the Day of Judgement that we desire and his sacred fountain in Paradise (Hawd al-Kawthar) for which we yearn.

### **The Level of Our Closeness**

What are the traces of the family life of Allah's Messenger in our family lives? To what extent are we able to mirror his state of devoted reverence in our worship? How close are we to the downtrodden, the forlorn and the lonely in our own lives? How much are we able to exert ourselves in the way of prescribing truth, goodness and justice and in advising against



wrongdoing and vice? To what degree are we able to take the Messenger of Allah as an effective criterion at any time or place? **How much of the spirituality in his worship, the refinement in his worldly affairs, the sensibility in his inner world, the luminance in his countenance, the delicacy in his feeling, the depth in his gaze, and in short his exemplary manner and bearing, projects onto us?**

### **A Divine Command: Invoking Peace and Blessings Upon His Messenger**

Declaring *la'amruka*, "By your life (O Muhammad)," Allah Almighty swears by the life of the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings. Allah has mentioned His Own Supreme name alongside the name of His Messenger and has made belief in His Exalted Presence contingent upon belief in the Prophethood of His Messenger. Allah is displeased with voices being raised over the voice of His Messenger and does not approve of his blessed name being mentioned in the same way as any ordinary name. Moreover, declaring that both He Himself and His angels send salutations to the Messenger of Allah, Allah Almighty commands the community of the Prophet to constantly invoke Allah for blessings and peace for him also.

As is stated in the relevant Qur'anic verse:



**“Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet** (He always treats him with His special mercy, with the angels praying to Him to grant him the highest station of praise with Him, and for the decisive victory of his Religion). **O you who believe, invoke the blessings of Allah on him, and pray to God to bestow His peace on him, greeting him with the best greeting.** (Love and follow him with utmost sincerity and faithfulness, and give yourselves to his way with perfect submission).” (33:56) As can be seen, sending salutations of blessings and peace upon the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, is a Divine commandment for the believers. And every invocation of peace and blessings is a means bringing us closer to that Sultan of Hearts.

### **Our Need For Allah's Messenger**

Owing to the Prophethood of the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, humanity attained the most perfected of all awaited guides to the truth. For this reason, those in our day who persist in leading a self-seeking and carnal existence will be more answerable before Allah than those who led a life of ignorance prior to the coming of such a noble, exemplary personality. In this regard, we are more in need of the spiritual training, or character building of that **Peerless Exemplar** in our day where humanity has for the most part succumbed to power and leads a life enslaved to the carnal soul.



## **Our Sole Remedy**

In the same way which that Divine breath, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, was a cure yesterday for an wayward Age of Ignorance – transforming it into an Era of Happiness – it is his breath of mercy today which is to deliver humanity from the abysses of oppression, denial and ignorance and lead them to repose and felicity.

**May Allah Almighty enable us all to adhere to the practice of his Beloved Messenger in this world, taking on his noble conduct, and to attain his intercession in the Hereafter.**

*Amin.*







## THE QUR'AN: The Eternal Miracle

*“We are sending down the Qur’an in parts – it is a healing and a mercy for the believers, though for the wrongdoers it increases them only in ruin.” (17:82)*

*“This is the (most honoured, matchless) Book: there is no doubt about it (its Divine authorship and that it is a collection of pure truths throughout) — a guidance for the God-revering, pious who keep their duty to Allah.” (2:2)*







# **The Qur'an: The Eternal Miracle**

## **A Manifestation of Mercy**

The Qur'an is God's greatest gift to the people of the End of Time. It is the textbook of the learning centre of the world that is filled with divine trial and examination and is God's last message and final call to humanity.

Allah Almighty bestowed the Qur'an upon us so that we may comprehend the reason for our creation, lead our lives as befits human honour and dignity, acquire moral excellence, become familiar with the manifestations of Divine power and majesty in the universe and in order for us to ultimately attain happiness in two worlds. That is to say, the Qur'an is the greatest of all blessing, honour and distinction which Allah Almighty has conferred upon us His servants.



As stated in a Qur'anic verse:

**“O humankind! There has come to you an instruction from your Lord, and a cure for what (of sickness or doubt) is in the breasts, and guidance and mercy for the believers.” (10:57)**

### **The Divine Edict**

The Qur'an is a letter of Divine guidance and happiness sent to all humanity.

– It is an eternal source of effusive grace imparting peace to the spirit.

– It is a miracle of speech to remain until the Last Day.

– Similarly, it is an unrivalled Divine edict transforming a fear of death into the fervour of eternal union.

### **Endless Miracles in Every Letter**

The Qur'an is an expression of the Divine Will. An endless number of miracles are hidden in its each and every letter. Whoever is closer to the Qur'an is closer to Allah. Whoever is close to Allah attains insight into the wisdom and mysteries of the Qur'an, deepens in reflection and leads a life of piety and God-consciousness. And to one who leads a life of piety



and righteousness Allah teaches what is beyond the lines. A verse of the Qur'an reads:

**"...(Always) act in due reverence for Allah and try to attain piety. Allah teaches you (whatever you need in life, and the way you must follow in every matter)..."** (2:282)

### **Treasure Trove of Mystery and Wisdom**

The Qur'an is a magnificent gate opening onto the profundities of the realm of reflection. It is the language of the heavens and the earth. It is a treasure trove of Divine mystery and wisdom granting cure for bleeding spirits and ease for weary hearts.

### **The Prosperity of Preoccupation with the Qur'an**

When the **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, entered the mosque one day, he encountered two groups seated in two separate circles. One of these groups was reading the Qur'an and turning to Allah Almighty in entreaty, while the other was engaged in teaching and learning. Upon seeing this, the Noble Messenger, upon him be blessings and peace, said:

*"Both these groups are (upon the path of) good (and righteousness). This group is reciting the Qur'an*



*and making supplication to Allah, and if He wills He will give to them, and if He wills He will withhold from them. And these people are engaged in learning and teaching. I have but been sent as a teacher.”* Then he sat down with the latter. (Ibn Maja, Muqaddima, 17)

### **Every Verse an Invitation to Reflect**

By inviting the human being – from its first verse to its last – to constant reflection, the Qur'an, an inimitable directory of guidance and happiness, demands them to contemplate the wisdom in their creation, the wondrous order in the universe and the Qur'an's being a miracle of speech and expression. Again, the Qur'an warns human beings through such statements as, **“Will you not, then, reason and understand?” “Will you not, then, reflect?” “Will you not reflect and be mindful?”** Consequently, every human being who aspires to lead a life befitting human honour and dignity and to acquire spiritual profundity is obligated to enter this world of reflection governed by the Qur'an.

