

Published on Al-Islam.org (https://www.al-islam.org)

Home > Sunan An-Nabi > Chapter 1: The Character and Moral Traits of the Holy Prophet

Chapter 1: The Character and Moral Traits of the Holy Prophet

1. From Ibn Shahr Ashub in al-Manaqib: al-Tirmidhi in al-Shama'il, al-Tabari in al-Tarikh, al-Zamakhshari in al-Fa'iq and al-Fattal in al-Raudhah have all narrated about the character of the Holy Prophet (S) with numerous narrations. From among these: Narrated from Amir al-Mu'minin (as), Ibn Abbas, Abu Hurayrah, Jabir ibn Samarah and Hind ibn Abi Halah: That he (S) used to be revered and venerated, dignified in the eyes (of the people) and honored in the hearts. His face would shine like the full moon, bright and white with a hint of redness.

He was neither too thin, nor too fat. He had a white forehead and a pleasant countenance. The white of his eyes was intensely white and the black of his eyes was intensely black, the edges of his eyelids were black, he had long narrow eyebrows, a moderately large and proportionate head and was of appropriately average height.

He had a wide forehead, the bridge of his nose was slightly raised, a little redness could be seen in the white of his eyes, his eyebrows were joined, and he had soft fair cheeks, long and broad forearms, large shoulder-joints, wide shoulders, strong hands and moderately large feet.

He had no hair on his chest, the soles of his feet were curved in the middle, lines were visible around the flesh near his backbone, he had long eyelashes, a thick beard, a full moustache, a mixture of black and white hair, a perfectly formed mouth and nose, fine white separated teeth, lank hair, a line of very small hair from the middle of his chest to his navel and a proportionate body. His stomach was aligned with his chest. He had a wide chest. His neck was beautiful like an image of pure silver.

His had extended fingers; the heels of his feet were bony and empty of flesh. He had a short chin. His forehead was slightly inclined to the front, his thighs were fleshy and muscular, and there was a slight swelling in his flank. His limbs were firm. He was of average height, neither too tall nor too short. He had curly hair not open falling hair. His face was neither skinny nor fleshy and its color was not as white as the white of the eyes. He had large joints. There was no hair on his stomach or chest except for a line of hair extending from his upper chest down to his navel. He had a large upper back. White hair was seen

on the sides of his (S) head next to his ears (as a result of old age).

His hands were like the hands of a perfume seller – always scented with perfume. He had wide palms. The bones of his arms and legs were proportionately long. When he was happy and joyful his face was like a shiny mirror. He walked inclining forward 1, with a humble gait. He would rush ahead of the people to perform good deeds. When he walked, he would raise his feet as if he was descending a declivity. When he smiled, his teeth would shine when exposed briefly, before being covered by the lips.

He was handsome, well-mannered, decorous and friendly. When he turned to face the people, they felt that his face was like a bright lantern, and the (drops of) sweat on his face were like pearls, and the scent of his perspiration was better than the most excellent musk. He had the seal of prophethood between his shoulders.2

- 2. Abu Hurayrah: When he (S) would turn to see the front or back, he would turn his whole body (not just his head).3
- 3. Jabir ibn Samarah: He was slender in the shanks.4
- 4. Abu Juhayfah: White hair covered the sides of his beard and the hair between his chin and the edge of his lower lip.5
- 5. Umm Hani: I saw the Holy Prophet (S) having four locks of hair.

Ibn Shahr Ashub says: In actuality he had two locks of hair and the one who started this (tradition of keeping the hair in this way) was Hashim (the Noble Prophet's great–grandfather).6

- 6. Anas: I did not count more than fourteen white hairs on the Holy Prophet's (S) head and beard.7
- 7. It has been said: He had seventeen (white hairs).8
- 8. Ibn 'Umar: The sign of old age in him was (the presence of) about twenty white hairs.9
- 9. al-Bara' ibn 'Azib: His hair reached up to his shoulders. 10
- 10. Anas: He had hair descending behind his ears up to the earlobes. 11
- 11. 'Aaisha: His hair extended beyond the earlobes but not up to the shoulders. 12
- 12. In Qisas al–Anbiya': There would be no place from which the Noble Prophet (S) passed but that all who would pass from there would know that he had been there from the scent of his fragrant sweat. He would not pass by a stone or tree except that it would prostrate before him. 13
- 13. From al-Saffar in Basa'ir al-Darajat: Narrated from Zurarah from Abi Ja'far (as) that the Holy Prophet (S) said: Verily we, the prophets, sleep with our eyes but not with our hearts and we see what is

