

Moral Governance of Prophet Muhammad Part 4: Culture & Education



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This text focuses on the Prophet's own ethical conduct as the perfect exemplar, and his efforts to eradicate differences based on tribe, gender, race, and social class to create a system grounded on principles in which all believers have equal rights.

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Abstract

Prophet Muhammad was sent to establish a community based on moral principles, and in doing so, he set out to perfect people's ethics. During his leadership, he established a comprehensive system of laws in which the duties of each person was taken into consideration to form an independent and unified nation. He encouraged public participation and eradicated structures of idol worship in Mecca by replacing them with places of worship for Muslims.

In part II, Prophet Muhammad's ethical management of the economy in the Islamic state was described. Part III studied his peace-making strategies, management of war, and dealing with opposition within and outside Medina, such as his judicial and political approaches, his emphasis on the use of consultation, and leniency and kindness towards war captives.

This last part focuses on the Prophet's own ethical conduct as the perfect exemplar, and his efforts to eradicate differences based on tribe, gender, race, and social class to create a system grounded on principles in which all believers have equal rights.

Ethical Management of Culture and Training

In Pre-Islamic Arabia, people generally followed their selfish motives and interests, and due to the close relationship of the individual and their tribes, the motives of each tribe were important. If consideration was given to matters of ethics, training, and humanitarianism, this was restricted to the interests of the tribe. To transform this community into one where it was concerned with the welfare of others for the sake of God was a task that required determination. Prophet Muhammad took all efforts to remove the narrow outlook of the Arabs and introduce them to morals free from personal, tribal, and racial interests. Despite being immensely difficult, he was ultimately successful in his task, and was able to bring forth a series of noble people who became exemplars in their own right.

All of the Prophet's activities were undertaken for this very objective: the ethical and divine nurturing of human beings. Prophet Muhammad himself a symbol of ethics, was naturally considered to be the ideal example of moral behavior. Furthermore, at every relevant stage and when confronted with different circumstances, he provided guidance and procedures on how to best deal with those life events.

In Medina, the first step he took was to stabilize and establish a monotheistic outlook. The ethical consequence of this was that the former frameworks where superiority was determined by factors including age, gender, wealth, tribal authority, and race, which in the past had been the root causes of discrimination and injustice and stood against the authority of God. Whenever he settled in any area, it was his practice to immediately eradicate such manifestations of polytheism.

After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet declared, "No one should have an idol in their home; and anyone who has any must destroy them." Following the success in Medina, the Prophet exerted his

methods in Mecca. Whilst standing on the head of the idol Hubal, he ordered all other idols to be broken. Zubayr ibn 'Awwam turned his face to Abu Sufyan ibn Harb and said, "O! Abu Sufyan! The idol Hubal has been broken while you were so proud of it in the battle of Uhud!" Abu Sufyan replied, "Leave this matter. I realize that if another god existed besides the God of Muhammad, then the situation would have been different."¹

There was no one from the Quraysh who did not possess an idol in his home. Following this order, the Muslims began to break the idols.² The Prophet dispatched individuals as well as the Muslim armies to various regions to convey the message of Islam to all tribes, and his first instruction was to destroy idols and manifestations of polytheism. Khalid ibn Walid and thirty others were dispatched to 'Arnah to destroy the temples dedicated to 'Uzza,³ and Tufayl ibn 'Amr Dusi was sent to destroy the idol Dhul Kaffayn and the idol of the tribe of 'Amr ibn Humamah.⁴ Sa'a ibn Zayd Ashhali was sent to destroy the idol Manat, and 'Amr 'As to ruin the idol Suwa, the idol of the Hudhayl tribe.

After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet stood atop the Ka'bah and announced the death of the barbaric, inhuman, and unethical culture and principles of the pre-Islamic age, and invited people towards morality and Islamic thought. He said:

"Any blood and property that you have possessed and all false pre-Islamic superiority that you deemed to have, have now disappeared. God has removed the pre-Islamic arrogance and the boasting over one's ancestors. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, and all Muslims are brothers of one other. All of you are from dust and the dearest one to God is the one who is most pious. All Muslims are equal. The weak and strong from among them benefit equally from the spoils of war. To fight either in the left wing or right wing does not affect the rewards of the battle. The Muslims' blood is honourable and must be protected. Muslims must be united and coordinated against their enemy. No Muslim should be killed in front of a disbeliever and no allied person should be harmed whilst the treaty is valid."⁵

The Prophet also fought harshly against superstitions, and would not pay heed to any unjustified demands and what was not in harmony with the principles of Islam. The Arabs worshipped a green tree named Dhat Anwat as they deemed it holy; they would gather around it and made a sacrifice to it once per year, before entering Mecca. The people performing Hajj would hang their cloaks from it to derive blessing, and would then proceed to Mecca. On the journey to the battle of Hunayn, the Muslim army passed by this tree.

Some requested the Prophet to appoint a tree like Dhat Anwat within Islam, but the Prophet said, 'God is the Greatest' [Allahu Akbar] three times to show his own dissatisfaction of their request, and then stated, "The tribe of Moses also did such a thing with their prophet."⁶ And in the battle of Tabuk, the Prophet ordered the Muslim army to open the glass beads from their camels and horses. The Arabs would hang such beads from the necks of their mounts to prevent harm by the power of the evil eye.⁷

The Prophet's main objective was to encourage people to submit to the truth, and he was prepared to

pay any price to achieve it. He would not force anyone to accept Islam, whether in Mecca or even in Medina,⁸ despite having the power to do so. Some of the pagans did not accept Islam for a long time and together with the Jews of Medina they harassed the Prophet and his companions;⁹ this is also mentioned in the Qur'an.¹⁰ Some persons converted to Islam during the battle of Uhud¹¹ and some others after the conquest of Hunayn in 9 and 10 AH. The only restriction upon the pagans came with the revelation of Surat al Tawbah, which forbade them from partaking in the Hajj ceremony.