### **The Most Fertile Soil**

There are such sacred seeds of predisposition planted by the Divine Hand of Power within the spiritual make up of the human being, that these seeds



await the effusive grace of belief and the Qur'an in order to exhibit the hues and beauty of spring.

The spiritual perception and truths reached as a result of the reflection and feeling within human beings received from the Qur'an are of a magnificence equal to or surpassing that of the magnificent splendour displayed by the transformation of minuscule seed into a huge sycamore by means of fertile soil.

### Two Important Trusts

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, says:

*"I leave for you two things of value in trust. You will not go astray so long as you hold fast to them. One of them is weightier than the other: the Book of Allah, the Qur'an, a rope extending from the heavens to the earth, and my family – the members of my household..."*  
(Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 31/3788)

### The Qur'anic Prescription

Allah Almighty has communicated the prescription for humanity to lead lives befitting human dignity and honour in the Qur'an, which comprises the lofty character of the Messenger of Allah.



Indeed:

- The cure for the temporal and carnal passions wreaking havoc on the human being is to be found in the Qur'an.

- The protection against the immodesty causing the human being to stoop to a level than that of animals is to be found in the Qur'an.

- The delicate balance preventing a sense of justice from turning into persecution is to be found in the Qur'an.

In short, the most acceptable response to the needs of all humanity from the lowest echelon to the highest, across time and space, is again to be found in the Qur'an.

### **Benefiting from the Qur'an is Contingent Upon Spiritual Profundity**

The Qur'an is akin to a vast, boundless ocean into which one can delve proportional to the level of their heart. Just as one who cannot swim can only dabble about in shallow water while a proficient diver can dive to the depths of the ocean and see what those on shore cannot, beholding utterly different realms through myriad wondrous, strange and mystifying scenes, those who advance spiritually on the path



of piety encounter a great many manifestations of wisdom in the Qur'an, become truly enlightened by it and acquire spiritual profundity.

In the same way that a person's head begins to spin when they look down a deep well, the perceptions of a heart deepening in the truths of the Qur'an open toward endlessness, render the servant, a traveller upon the path of utmost astonishment and propel them to receiving a share in experiential knowledge (*ma'rifa*) of Allah.

### **Those to be Envied**

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, states:

*"Envy is permitted only in two cases: [First], a person whom Allah has taught the Qur'an and he concerns himself with it by day and by night. And [second], a person whom Allah has given wealth and he spends it in the service of Truth."* (Muslim, Musafirin, 266, 267)

### **The Qur'an is A Description of the States and Attributes of the Prophets**

One who orients oneself with the Qur'an takes on the noble conduct of the Qur'an and Allah's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings. They develop a



familiarity and acquaintance with the stories of the Prophets narrated in the Qur'an and, as such, the exceptional virtue and beauty of Prophetic conduct begins to reflect on their own person.

**Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi** vividly depicts this truth in the following words:

*“The Qur'an is (a description of) the states and attributes of the Prophets... When you have fled (for refuge) to the Qur'an, you have mingled with the spirit of the Prophets. And if you read and do not accept (take to heart) the Qur'an, suppose you have seen the Prophets and saints (what will that avail you?); But if you are accepting (the Qur'an), when you read the stories (of the Prophets), the bird, your soul, will be distressed in its cage. “*

### **All Truths are Hidden in the Qur'an**

The happiness in this world and the Hereafter that is promised the human being can only be attained through complete and utter devotion to the Qur'an. Every truth is hidden within the Qur'an and every happiness apparent in belief. The most auspicious and happiest of the people are those who gather beneath the Qur'an's shade of mercy, who are illuminated with and annihilated within its light. In other words, they are those who can themselves become a living, breathing Qur'an.





Let us not forget that if love of the Qur'an does not pour forth in our barren hearts like the exuberant spring rains, we cannot attain the lush emerald-green of a Muhammadan climate.

### **The Qur'an is Instruction in Refined Manners**

**Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi** says:

*“Whoever has not received a share in refined manners cannot be said to be human as the difference between the human being and animal is refined manners. O human being, open your eyes and carefully observe the Qur'an, the Book of Allah. You will see that it consists, verse by verse, of refined manners.”*

### **An Indicator of Our Level of Piety**

The indicator of the level of our piety and righteousness is our Qur'anic tradition, while our Qur'anic tradition exhibits itself as the Islamic morality, which includes such facets as sincerity in worship, beauty in behaviour and spiritual profundity.

Our intimate knowledge and love of Allah, as well as our sincerity and God-consciousness, will deepen in proportion to our benefiting from the spiritual luminance of the Qur'an.