behind us with the same clarity as what we see in front of us. 14

- 14. From al–Qutb in al–Khara'ij wa al–Jara'ih: From his (S) miracles which have been confirmed by numerous sources, and disbelievers and believers have acknowledged it, was the seal of prophethood on the hair that had accumulated between his shoulders.15
- 15. In al-Managib: His (S) shadow did not fall upon the earth. 16
- 16. From al-Kulayni in al-Kafi: Narrated from 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Nawfali from Abi al-Hasan (as), he said: I mentioned to him about (good) voice. He said: When 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) used to recite (the Qur'an) and a person would pass by, he would swoon because of the beauty of his voice; and if the Imam manifests any of this, the people would not be able to bear its beauty. I said: Did the Holy Prophet (S) not lead the people in prayer, raising his voice in recitation of the Qur'an? He (as) said: He would recite in a way that was bearable for the people behind him. 17

Note: And this has been narrated with numerous other chains of narrators.

17. From al-Saduq in Ma'ani al-Akhbar: By way of Ibn Abi Halah al-Tamimi from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (as) and (in another narration) by way of al-Rid'a from his fathers, from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, from Husayn ibn 'Ali (as) and also (in yet another narration) by way of a man from the lineage of Abi Halah from his father, from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (as) who said: I asked my maternal uncle, Hind ibn Abi Halah – who always used to talk about the Noble Prophet (S) – to describe for me something about him so that I may increase my love for him. So he said:

The Prophet (S) was revered and venerated. His face would shine like the full moon. He was taller than those who were short and shorter than those who were tall (i.e. he was of average height). He had a moderately large head and curly hair. If his hair could be combed he would comb it otherwise, if he let his hair grow, he would not let it exceed up to the length of his earlobes.

He had a light complexion, a wide forehead, long narrow eyebrows that were broad but not conjoined, with a vein running between them which became visible when he was angry. There was a light which elevated him such that if one who saw him did not notice it, he would think he was raising his head with haughtiness.

His beard was short and thick; his cheeks were smooth and wide. He had a broad mouth with clear separated teeth. He had fine hair on his chest. His neck was like a beautiful image of pure silver. His body was proportional (all his limbs were the perfect size in relation to his body). His stomach and chest were equal in size. He had broad shoulders. His joints were fleshy. He had a wide chest. The unclothed parts of his body shone with brightness. He had a line of hair extending from his chest to his navel; other than this, his chest and stomach were bare.

His forearms, shoulders and upper chest were hairy. He had long forearms and wide palms. His hands

and feet were thick and firm. He had extended fingers and bones that were without any protuberances in the forearms and shanks. The middle of the soles of his feet was raised from the ground and his feet were wide. Water would not soak them. When he walked he raised his legs from the ground and inclined forwards, treading lightly with soft steps. He walked briskly as though he was descending a declivity. When he turned to face someone, he would turn his entire body (not just his head).

His eyes were lowered; his gaze toward the ground was longer than his gaze toward the sky. He would look with short glances. He was the first to salute (say salam to) whomever he met.

He (as) then said: Describe to me his speech. He replied: He (S) was afflicted with continued sadness, always deep in thought and never at ease. He was silent for long periods of time. He never talked unnecessarily. He started his speech and ended it with great eloquence. His discourse was relevant and concise, without superfluity and not lacking the necessary details. He was soft–spoken and never rude or insulting. He would consider blessings to be great even if they were small, never complaining about them. However, he neither criticized nor praised what he tasted (or ate).

The world and its disappointments never made him angry. But when someone's rights were usurped, he would become so angry that nobody would recognize him and nothing would stand in his way until he had helped him (get back his rights). When he pointed to something he pointed to it with his whole hand and when he was surprised he turned his hand upside—down. When he talked he would join his hands together, and would tap the back of his left thumb with his right palm. When he became angry he turned his face away and when he was annoyed he looked down. His laughter was manifested by a smile and (when he smiled) his teeth were seen to be like hailstones.

Al-Sadiq (as) said: Up to this point it has been the narration of Qasim ibn al-Muni' from Isma'il ibn Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad and the rest, up to the end, is the narration of 'Abd al-Rahman ...

Imam Hasan (as) said: I kept this hidden from al-Husayn (as) for some time then I told him about it, but I found he already knew of this before me so I asked him about it and found out that he had asked his father about how the Holy Prophet (S) was, inside the home and outside, his sitting and his appearance; and he did not leave out anything.

Imam Husayn (as) said: I asked my father about the conduct of the Holy Prophet (S) when he entered his home. He said: He (S) entered the home when he wanted to and when he came to his home, upon his entrance, he divided his time into three parts: a part for Allah, a part for his family and a part for himself. Then he divided his own time between himself and the people, keeping his portion for his special companions and the other portion for the general public; and did not save any time for his personal work. It was from his practice, in the portion devoted to (meeting) the people, to give preference and respect to the people of distinction and he would categorize them according to their excellence in religion.

From among them were those with one need and those who had two needs and even those with many needs, so he occupied himself with them and occupied them with what was good for them. He would ask them about the community and in informing them about what was necessary he would say: "Those who are present from among you should inform those who are absent, and inform me about the need of one who is unable to inform me of his need. For surely the one who informs a person in authority of the need of the one who cannot express it, Allah will make his feet firm on the Day or Reckoning." Nothing other than this would be mentioned in his presence and he would not accept from anyone anything other than this. They would come in seeking (knowledge and wisdom) and they would not disperse until they had received it and they would leave as guides (for others).

I asked him about the conduct of the Noble Prophet (S) outside the home – how was it? He (as) replied: The Prophet (S) would remain silent except when it was necessary for him to speak, and he would be affable with the people and would not alienate them. He would honor the honorable of every community and would make them in charge of their affairs. He would be careful with the people and would be cautious not to be impolite or turn away from them, frowning. He would seek to know about the condition of his companions and he would ask the people about the condition of others (like their relatives or neighbors).

He used to admire the good deed and encourage it while censuring the evil action and discouraged it. He was unwaveringly moderate in his affairs. He was never unmindful (toward the people) out of fear of their becoming negligent and deviating (from the right path). He would never fall short of the truth and would never overstep it. Those who were near him were from the best of the people. The best from among them, in his view, was the one who gave more advice and guidance to the Muslims and the ones who were of greater status in his eyes were those who were more caring and helpful to them.

He said: Then I asked him (as) about his (manner of) sitting, so he said: He would neither sit nor stand but by remembering Allah (SwT). He never reserved a place specifically for himself and forbade others to have places reserved for them. When he arrived at a gathering, he sat wherever there was a place to sit and he enjoined others to do the same. He would give a chance to all those who were sitting with him, without giving preference to one over the other because he held him in greater esteem. When someone would come to sit with him he would remain seated patiently until he stood up and left. If someone asked him for something, he would give him exactly what he had asked for or if he did not have it he would offer kind words to him.

The people were so pleased with his character that he became like a father to them and they were all treated as equals by him. His gathering was a gathering of forbearance, respect, honesty and trust. There were no raised voices in it and neither were there any evil imputations. Nobody's mistakes were repeated outside the gathering. Those who were in the gathering were fair to one another and were, in this, linked to each other with piety. They were humble, respectful to the elderly and merciful to the young, charitable to the needy and hospitable to the outsider.

I said: How was his interaction with those who were in his company? He (as) said: He was always cheerful, easygoing, approachable and soft–spoken. He was never rude or harsh. He never laughed loudly, never uttered obscenities, never looked for faults in people and never flattered anyone. He ignored that which was not liked by him in such a manner that it would neither cause any despair nor make one feel hopeless. He kept three things away from himself: arguing, being loquacious and talking about things that did not concern him. He also stayed away from three things related to people, namely: he would never rebuke anyone, never reproach him and never look for his slip–ups or faults. He would not speak except that for which he hoped to be rewarded by Allah (SwT).

When he spoke, those who were sitting with him were mesmerized and motionless and silent with awe — as though there were birds perched on their heads. When he became silent they spoke. They never debated in his presence; when one would speak, the others would listen to him until he had finished and they would take turns to speak in his presence. He would laugh when they laughed and express surprise when they expressed surprise. He used to be patient with the incivility of the outsider in his questioning and speech, even if his companions objected. He would say: "If you see a person in need then assist him." He would not accept praise except from one who was sincere in his professing himself a Muslim. He never interrupted anyone's talk until he had exceeded the limits, in which case he would interject by asking him to desist or by standing up.

He said: I then asked him (as) about the silence of the Holy Prophet (S) so he (as) said: His silence was based on four things: forbearance, caution, consideration and contemplation. As for (his silence in) consideration, this was in order to look and listen to everyone equally. As for contemplation, it was about what remains and what perishes. He had a perfect balance of forbearance and patience. Nothing would enrage him or upset him. He was cautious in four things: in his performing a good deed so that others would emulate him, in his abandoning evil so that others would also reject it, in his struggling to make the best decisions for reforming his community, and in his performing that which secures the good of this world and the next. 18

Note: It is also narrated it in Makarim al-Akhlaq19 quoting from the book of Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Ibrahim al-Talqani with in his narration from those whom he deemed trustworthy, from al-Hasan and al-Husayn (as).