## The Lustre of Hearts

**Allah's Messenger**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

*"Indeed, hearts rust in the same way that iron rusts."*

The Companions asked, "What is its polish, O Messenger of Allah?" Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied, *"Constant recitation of the Book of Allah and remembrance of Allah."* (Ali al-Muttaqi, II, 241)

## The Strongest Handle

The Qur'an is the strongest handle for those who seek to attain Allah's good pleasure and approval and to be delivered of all forms of evil and eternal punishment – one which Allah Himself has extended to His servants. Those who take hold of it are saved, elevated and honoured, while those who reject it are debased, disgraced and deviate from the straight path. As is stated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*"The Book of Allah is a rope whose one end is in the hands of Allah while the other end is in yours; so take hold of it and you shall not err nor be destroyed."*



## The Source of Knowledge

The source and treasure of all knowledge is the Qur'an, our sacred book. For this reason, the most honourable deed, the greatest wealth and the most magnificent dominion is to teach the Qur'an and be engaged in its teaching and instruction. The **Messenger of Allah**, the pride of humanity, upon him be peace and blessings, has said:

*(Such a book is) the Book of Allah, glorified and exalted be He, (that it) secures (the human being) against every kind of trial. In it is knowledge about what came before you, news about what will come after you and correct judgement for what happens between you. It is the Criterion (distinguishing between right and wrong) and is not for pastime. Allah will crush any who reject it because of their despotism. Whoever searches for guidance in something other than it, Allah leads them astray. It is Allah's strong rope. It is a book which vain desires cannot lead astray, or tongues confound and with which scholars cannot be satiated. It will never be exhausted by repetition and its awe-inspiring wonders will never be depleted. Such a book it is that when they heard it, they could not help but say, "We have indeed heard a wonderful Qur'an..."<sup>4</sup> Those who speak in agreement with it speak the truth. Those*

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4. (72:1)



*who judge by it judge justly. Whoever acts according to it will be rewarded and whoever calls to it calls to the straight path.”* (Tirmidhi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 14/2906; Darimi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 1)

## **The Eternal Miracle**

Allah Almighty has rendered the Qur'an an eternal miracle affirming the truthfulness and reality of both His Divine Essence as well as His Messenger. For this reason, its aspects of miraculousness are too numerous to be counted. The Qur'an will continue to proclaim its mysteries and wisdoms to pious hearts until the Last Day.

## **A Miracle of Eloquence**

The society in which the Qur'an was revealed was a society at the pinnacle of poetry and oration. Everyone, young and old, was preoccupied with the art of rhetoric and poetry. Despite this, all oratory and poetic masters writhed with desperation and despair before the eloquence, rhetoric and miraculous verse of the Qur'an and were thus buried into the vortices of impotence.

Notwithstanding the Qur'an's repeated challenge to gather all their aids and produce the like of its chapters and expression, the proud-hearted Arabs of the Age of Ignorance were never able to respond.



## **Knowledge of the Unseen**

The account of the creation of the first human being, the associated events unfolding herein, knowledge of former societies and their life stories, as well as their connection with the Prophets sent to them, all pertain to news that the Qur'an conveys in relation to the past.

The Divine Essence of Allah the Exalted, His attributes and acts, the angels and jinn, the world of the grave, news concerning Paradise and Hellfire, and expressly the verses describing the mindsets in addition to the intrigues and deceptions occurring to the hearts and minds of the People of the Book, the hypocrites and unbelievers, constitute news of the Unseen with regard to the specific time of revelation.

The most important of knowledge which pertains to the Unseen, however, is that which concerns the events that will unfold in the future.

## **Guiding Scientific Discovery**

As a case in point, the Qur'an provides information concerning human reproduction and the formation of the embryo that modern science has only recently been able to discover. The relevant verse reads:



**“We created humankind (in the very beginning) from a specially sifted extract of clay. Then We have made it into a fertilized ovum in a safe lodging. Then We created of the fertilized ovum a clot clinging (to the womb wall), and (afterwards in sequence) We created of the clinging clot a (chew of) lump, and We created of (a chew of) lump bones, and We clothed the bones in flesh. Then We caused it to grow into another creation. So Blessed and Supreme is Allah, the Creator Who creates everything in the best and most appropriate form, and has the ultimate rank of creativity.” (23:12-14)**

A comparison between this information that the Qur'an provides and the findings of modern biology reveals a complete consonance between the two. In his work in the field of embryology, Professor Emeritus in the Division of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, **Keith L. Moore** expounded the stages of human development in the womb. He then compared the findings of modern embryology with relevant verses in the Qur'an and concluded that these were in agreement with the Qur'an, even conceding that the examples provided in the Qur'an were significantly ahead of their time and ahead of the science of medicine.

Similarly, the fact that every single human being possesses a unique fingerprint was discovered towards



the end of the nineteenth century. The Qur'an draws attention to this phenomenon centuries earlier:

**“Does human think that We will never assemble his bones (to resurrect him)? Yes, indeed, We are able to make whole his very fingertips [banānah].” (75:3-4)**

In addition to the abovementioned, the Qur'an also made known, centuries in advance, nuclear fission, the creation of everything in pairs, the atmosphere that is a protected canopy, the seas that do not mix, atmospheric pressure and fertilising winds.

In short, the Qur'an is forever in the lead, while scientific discoveries tag along behind, constantly affirming the Divine Word.

### **See Yourself in the Divine Mirror**

The human being can find oneself in the truest way only in the atmosphere of the Qur'an and can thus overcome their material and spiritual crises. By holding up a divine mirror to the human being, the Qur'an ensures that they see and come to know themselves in a real sense. This is because the Qur'an is not the word of human beings, but is a letter of guidance, a manual of eternal happiness sent by our All-Mighty Lord Who creates and Who best knows us. Consequently, one who deepens in the Qur'an reads their own self and the favours of their Lord,



turns the pages of the book of the universe and becomes acquainted with the flow of Divine Power and the artistry of Divine majesty.

As beautifully expressed by one of the possessors of intimate knowledge:

*“For the knowing, this realm is a journey of wonder (mystery for the reasoning and being able to observe the Divine art with the ‘eye of the heart’), while for the foolish, it is appetite.”*

### **If You Seek to Speak with Allah**

For humanity, the Qur'an is the most propitious path to hearing the celestial echo, feeling the Divine breath in one's soul and conversing with Allah while still in this world.

Indeed, the **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, has said:

*“Whoever wishes to speak with their Lord should read the Qur'an.”* (Suyuti, I, 13/360)

### **A Spiritual Banquet**

The Qur'an is a spiritual banquet prepared by Allah Almighty for His servants. Those who accept His invitation and attend this banquet delight in endless bounties offering tranquillity, felicity and joy.





Indeed, for the Prophet's Companions, leading a life in conformity to the Qur'an was tantamount to an insatiable pleasure. Every single verse that was revealed was as though an elaborate repast descended from the heavens. Their entire exertion was to be able to duly perceive the Qur'an, put it into practice and serve as a good example in this regard.