He says in al-Bihar: And this narration is from the famous narrations that have been mentioned by the *'ammah* in many of their books.20

18. In Makarim al–Akhlaq, al–Tabarsi narrates from Anas ibn Malik who said: The Noble Prophet (S) had a white complexion like the color of a pearl, and he inclined forward when he walked; and neither the scent of musk nor of ambergris would be better than his scent; and neither the feel of silk brocade not that of (pure) silk would be softer to touch than the hand of the Holy Prophet (S).21

19. (Also) from him, from Ka'b ibn Malik who said: When something made the Holy Prophet (S) happy,

his face would shine like the full moon.22

- 20. From al-Ghazali in al-Ihya: Of all men, he (S) had the most eloquent diction and most pleasant speech. He would say: "I am the most eloquent of the Arabs"; and the people of paradise will speak in the dialect of Muhammad ... and he (S) spoke in a concise manner, neither exceeding nor falling short (of his purpose), as though the words followed each other; there was a pause between his speech that enabled the listener to remember what he said and understand it. He had a powerful and most melodious voice.23
- 21. In al-Manaqib, narrated from 'Aaisha: I said: "O Prophet of Allah! I saw you entering the toilet, and when you came out I entered (the toilet) but did not find anything except the scent of musk?!" He said: "We, the company of prophets, have bodies that are nourished by the heavenly spirits, so nothing comes forth from it but that the earth swallows it."24
- 22. In al-Mahasin: From 'Abdallah ibn al-Fad'l al-Nawfali, from his father, from Abi 'Abdillah (as) who said: The Holy Prophet (S) said: Allah created the intellect and said to it: Retreat! So it retreated. Then He said to it: Advance! So it advanced. Then He (SwT) said: I have not created anything more dear to Myself than you. Allah gave Muhammad (S) ninety-nine parts (of it) and divided the remaining one part among the rest of His servants.25
- 23. From al-Shaykh al-Tusi in al-Tahdhib: In his narration from Ishaq ibn Ja'far, from his brother Musa, from his forefathers, from 'Ali (as) who said: I heard the Prophet (S) saying: "I was sent with the most noble and refined character." 26
- 24. From al–Saduq in al–Faqih: In his narration from 'Abdallah ibn Miskan from Abi 'Abdillah (as) who said: Allah (SwT) distinguished His prophet with a noble character; so test yourselves, if you have it in you then praise Allah the Almighty and desire more of it. He mentioned ten things (to be tested): Certainty, contentment, patience, thankfulness, forbearance, good manners, generosity, honor, bravery and valor.27

Note: al-Kulayni has also narrated this, as has al-Saduq in all his other books.28

- 25. In Makarim al-Akhlaq, quoting from the book al-Nubuwwah: From Anas who said: The Noble Prophet (S) was the bravest of all men, and kindest of all men, and most generous of all men. One night the people of Madinah heard a loud noise which frightened them, so they (all) went towards where the sound had come from. The Holy Prophet (S) met with them; and he had preceded them (and already investigated it), and he was saying: "Don't be alarmed," while he was on the horse of Abi Talha and had a sword tied around his neck. He began telling the people: "Do not be afraid, we found it to be only a loud noise (of no consequence)."29
- 26. Also: From 'Ali (as) who said: In the heat of war, when the two sides would charge at each other, we sought refuge in the Holy Prophet (S) as (he would be at the forefront of the battle and) there was

nobody closer to the enemy than him.30

27. Also: From Abi Sa'id al-Khudri who said: The Noble Prophet (S) was more bashful than a virgin girl behind a curtain. When he disliked something we would see it in his face.31

28. In al-Kafi: Narrated from Hafs ibn Ghiyath who said: Abu 'Abdillah (as) said (to me): "O Hafs, verily the one who was patient had little patience and the one who was impatient had little impatience." Then he said: "You must be patient in all your affairs, for Allah (SwT) send Muhammad (S) and commanded him to be patient and gentle and He said:

"And be patient with what they say, and keep away from them in a graceful manner. Leave me to deal with the deniers, the opulent, and give them a little respite." (Surat al-Muzammil (73): 10-11)

And He said: "Repel [evil] with what is best. [If you do so,] behold, he between whom and you was enmity, will be as though he were a sympathetic friend. But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the greatly endowed." (Surat al-Fussilat (41): 34–35)

So he was patient until they defamed him and accused him of grave transgressions and this made him distressed.

So Allah revealed to him: "Certainly We know that you become upset because of what they say. So celebrate the praise of your Lord and be among those who prostrate." (Surat al-Hijr (15): 97–98)

Then they called him a liar and accused him, and he became sad by this. So Allah revealed:

"We certainly know that what they say grieves you. Yet it is not you that they deny, but it is God's signs that the wrongdoers impugn. Apostles were certainly denied before you, yet they patiently bore being denied and tormented until Our help came to them. Nothing can change the words of God, and there have certainly come to you some of the accounts of the apostles ..." (Surat al-An'am (6): 33–34)

So the Holy Prophet (S) prescribed patience for himself, but when they exceeded the limits and when he mentioned Allah (SwT), they called him a liar. So he (as) said: "I have been patient with regards to myself, my family and my reputation, but I do not have patience when it comes to the remembrance of my Lord." So Allah (SwT) revealed:

"So be patient with what they say ..." (Surat Qaf (50): 39)

So he remained patient at all times. Then the glad tidings of *Imamah* were given to his progeny and they were described as having patience and Allah (SwT) said:

"And amongst them We appointed Imams who guide [the people] by Our command, when they had been patient and had conviction in Our signs." (Surat al-Sajdah (32): 24)

At this point the Holy Prophet (S) said: "Patience is to faith as a head is to the body" and he thanked Allah for this great blessing, so Allah revealed:

"...and your Lord's best word [of promise] was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because of their patience, and We destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had built and what they used to erect." (Surat al-A'raf (7): 137)

Upon which the Holy Prophet (S) said: "It is glad tidings and a (promise of) vengeance." And Allah had made it permissible for him to fight the polytheists, and Allah (SwT) revealed:

"Kill the polytheists wherever you find them, capture them and besiege them and lie in wait for them at every ambush" (Surat al-Tawbah (9): 5)

and

"And kill them wherever you confront them" (Surat al-Bagarah (2): 191, Surat al-Nisa (4): 91)

So Allah slew them at the hands of the Holy Prophet (S) and his dear companions and He gave him the reward for his patience in addition to the treasures that were reserved for him in the hereafter. "Therefore, the one who is patient and persevering, and leaves his accounting to Allah, will not leave this world until Allah has pleased him by vanquishing his enemies in addition to the rewards that he will get in the hereafter."32

29. In Ma'ani al-Akhbar: In his narration from Ahmad ibn Abi 'Abdillah from his father in a hadith attributed to the Noble Prophet (S) that he said: Jibra'il (as) came and said: "O Prophet of Allah! Allah has sent me to you with a gift which He has not given to anyone before you." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "What is it?" Jibra'il said: "It is patience; and something better than it." He said: "And what is that?"

Jibra'il said: "It is pleasure; and something better than it." He asked: "And what is that?" Jibra'il said: "It is abstinence; and that which is better than it." He said: "What is it?" Jibra'il said: "It is sincerity; and better than that." He said: "And what is it?" Jibra'il said: "It is certainty; and better than it." The Holy Prophet (S) said: I said: "What is that O Jibra'il!" He said: "The way to attain all of them is to trust in Allah (SwT)."

I said: "O Jibra'il! What is the meaning of trusting in Allah?" He said: "Knowing that the creation can neither cause any harm nor benefit and can neither give nor withhold (anything), and having no hope (of getting anything) from the creation. When the servant reaches this state, he does not do anything save for Allah, and he does not desire nor fear anyone but Allah and he does not set his hopes on anyone except Allah. This is the meaning of trusting in Allah."

The Holy Prophet (S) said: I said: "O Jibra'il! What is the meaning of patience?" He replied: "One must be forbearing and patient in times of affliction as he is in times of joy and in poverty as he is in wealth and in calamity as he is in comfort; without complaining of his condition because of what has befallen

I said: "And what is the meaning of contentment?" He said: "To be satisfied with whatever comes to him in this world, being content with whatever little he has and thanking (Allah) for it."

I said: "And what is the meaning of pleasure?" Jibra'il said: "It means that one should never be displeased with his Master, whether he gets (the comforts) of the world or not, and not to be pleased with one's few good deeds."

I said: "And what is the meaning of abstinence?" He said: "That one loves whatever His creator loves and hates whatever He hates and is very careful about what is lawful and does not (even) glance at what is unlawful; for what is lawful is to be accounted for and what is unlawful will entail punishment. He is merciful to all Muslims as he is merciful to himself. He avoids useless speech just as he avoids a corpse with an intensely foul smell. He avoids the possessions and embellishments of this world as he keeps away from the fire – that it should not cover him. He has no great hopes or desires and he always remembers his death."

I said: "O Jibra'il! And what is the meaning of sincerity?" He said: "A sincere person is one who does not ask for anything from people until he obtains it (himself) and whenever he obtains it, he is pleased with it. If something extra remains with him, he gives it in the way of Allah. By not asking for anything from others, he has shown that he is truly a servant of Allah. If he obtains what he wants, he becomes happy, and he is pleased with Allah, and Allah § the Almighty is pleased with him. When he gives from it in the way of Allah, he has reached the stage of fully relying on his Lord."