### Wealth With No Poverty

As stated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*"Such wealth is the Qur'an that no wealth can equal (or surpass) it (i.e. one who attains it has attained the greatest treasure) and there is no poverty after it (i.e. that Divine treasure cannot be compared with any material riches)." (Haythami, VII, 158)*

### The Messenger's Union With the Qur'an

The Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace, used to recite the Qur'an at every opportunity. He used to recite it when conveying the message of Islam, in spiritual exchange with his Companions, when explaining a particular matter and in particular during his night worship, as the solution to every matter is to be found in the Qur'an. The detailed explanation and practice of the Qur'an is exemplified in the life of Allah's Messenger. It can

thus be said that the life of the Messenger of Allah, from beginning to end, constitutes a commentary of the Qur'an.

### Doing Justice to One's Eyes

The **Companions** of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to read the Qur'an constantly and did not wish for a single day to pass when they had not read the Qur'an and gazed upon its pages. They would begin their day with the Qur'an and would advise those with eye problems to look at the sacred manuscript. (Haythami, VII, 165)

### The Primary Pursuit of the Prophet and His Companions

The **Messenger of Allah**, upon him be peace and blessings, used to instruct his Companions in the Qur'an even under the most trying circumstances. **Abu Talha**, may Allah be well pleased with him, once saw the Messenger standing, instructing the Suffa Companions in the Qur'an. *The Greatest of the Prophets had strapped a rock to his stomach to straighten his back that had been bent double in hunger.* (Abu Nu'aym, Hilya, I, 342)

The foremost preoccupation of the Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace, was to learn



the Book of Allah, comprehend its meaning, teach it to others, attain its manifestations of wisdom and to act as it required. He derived the joy his existence from constant reading of the Qur'an, listening to its recitation and putting it into practice.

### **The Sacrifice of the Companions**

The Companions led their lives in accordance with the Qur'anic enjoinders and dedicated their lives to the Qur'an. They exhibited an endeavour and service unparalleled throughout history. They were subjected to torture, oppression and persecution, but made no concessions whatsoever with respect to the values in which they so wholeheartedly believed. So as to translate the Divinely revealed verses into action, they emigrated, leaving their wealth, possessions and homeland behind and sacrificed everything they had for this cause.

### **The Endeavour to Become a Living Qur'an**

When the Qur'anic verses enjoining spending in the way of Allah were revealed, even the poorer Companions who had nothing to give carried wood from the mountains and sold it, and as such enjoyed the peace that being able to spend for Allah's cause engendered in their conscience. Demonstrating their love for Allah, glorified and exalted be He, and His



Messenger, upon him be blessings and peace, by way of this deed of righteousness, they virtually strove to each become a living Qur'an.

### **The Qur'an Speaks to a Feeling Heart**

Benefiting duly from the Qur'an is contingent upon the development of one's inner world, or one's inner world receiving a share in experiential knowledge (*ma'rifa*). Otherwise, just as the abundant spring rains are of no use to the rocks over which they run, no benefit can be obtained from the Qur'an for hearts whose doors are shut to it. The Qur'an perhaps even increases the frustration and misguidance of such people, as those unable to meet the Qur'an's mercy and guidance face great disappointment. Prominent Qur'anic commentator from the era of the followers of the Prophet's Companions, **Qatada**, states:

“Those who recite the Qur'an rise either with profit or with loss. As is declared in a Qur'anic verse:

**‘We are sending down the Qur'an in parts – it is a healing and a mercy for the believers, though for the wrongdoers it increases them only in ruin.’”**

(17:82)

That is to say, however much we can turn to the Qur'an with a heart overflowing with a love of faith,



its healing and mercy will become manifest in us to that same degree.

### **The Qur'an is Honoured and Bestows Honour**

Nafi' ibn 'Abd al-Harith met 'Umar at 'Usfan and as 'Umar, may Allah be well pleased with him, had employed him as governor in Makka, 'Umar asked him, "Whom have you appointed as your deputy over the people of Makka?"

Nafi' said, "**Ibn Abza.**"

When 'Umar asked who Ibn Abza was, Nafi' replied, "He is one of the freed slaves."

Upon 'Umar's remarking, "So you have appointed a freedman over them," Nafi' gave the following telling response:

"He is well versed in the Book of Allah and takes pains with fulfilling its commandments and prohibitions (in utmost piety and God-consciousness)."

'Umar, may Allah be well pleased with him, then said in admiration, "The Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace, had said, 'By this Book, Allah raises some in rank and debases others.'" (Muslim, Musafirin, 269)



## Compass of Truth Across Time and Space

The Qur'an is a realm of miracles shedding light on historical obscurities, solving inextricable mysteries and enabling its inhabitants to experience the spring of tranquillity and bliss both in this world and in the Hereafter.

In relating to us the cautionary tales of bygone societies, the Qur'an pours forth wisdom and offers us many lessons of life and society in relation to our own future.

Again, the Qur'an is the miraculous words of our Lord. It is the demonstration of the manifestations of the Divine names in speech. However, only those believers who have received their share of experiential knowledge with a pure heart can only duly comprehend its wisdom and draw complete benefit from its truths.

Just as is colourfully illustrated in the following story narrated by **Mawlana Jalal al-Din**:

“Someone once accompanied Jesus, peace be upon him, on his way. The man caught sight of some bones in a deep-dug hole and said to Prophet Jesus, ‘O companion, teach me that Exalted Name (*al-Isma al-A'zam*) by which you bring the dead to life that I may do good and by means of it endow the bones with life.’



Jesus said:

*'Be silent, for that is not your work: It is not meet for your breath and speech, for it wants breath purer than rain and more piercing in servanthood to Allah than the angels. The Exalted Name requires that the breath might be purified (of all that is forbidden and doubtful) and a heart purified (of everything that distracts one from Allah). Its possessor was such that they were not soiled with the religiously prohibited and were as free from sin and wrongdoing as the angels, for a person's supplication will not be acceptable without a purified selfhood.*

*Let us suppose that you have grasped the staff of Moses firmly in your hand: whence will accrue to your hand the strength of Moses to turn it into a dragon? Thus, like so, what use is pronouncing the Name over the bones when you possess not the breath of Jesus?"*

### **The Qur'an is Read with the Heart**

The Qur'an is, in essence, read with the heart. The duty of the eyes is to be like a pair of glasses for the heart. If all the believers, from commoner to scholar, were to sit before the same lectern and read the Qur'an, they would all receive from it according to their spiritual level.

As indicated by Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi:



*“First reform yourself before you read the verses of the Book and the Traditions of the Noble Messenger. For if you smell not the fragrance in the rose garden, seek the fault in your heart and your nose and not in the garden.”*

### **The Heart Demanded by the Qur'an**

The Qur'an reveals its secrets to a heart purified of turbidity and enveloped in luminosity. There is therefore a need to refine the heart with piety and God-consciousness and to turn to the Qur'an with precisely such sentiment. As stated by **Rumi**:

*“Only those who have set fire to their lusts and fancies (those who have defeated their carnal passions), who have thus melted away (their existence) before the Qur'an and whose souls have as though become the Qur'an itself can comprehend its meaning...”*

### **How To Become Acquainted with Divine Mysteries**

**Ibrahim Dasuqi**, may his secret be sanctified, makes the following observation in relation to properly benefiting from the spiritual effulgence of the Qur'an:

*“One who wishes to read the Qur'an must first purge their tongue of evil and repugnant speech. They must not tend towards waste and must be vigilant*





*against the unlawful and the doubtful. For if they are not attentive to these, they would be guilty of impiety against the Qur'an..."*

*"Son, if you seek to understand the secrets of the Qur'an, purify your carnal soul and strive to benefit from the emanation of the Qur'an. Abandon empty speech and preoccupy yourself with propitious deeds. Place your cheek to the ground (in humility) and do not forget that you have come from the earth and will return to it. Fear your sins being great in number and fear their being held against you on the Day of Reckoning. Reckon well whether or not your deeds will be accepted. If you do so, you may well understand the subtle meanings and mysteries in the Word of your Lord. If you do not, this Divine door will remain to you closed."*

### **Semantic Richness in the Qur'an**

Allah Almighty declares in relation to the infinite richness of meaning in the Qur'an:

**"If all the trees on the earth were pens, and all the sea (were ink), with seven more seas added thereto, the words of Allah (His decrees, the acts of all His Names and Attributes manifested as His commandments, and the events and creatures He creates) would not be exhausted in the writing. Surely Allah is the All-Glorious with irresistible**



**might** (Whom none can frustrate and Whom nothing can tire), **the All-Wise.**" (31:27)

As a result, the commentaries and translations rendered with a view to indicating the meanings contained within the Qur'an resemble our taking water from a boundless ocean in accordance with the particular capacity of our cup. **Mawlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi** echoes this meaning:

*"It is possible to write the external meaning of the Qur'an using a single okka of ink. As for expression of all the secrets it contains, if all the boundless oceans were ink and all the trees on earth pens, this would still not suffice."*

### **An Infinite Ocean of Meaning**

In the same way that the truths present in the universe are discovered and studied by natural scientists working in such fields as medicine, botany, astrophysics and embryology in accordance with their particular scope and comprehension, the Qur'an too is examined by Muslim scholars and its truths unearthed in the course of time. Those scholars and Sufis who have been delving into its profound contents for over the last 1400 years and who have been studying the truths that it contains, take from it in accordance with their reason, perception, capacity and spiritual depth.



This endeavour will continue until the Last Day and even by then, all the truths that the Qur'an contains would still not have been discovered and exhausted. This point is articulated in a Prophetic Tradition as follows:

*"...and its wonders are never exhausted..."* (Tirmidhi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 14)

For every single word of the Qur'an possesses an endless semantic meaning that cannot be compared with the scope of those considering it. What the majority of human beings require is its outward or exoteric meaning. This is sufficient in enabling the perfect regulation of human life. In any event, perceiving that ocean of truth in its entirety is not possible as the Qur'an is not the knowledge of a mortal but is a manifestation of the infinite knowledge of Allah Who bestows humanity with the guiding principles of all disciplines.

### **The Source of Honour**

As decreed in a verse from the Qur'an:

**"Now We send down to you (O people of Makka and O all humankind,) a Book which contains what you must heed in life for your honour and happiness. Will you not, then, use your reason?"** (21:10)



Beginning with Adam and perfected with the **Prophet of the End of Time**, upon him be blessings and peace, the horizon that Islam attained constitutes the final stage of the continuum of human honour and virtue. In this way, the horizon of meaning that hearts fittingly kneaded with that lofty Divine Book are able to attain encompasses the boundlessness that is beyond reason and comprehension. This is because without illumination by the light of the Qur'an, it is not possible to duly perceive our Creator and for the human being to arrive at the mystery of whence they came and to where they are headed.

Consequently, the Qur'an is in every respect the light of our eye, the joy of our heart and the most abundant source of our guidance. This guide to deliverance and sun of meaning, the Book of Allah, transformed the Bedouin deserts that were each a river of blood lost in the deep abysses of ignorance into radiant gardens of civilisation and turned the swamps of persecution rife with hostility, conflict and killing into the peaceful and loving climate of faith fellowship. The life of those tribes, who prior to the emergence of Islam were at each other's throats, attained a sweet serenity. Such a star of guidance is the Qur'an that it elevates communities that follow it to the peak of humanity, virtue and civilisation across time and space. Just as humanity has hitherto



not possessed such a powerful means of transforming the life of this world into a garden of Eden, it will not possess another hereafter.

### **The Person Loved by the Prophet**

**Kulayb ibn Shihab** narrates:

‘**Ali ibn Abi Talib**, may Allah be well pleased with him, once heard voices coming from within the Mosque of Kufa and inquired as to its source. He was informed that some people were engaged in reading and learning the Qur'an.