I said: "And what is certainty?" He said: "A man with certainty performs actions for the sake of Allah as though he sees Him. Even if he does not see Allah, he knows that Allah sees him; and he is certain that what is coming to him (by the will of Allah) will not pass him by, and what is not meant to be for him will not come to him. These are all branches of trust in Allah and abstinence (from worldly pleasures)."33

30. In the book of 'Asim ibn Hamid al-Hannat: From Abi Basir who said: I heard Aba Ja'far (as) saying: An angel came to the Holy Prophet (S) and said: "O Muhammad! Your lord sends His salutation to you and says: If you wish I will place for you pebble of gold in an area the size of Makkah." So he (as) raised his head to the heavens and said: "O my Lord! I eat one day so I praise you and I remain hungry another day so I invoke you."34

31. In al–Kafi: Narrated from Muhammad ibn Muslim who said: I heard Aba Ja'far (as) mentioning that an angel came to the Noble Prophet (S) and said: "Allah has given you the choice between being a humble servant or a wealthy king." So he looked at Jibra'il (as) who made a sign with his hand to him to choose humility. So he said: "(I choose to be) a humble servant messenger." So the sent angel said: "Even if (you choose to be a king) it will in no way reduce your status in front of your Lord." He (as) said: And he had the keys to the treasures of the earth.35

32. In Nahj al-Balagha: He (as) said: "So follow your Prophet, the noble, the pure ... He took the least (share) from this world and did not take a full glance at it. Of all the people of the world, he was the least sated and the most empty of stomach. The world was offered to him but he refused to accept it. When he knew that Allah, the Glorified, hated a thing, he too hated it; that Allah held a thing low, he too held it low; that Allah held a thing small, he too held it small. If we love what Allah and His Prophet hate and hold great what Allah and His Prophet hold small that would be enough isolation from Allah and transgression of His commandments. The Holy Prophet used to eat on the ground, and sat like a slave. He repaired his shoes with his own hands and patched his clothes with his own hands. He would ride on an unsaddled donkey and would seat someone behind him.

If there was a curtain on his door with pictures on it, he would say to one of his wives: "O so-and-so! Take it away out of my sight because if I look at it I recall the world and its allurements." Thus, he distanced his heart from this world and removed its remembrance from his mind. He wished that its allurements should remain hidden from his eyes so that he should not take wealth from it, nor regard it a place of stay and hope to live in it. Consequently he removed it from his mind, distanced it from his heart and kept it hidden from his eyes, just as he who hates a thing would hate to look at it or to hear about it.36

33. In al-Kafi: Narrated from Talha ibn Zayd from Abi 'Abdillah (as) who said: There was nothing in this world that pleased the Holy Prophet (S) more than remaining hungry and fearing Allah.37

Note: This has also been narrated from Hisham and others from the Imam (as).38

- 34. From al-Tabarsi in al-Ihtijaj: From Musa ibn Ja'far, from his father, from his fathers, from Husayn ibn 'Ali (as), in a lengthy narrative mentioning the condition of the Holy Prophet (S): He would cry out of the fear of Allah until his prayer mat would become wet (from his tears) despite not having committed any sin.39
- 35. In al-Manaqib: He (S) would cry until he became unconscious. Someone asked him: "Has Allah not forgiven all your sins, of past and future?" He replied: "Should I not be a thankful servant?" And this was the same condition of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as), his successor, when he worshipped.40
- 36. From al-Daylami in al-Irshad: It is narrated that a sound of weeping, like the sound of boiling from a cooking-pot would be heard from Prophet Ibrahim (as) when he prayed out of fear of Allah (SwT) and the Holy Prophet (S) was the same.41
- 37. From Shaykh Abi al-Fattah in his Tafsir: From Abi Sa'id al-Khudri who said: When the verse

"Remember God with frequent remembrance" (Surat al-Ahzab (33): 41)

was revealed, the Noble Prophet (S) became so engrossed in the remembrance of Allah that the infidels said he had become insane.42