‘Ali, may Allah be well pleased with him, then said,

“Happy are they, for they were the most beloved of people in the eyes of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.” (Haythami, VII, 162)

### **Attributes of the People of the Qur'an**

The people of the Qur'an (*ahl al-Qur'an*) are as vibrant as the spring and revive hearts with beauty, fruit by fruit and flower by flower. In describing the people of the Qur'an, **Ibn Mas'ud**, may Allah be well pleased with him, says:

“One who has learned the Qur'an by heart should be distinguished by their prayer and recitation at night



while the people sleep, their earnest endeavour while the people are given to excess, their sorrow while the people are joyous, their silence while the people indulge in idle chatter and their consciousness of Allah while the people are conceited. One who memorises the Qur'an, moreover, should be humble, tender-hearted and gentle, never harsh or quarrelsome.”(Abu Nu'aym, Hilya, I, 130)

### **Allah is the Guardian of the Qur'an**

The Qur'an is the last of the four Divinely revealed scriptures sent to humanity. Of all the books that Allah sent, He vowed that He would protect only the Qur'an until the Last Day. As affirmed in a Qur'anic verse:

**“Indeed it is We, We Who send down the Reminder in parts, and it is indeed We Who are its Guardian.”** (15:9)

On account of this, the only Divine scripture preserved entirely in its original form, without alteration of even a single letter, is the Qur'an. The pressing question at this point is the extent to which we can each serve as a means to the fulfilment of God's promise.



## Will the Qur'an be our Intercessor or Complainant?

The Qur'an will endure with the human being as the human will endure with the Qur'an. At the end of human life in this world, on the Last Day, this universe will be destroyed and the pages of the Qur'an will be erased. Subsequently, a new order will be established and a day that is unending will begin. On that day, those favoured with the intercession of the Messenger of Allah and the Qur'an will be admitted into Paradise, while those subjected to the Qur'an's complaint will face a tragic end. They will be driven to Hellfire.

### Houses of Ruin

A human being's honour, or their standing before their Lord, is by virtue of the Qur'an. The believer's aspiration, in that case, is to be able to become a living Qur'an, like its greatest exemplar, the Pride of Humanity, upon him be peace and blessings.

The words of the **Messenger of Allah** below are most striking:

*"A person who has nothing of the Qur'an inside their heart is like a ruined house."* (Tirmidhi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 18; Darimi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 1)



## Seeking Shade Beneath the Supreme Throne

It is stated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*“Instruct your children in three things: Love of the Prophet, love of his household and the recitation of the Qur'an.*

*For the bearers of the Qur'an (those who learn and teach the Qur'an and serve in this cause) will be with the Prophets and the friends of Allah in the shade of the Supreme Throne on that Day (of Judgement) when there will be no shade but His.”* (Munawi, Fayd al-Qadr, I, 226)

## The Greatest Negligence

There is no failing greater among those blackening a person's spiritual life than a disregard of the Qur'an. When the sins of his community were shown to him, the Messenger of Allah, upon him be blessings and peace, pointed to 'forgetting the (portions of the) Qur'an that one has committed to memory,' as the greatest sin among them. We are therefore required to adorn both ourselves and our children with the love and morality of the Qur'an that we aspire to learn and to put into practice.

We must send our children to the Qur'an schools established for the sake of the instruction and training in the Qur'an by the pious people of our ummah with





great sacrifice, and thus avoid the grave responsibility of contributing to their closure due to lack of students and interest. We must not be one of those who fail to appreciate the Qur'an as a Divinely-bestowed bounty and who are deprived of the exuberant climate of the Qur'an due to their pinning their hopes on worldly diplomas, in pursuit of their petty, fleeting and base interests in their trepidation about the future. It will become apparent in the end that these fleeting obsessions are altogether empty, but the damage would have well and truly been done by that time. Everything would have been over and the opportunity for making amends lost.

In this respect, we must never forget that it is Allah Almighty alone Who will grant our children happiness and prosperity. We must not put our eternal future at risk with our concern for a fleeting future. Again, we must strive to lead a life in accordance with the verse that we read in each every single of our prayer, “(Our Lord!) **You alone do We worship, and from You alone do we seek help.**” (1:5)

### **Calling Ourselves to Account**

It is not enough to say, “I love the Qur'an.” To what extent are the ethics and morality of the Qur'an projected onto our person? To what degree are we able to act upon the enjoinders of the Qur'an? How



much are we able to send our children to learn the Qur'an and enable them to acquire a knowledge of the Qur'anic tradition and morality? Precisely how much are we able to reflect on the fact that the Qur'an will be either an intercessor or – due to our negligence – a complainant on the Day of Reckoning? These are the kinds of questions that we therefore constantly need to ask ourselves.

### **Happy Are Those Who Become One With the Qur'an**

It is stated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*“Read the Quran, for it will come forth as an intercessor for its reciters on the Day of Judgement.”*  
(Muslim, Musafirin, 252, 253; Ahmad, V, 249, 251)

*“Whoever reads the Qur'an and acts upon it, on the Day of Judgement their parents will be crowned with a crown of light, its brightness more radiant than that of the sun in a worldly abode. What, then, do you suppose will be given to one who acts upon what the Qur'an contains?”* (Abu Dawud, Witr, 14/1453)

*“Allah does not listen so attentively to anything as He listens to a servant who offers two units of prayer. And righteousness spreads over the head of the servant as long as they remain in prayer. And the servant does not draw as near to Allah, glorified and exalted be He,*



*as through that which came from Him, (meaning the Qur'an)."* (Tirmidhi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 17/2911)

### **The Reward of Devotion to the Qur'an**

The true bearers of the Qur'an, those who have committed the entire book to memory, are granted many Divinely bestowed bounties in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Friend of Allah, **Mahmud Sami Ramazanoğlu**, may his secret be sanctified, personally recounted the story of the disinterment of such a person who had memorised the entire Qur'an and passed away in Adana thirty years prior, as a road that was being built cut through his burial site. He witnessed firsthand the body to have been perfectly preserved and what is more, the white shroud to still have been bright and gleaming.

As indicated in a Prophetic Tradition:

*"When a bearer of the Qur'an (a memoriser of the Qur'an who lives in accordance with the Qur'anic laws, who takes on its morality and attains spiritual refinement with its wisdom) dies, Allah forbids the earth to consume their body and the earth says, 'O Lord! How can I consume their body when Your Word presides in their bosom?'"* (Daylami, I, 284/1112; 'Ali al-Muttaqi, I, 555/2488)



## Were Our Hearts Pure

‘Uthman, may Allah be well pleased with him, is known to have said:

*“Were our hearts truly pure (i.e. had we undergone a process of spiritual purification and refinement), we could never be sated with the Word of our Lord, may He be glorified and exalted. I do not like that a single day pass without my having gazed upon the Book.”*

## Service to the Qur'an

Serving the Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and interpreted through his lived example is one of the most important manifestations of embodying the Prophetic conduct and morality. Indeed, saying, *“The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and and teach it to others,”* (Bukhari, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 21) the Messenger of Allah, upon him be peace and blessings, served as the model of perfection to his community with respect to busying oneself with the Qur'an under any circumstances. As a result, learning and teaching the Qur'an is the principal duty and responsibility of the believer. Expressed differently, love for and service to the Qur'an is the mark of a believer.



## How Must the Qur'an Be Read and Recited?

The hearts of those being of service to the Qur'an must, first and foremost, be filled with love of Allah that these exuberant hearts motivate those surrounding them to a depth of feeling and reflection.

To those who asked which recitation of the Qur'an was best, the **Messenger of Allah**, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied:

*"The recitation of the one whom you perceive to fear Allah upon hearing his recitation."* (Darimi, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 34)

Otherwise, it is self-evident that a recitation that does not descend from the tongue to the heart cannot possibly lead a person to the Qur'an's horizon of infinite reflection and to its profundity of feeling.

## Reverence Towards the Qur'an

Utmost care and meticulousness is necessary when it comes to the mannerliness and reverence one shows towards the Divine Word. For instance, the Qur'an should not be read and taught without the ritual ablution for a relevant Qur'anic verse expressly declares:

**"None except the purified ones can reach it** (to obtain the knowledge it contains. And none except



those cleansed of material and spiritual impurities should touch it).” (56:79)

Implied in this verse are the minor and major ablutions as well as women's states of ritual impurity (of menstruation and post-natal bleeding). The four legal schools are unanimous in the view that touching the Qur'an without the ritual ablution is forbidden. In any event, this ruling has been applied throughout the more than fourteen centuries that have passed since the time of the Prophet (known as *ijma' al-umma*, or the consensus of the community).

**Imam Malik** says:

“One should not carry the Qur'an in its casing, or on a cushion, unless they are pure... This is not because there is something on the hands of the one who carries it by which the Qur'an will be soiled, but because it is reproachful for someone to carry the Qur'an without being pure, out of reverence and honour for the Qur'an.” (Muwatta, Qur'an, 1)

### **Reverence for the Qur'an is a Requirement of Piety and God-Consciousness**

All manner of reverence and honour as keeping the Qur'an at a level above one's waist, not extending one's legs towards it (in a reclining position), not placing other books or objects on top of it and not



entering an impure place with the Qur'an on one's person, must be observed with a spirit of worship and must be passed down to future generations. For the Qur'an is one of the most important *sha'a'ir al-Islam*, or marks or symbols of Islam. A Qur'anic verse reads:

**"...That (is the truth itself). And whoever venerates the public symbols and rituals set up by Allah (such as Jumu'ah and Eid Prayers, the Call to Prayer, Sacrifice, and the rites of the Pilgrimage), surely it is because of the true piety and God-consciousness of their hearts."** (22:32)

### **Learning the Language of the Qur'an**

If we are obliged to learn any language, this is surely to be the language of the Qur'an, as learning the language of the Qur'an, becoming acquainted with its meaning, learning its laws and ethics is at the same time an expression of our human dignity, refinement and grace.

### **Attaining An Eternal Future**

The greatest service that can be rendered to the human being is to aid them in attaining their eternal future. The means to achieving this is to guide them to a life of servanthood with which Allah is well pleased. This life is comprised of being guided by the criteria of the Qur'an and espousing its morality.



## A Means of Deliverance

The most vital means to deliverance from every period of intermission, or *fatrah*, has been the efforts in the service of the Qur'an. The true service enabling the Muslim world in our day to pull itself together and return to its essence is to ensure that an interest and need felt for the Qur'an is maintained. Let us note as a historical case in point, that the key cause of material and outward grandeur and glory is adherence to spiritual mysteries and wisdoms. The six hundred year splendour of the Ottoman state had its source in the importance it attached to spirituality. The well-known story of founder of the Ottoman state, Osman I, staying overnight as a guest in the residence of a family acquaintance and refrained from lying down in his room out of respect for the Qur'an hanging on the wall. This is considered as a fundamental reason behind the legendary greatness of the Ottoman state. Sultan Selim I's having the sacred trusts brought to Istanbul in great reverence and appointing forty huffaz (reciters of the Qur'an who committed the whole Qur'an to memory) to read the Qur'an without interruption for what would be centuries to follow, can be identified as another indication of high respect shown to the Qur'an by Ottoman Sultans.





## Being Among the People of the Qur'an

As the community of Prophet Muhammad, upon him be blessings and peace, we are obligated to become of the **People of the Qur'an** in order to follow in his luminous footsteps and to take on his noble conduct and morality. For in the words of 'A'isha, the Mother of Believers, *"His character is (the embodiment of) the Qur'an."*

In order for us to adorn our inner worlds with the feeling that permeated the inner world of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, we are in need of the spiritual instruction and training of the Qur'an.

May Allah Almighty embellish our hearts with the knowledge, wisdom, light and radiance of the Qur'an and render us of the devotees of the Prophet who put Islam into practice in the form of a living Qur'an. May He protect our nation and our people from the absence of the Qur'an, belief and morality. May He envelop us in the true magnificence of the Qur'an and thus allow us to lead a life of Paradise in this fleeting realm, and enable us all to serve in the way of ensuring the continuation of an auspicious Qur'an generation.