- 38. In al-Kafi: Narrated from Zayd al-Shahham from Abi 'Abdillah (as) who said: The Prophet (S) used to seek repentance seventy times a day. I asked: did he say: 'Astaghfirullaha wa Atubu Ilayh' (I seek repentance from Allah and turn to Him)? He replied: No, but he used to say: 'Atubu Ilallah' (I turn to Allah). I said: The Prophet (S) used to repent and not repeat and we repent and repeat (our sins), so he (as) said: Allah is the provider of succor.43
- 39. Also: Narrated from Talha ibn Zayd from Abi 'Abdillah (as): The Holy Prophet (S) never used to stand up from a gathering, even when almost everyone had departed, until he had sought repentance from Allah (SwT) twenty-five times.44
- 40. In Makarim al-Akhlaq, quoting from the book al-Nubuwwah: From Amir al-Mu'minin (as) who, when describing the Holy Prophet (S) would say: He was the most openhanded, the most valiant, the most truthful, and the most loyal in fulfilling his obligation, the most soft-hearted and the noblest of all people. When a person saw him for the first time he was awed by his presence and when one mingled with him he would (immediately) love him. I have never seen anyone like him (S) before him nor after him.45
- 41.From al-Shaykh al-Tusi in al-Amali: Narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Zayd ibn 'Ali from al-Rid'a from his fathers (as) who said: The Holy Prophet (S) said: You must adopt an honorable character, for Allah (SwT) has sent me with it. From the honorable character is for one to show forgiveness to the one who wrongs him, to give the one who deprives him, to keep contact with the one who cuts him off and to visit the sick one who does not visit him (when he is sick).46
- 42. In al-Kafi: From 'Isa ibn 'Abdillah ibn 'Umar ibn 'Ali from his father (as) who said: It was from the attestation of the Holy Prophet (S) to say: No, and I seek forgiveness from Allah. 47
- 43. In Makarim al–Akhlaq: From Ibn 'Umar who said: The pleasure and displeasure of the Noble Prophet (S) could be seen in his face. When he was pleased, it would be apparent by the brightness of his face, and when he became angry, the color of his face paled and became darkened.48
- 44. In al-Kafi: Narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Arafah from Abi 'Abdillah (as) who said: The Holy Prophet (S) said (to his companions): "Should I not inform you of the one from among you who is most similar to me?" They said: "Yes, O Prophet of Allah!" He said: "The one with the best character from you, the most soft-hearted towards the people, the most beneficent to his relatives, the most intense in his love for his brothers in faith, the most patient with regards to the truth, the one who represses his anger the most, the most forgiving and the most intense in his upholding justice, in pleasure and anger 49
- 45. From al-Ghazali in al-Ihya': When he (S) became very excited he would touch his noble beard frequently.50
- 46. Also: He said: And he (S) was the most generous of all men. Neither a dinar nor a dirham was left with him in the evening. If night fell and he had something extra and did not find anyone to give it to, he did not return to his home until he was able to give it to the one who needed it. He did not take from

what was given to him by Allah except his annual provisions, from the dates and barley that were easiest for him to get, and he gave the rest in the way of Allah. He was not asked for a thing but that he gave it. Then (after giving away the excess) he returned to his annual provisions and preferred to give from it. Even when it was possible that he would require it before the end of the year if nothing (else) was to come to him ... he would enforce the truth, even if it meant a loss for himself or his companions ... he would walk alone among his enemies, without a bodyguard ... he was not moved by any of the worldly affairs ... He sat with the poor and ate with them. He honored the people of virtue for their good character and he won the hearts of the noble ones by respecting them.

He kept close ties with his near relatives without preferring them to the one who was better than them (in virtue). He did not oppress anyone and accepted the excuse of the one who asked for pardon ... and he had a male and female slave but never ate better food or wore better clothes than them. Not a moment of his time was passed without doing an action for Allah, or (doing) that which was necessary for the probity of his soul. He would visit the gardens of his companions. He never looked down on a poor man due to his poverty or misfortune, nor did he fear a king because of his power; (rather) he would urge them equally to Allah.51

- 47. Also: He said: Of all men he (S) was the least angry and the easiest to please. He was the most caring, courteous and helpful towards the people.52
- 48. Also: He said: When he (S) rejoiced and was pleased, he was the best of the pleased ones. If he preached, he preached seriously; if he got angry and he never got angry except for the sake of Allah nothing could withstand his anger. This was how he was in all his affairs. When some difficulty came upon him, he entrusted it to Allah and renounced his (own) strength and power, and sought guidance from Allah.53
- 49. In al-Kafi: Narrated from Salam ibn al-Mustanir from Abi Ja'far (as) who said: The Prophet (S) said: Verily for every act of worship there is eagerness (in the beginning) then it becomes languid. So the one whose eagerly performed worship is in accordance to my *sunnah* has found guidance, and the one who acts against my *sunnah* has strayed and his deeds are in ruin. As for me, I pray and I sleep, I fast and I open my fast, I laugh and I cry. So the one who forsakes my ways and my *sunnah* is not from me.54

Note: The narrations on this subject are numerous. We have quoted one or two narrations from each topic. However, there are many more narrations on detailed aspects (of his (S) character).

- 1. This is indicative of strength. (Tr.)
- 2. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:155, Fayd' al-Qadir 5:76-79, Wa`sail al-Wusul Ila Shama`il al-Rasul: 37-47
- 3. Managib Ale Abi Talib 1:157
- 4. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:157, Fayd' al-Qadir 5:80
- 5. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:158
- 6. Ibid.
- 7. Ibid.
- 8. al-Faqih 1:122, Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:158

- 9. Managib Ale Abi Talib 1:158, Bihar al-Anwar 16:191
- 10. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:158
- 11. Ibid.
- 12. al-Faqih 1:129, Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:158
- 13. Bihar al-Anwar 16:172 quoting from Qisas al-Anbiya`: 287, Makarim al-Akhlaq: 24
- 14. Basa'ir al-Darajat: 420, no. 8
- 15. al-Khara`ij wal-Jara`ih 1:32, no. 29, Bihar al-Anwar 16:174, Kamal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'mah 1:165, and in the book of 'Abd al-Malik: 99
- 16. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:124, more about this is narrated in al-Khara`ij: 221
- 17. al-Kafi 2:615, and al-Tabarsi has narrated the same thing in al-Ihtijaj: 204
- 18. Ma'ani al-Akhbar: 83, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rid'a, 1:246, al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah of Ibn Kathir 2:601
- 19. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 11
- 20. Bihar al-Anwar 16:161
- 21. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 24, 'Awarif al-Ma'arif: 224
- 22. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 19, Majma' al-Bayan 5:69 Surat al-Tawbah (9)
- 23. Ihya 'Ulum al-Din 2:367
- 24. Manaqib Ale Abi Talib 1:125, Makarim al-Akhlaq: 24
- 25. al-Mahasin: 192, no. 8
- 26. We did not find this in al-Tahdhib, but we found it in Amali al-Shaykh al-Tusi 2:209, al-Fiqh al-Rid'a: 353, Mishkat al-Anwar: 243, 'Awarif al-Ma'arif: 211
- 27. al-Faqih 3:554
- 28. Ma'ani al-Akhbar: 191, al-Khisal: 431, Tuhf al-'Uqul: 362, al-Kafi 2:56 (and in it is `He distinguished His prophets),

Amali al-Saduq, 184

- 29. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 19
- 30. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 18, Nahj al-Balaghah: 520, Kashf al-Ghummah 1:9
- 31. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 17
- 32. al-Kafi 2:88
- 33. Ma'ani al-Akhbar: 260, 'Uddat al-Da'i: 94
- 34. al-Usul al-Sittata 'Ashar: 37, Makarim al-Akhlaq: 24, al-Kafi 8:131, Jami' al-Akhbar: 295, Amali al-Tusi 2:144, Bihar al-Anwar 16:283 and 70: 318
- 35. al-Kafi 2:122 and 8:131, Amali al-Saduq: 365, Bihar al-Anwar 18:334
- 36. Nahj al-Balaghah: 227 Sermon 160, Makarim al-Akhlaq: 9, Bihar al-Anwar 16:285
- 37. al-Kafi 2:129
- 38. Ibid., 8:129
- 39. al-Ihtijaj: 223 in the debate of Imam 'Ali (as) with the Jews.
- 40. al-Mustadrak 11:247, Irshad al-Qulub: 91, and we did not find it in al-Manaqib.
- 41. Irshad al-Qulub: 105, 'Uddat al-Da'i: 137
- 42. Rawhul Jinan wa Ruhul Jinan (Tafsir of Abi al-Fattuh al-Razi) 1:375 Surat al-Baqarah: 147
- 43. al-Kafi 2:438, 'Uddat al-Da'i: 250
- 44. al-Kafi 2:504, 'Uddat al-Da'i: 250
- 45. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 18, Bihar al-Anwar 16: 194 Section 8 Hadith no. 33
- 46. Amali al-Shaykh al-Tusi 2:92
- 47. al-Kafi 7:463
- 48. Makarim al-Akhlaq: 19
- 49. al-Kafi 2:240, Tuhf al-'Uqul: 48
- 50. lhya` 'Ulum al-Din 2:387
- 51. Ihya` 'Ulum al-Din 2:360, al-Manaqib 1:145, al-Mahajjat al-Bayd'a` 4:123
- 52. Ihya` 'Ulum al-Din 2:369

53. Ibid. – The author has an explanation on this hadith, refer to al–Mizan 6:311 – Surat al–Ma`idah (5): 116–120
54. al–Kafi 2:85

Source URL:

https://www.al-islam.org/sunan-nabi-sayyid-muhammad-husayn-tabatabai/chapter-1-character-and-moral-traits-holy-prophet#comment-0