*Amin.*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	5
<b>Prophet Muhammad: Mercy to the Worlds / 9</b>	
Mercy to the Worlds .....	11
Were it Not For Him.....	12
The True Day of Rejoicing.....	13
Obedience to the Messenger Obedience to Allah .....	13
The Messenger's Life is an Effective Commentary of the Qur'an.....	14
Human History's Inscription of Honour .....	14
Ocean of Virtue .....	15
The Epitome of Noble Character .....	16
Our Debt of Gratitude to Allah's Messenger .....	17
The Monument of Reliance and Surrender.....	17
Forever the Most Trustworthy, the Most Compassionate.....	19
He Always Kept His Word .....	19
Even the Unbelievers Put their Trust in Allah's Messenger .....	20
Allah's Messenger Fulfilled Trusts.....	20
Beware of the Rights of Your Neighbour!.....	21



The Bravest of Them All .....	22
The Prophet of Forgiveness and Mercy .....	22
A Heart Beating with Mercy.....	24
Allah's Messenger was in a Constant State of Supplication .....	24
Unequalled Refinement.....	25
A Countenance Most Beautiful.....	26
Had They Seen His Blessed Countenance .....	27
The Prophet of Mercy .....	27
A Generous One Unafraid of Poverty .....	28
If I Had as Much Gold as the Weight of Mount Uhud .....	28
If You Can Give Nothing Else .....	29
Allah's Messenger Never Took a Liking to the World.....	30
The True Life is the Life of the Hereafter .....	31
Allah's Messenger Divided His Time into Three .....	32
The Felicitous Home of Allah's Messenger .....	32
The Best of You.....	33
Lest the Crystals Should Break! .....	34
A Matchless Court of Mercy.....	34
The Peerless Exemplar.....	35
A Bouquet of Rare Roses.....	36
An Example to People From Every Walk of Life .....	36
Behold Yourself in His Mirror.....	37
The Prophet's Teacher is Allah Almighty .....	40
The Product of Which Education System?.....	41
The Fire will not Burn the Heart that is Filled With Him .....	42
Whoever Revives My Tradition.....	42
The Fibres of a Rope .....	43



The Need for Adherence to the Sunna.....	43
The Impossibility of Complete Comprehension of Allah's Messenger .....	44
The One Sent Bespeaks the Might of the Sender .....	45
The Miracle of the Companions .....	46
The Pride of Humanity.....	46
The True Genius.....	47
The Conceding of Consciences.....	48
A Person Will Be With Those Whom They Love .....	49
Love Demands Sacrifice .....	50
So As Not to Face Separation .....	50
Harmonising Everything With Him.....	50
The Sole Concern of Allah's Messenger was His Community.....	51
He is Very Close to Us, But Are We Close to Him? .....	51
The Level of Our Connection .....	52
The Level of Our Closeness .....	52
A Divine Command: Invoking Peace and Blessings Upon His Messenger .....	53
Our Need for Allah's Messenger.....	54
Our Sole Remedy .....	55
<b>The Qur'an: The Eternal Miracle / 57</b>	
A Manifestation of Mercy .....	59
The Divine Edict .....	60
Endless Miracles in Every Letter.....	60
Treasure Trove of Mystery and Wisdom.....	61
The Prosperity of Preoccupation with the Qur'an .....	61
Every Verse an Invitation to Reflect .....	62
The Most Fertile Soil .....	62



Two Important Trusts .....	63
The Qur'anic Prescription .....	63
Benefiting from the Qur'an is Contingent Upon Spiritual Profundity .....	64
Those to be Envied.....	65
The Qur'an is A Description of the States and Attributes of the Prophets .....	65
All Truths are Hidden in the Qur'an .....	66
The Qur'an is Instruction in Refined Manners.....	67
An Indicator of Our Level of Piety .....	67
The Lustre of Hearts .....	68
The Strongest Handle .....	68
The Source of Knowledge .....	69
The Eternal Miracle .....	70
A Miracle of Eloquence .....	70
Knowledge of the Unseen .....	71
Guiding Scientific Discovery .....	71
See Yourself in the Divine Mirror .....	73
If You Seek to Speak with Allah .....	74
A Spiritual Banquet.....	74
Wealth With No Poverty .....	75
The Messenger's Union With the Qur'an.....	75
Doing Justice to One's Eyes.....	76
The Primary Pursuit of the Prophet and His Companions .....	76
The Sacrifice of the Companions.....	77
The Endeavour to Become a Living Qur'an .....	77
The Qur'an Speaks to a Feeling Heart.....	78
The Qur'an is Honoured and Bestows Honour .....	79



Compass of Truth Across Time and Space.....	80
The Qur'an is Read with the Heart.....	81
The Heart Demanded by the Qur'an.....	82
How To Become Acquainted with Divine Mysteries .....	82
Semantic Richness in the Qur'an .....	83
An Infinite Ocean of Meaning .....	84
The Source of Honour .....	85
The Person Loved by the Prophet.....	87
Attributes of the People of the Qur'an.....	87
Allah is the Guardian of the Qur'an .....	88
Will the Qur'an be our Intercessor or Complainant?.....	89
Houses of Ruin .....	89
Seeking Shade Beneath the Supreme Throne.....	90
The Greatest Negligence.....	90
Calling Ourselves to Account.....	91
Happy Are Those Who Become One With the Qur'an .....	92
The Reward of Devotion to the Qur'an.....	93
Were Our Hearts Pure .....	94
Service to the Qur'an .....	94
How Must the Qur'an Be Read and Recited? .....	95
Reverence Towards the Qur'an.....	95
Reverence for the Qur'an is a Requirement of Piety and God-Consciousness.....	96
Learning the Language of the Qur'an.....	97
Attaining An Eternal Future .....	97
A Means of Deliverance .....	98
Being Among the People of the Qur'an .....	99