On the journey to Hudaybiyyah, the Prophet met groups of Bani Nahad in the region Ruha and invited them to Islam, though they did not accept. They then sent some milk to the Prophet, whereupon he refused to accept it, saying, "I do not accept gifts from pagans." He ordered the Muslims to purchase the milk instead.¹²

The Prophet was very pleased when anyone accepted Islam. For example, Khalid ibn Walid who previously played a significant role in defeating the Muslims in the Battle of Uhud, narrates: "I put on my fine clothes and became ready to visit the Prophet. My brother saw me and said, "Hurry up! The Prophet has been informed that you want to become a Muslim and he is gladly waiting for you." When I saw him from afar I saw that he was smiling. I stood and greeted him with his title as a prophet and he returned my greeting with a smiling face. I said, "I testify that there is no god but Allah and you are the Apostle of Allah." The Prophet said, "I knew you were smart and intelligent and hoped that it would lead you into righteousness and goodness."¹³

'Amr ibn 'As has recounted his own acceptance of Islam: "I paid allegiance to the Prophet on the condition that my past sins are forgiven and that I never return to them. After this, the Prophet would never treat us differently to his other companions in any matter."¹⁴ The Prophet would say to new Muslims, "I prefer for every one of you that follows me what I prefer for myself; and in any case, we are together in our understanding of what is lawful and unlawful. I swear by God, never will I lie to you, and surely God loves you."¹⁵

Furat ibn Hayyan was the guide of the trade caravan of the Quraysh to Sham, and took unknown and small roads to avoid being captured by the Muslims. When the Muslims overcame them, Furat – a wrongdoer worthy of punishment – was brought to the Prophet. He was promised that if he converts to Islam his life will be protected. He then became Muslim and was not killed.¹⁶ The objective of the Prophet was to not seek revenge and cause bloodshed, especially while in a position of power.

After the Battle of Ghabah, when the Prophet reached Medina, Abu Dharr's wife who had rode on the Prophet's she-camel, Quswa, entered the city. She came to the Prophet and delivered news from the enemy to him and then said, "O Apostle of God! I have vowed that if God saves me by this she-camel, I will kill her and eat from her liver and hump." The Prophet replied, "What a bad reward you have appointed for this animal! Is the reward of what has saved you, is that you kill it? Your vow is not valid regarding that which you do not own and that which is a sin against God."¹⁷

The Prophet's acceptance of new Muslims and leniency towards them resulted in their deep attraction to Islam. In one instance, 'Abdullah Dhu al-Bijadin, who had a loud voice, was standing in the mosque reciting the Qur'an loudly as others were preparing to embark on the expedition to Tabuk. Omar protested to the Prophet that this man's loud voice was preventing others from reciting the Qur'an. The Prophet replied, "Let him be, for he has left his own lands to migrate toward God and His Messenger and assist them."¹⁸

Representatives of the pagans of Thaqif approached the Prophet in the mosque to speak with him about Islam. They were spoken to and greeted in the way of pagans, with "Good day". The others in the mosque at that time questioned the Prophet as to whether the pagans can enter the mosque. Considering this event as an opportunity of guidance to the pagans, the Prophet said, "There is no problem. Nothing can make clean earth ritually impure."¹⁹

Some representatives from Thaqif came to the Prophet to learn more about Islam. He ordered his people: "Make shade for them in the mosque so they are protected from the heat of the sun." They were also given accommodation. With this opportunity, they were able to hear the voices of the Muslims worship and recitation of the Qur'an in the night. At the times of the obligatory prayers, they would observe the straight lines of Muslims in prayer, and would listen to the Prophet's sermons.²⁰ Whilst the Prophet was lenient and accommodating in order to pave the way for guidance, he would not allow any negotiation in discharging the mandatory laws of God, and in abandoning any unlawful practices.

The representatives of Bani Thaqif asked the Prophet what would happen to the idol Lat if they accepted Islam. The Prophet said, "It must be destroyed." They requested the Prophet not to destroy it for three years. He refused. They then requested two years, but he did not accept. They then asked for one year. Again, he did not accept. They asked for one month, and still the Prophet refused. Although they were frightened of the reaction of other people, they submitted and accepted Islam.

The Bani Thaqif also asked the Prophet to exempt them from praying. He said, "There is no goodness in a religion that does not have prayer." Finally, they accepted all of Islam's regulations and fasted the remaining days of the Month of Ramadan. It is interesting that the Prophet appointed Abu Sufyan to destroy the idol Lat. This had two effects: firstly, Abu Sufyan was given the opportunity to destroy his own deep attachment to idols; secondly, because of Abu Sufyan's reputation and respect in society, the laypeople of Bani Thaqif did not react strongly to his act of destroying Lat.²¹

After the conquest of Mecca, Shaybah ibn 'Uthman, one of the hypocrites, accompanied the Muslim army for the Battle of Hunayn toward the tribe of Hawazin. He intended to kill the Prophet at a suitable opportunity to avenge the deaths of his uncle and father who had been killed in the Battle of Uhud. Upon finding a suitable opportunity to attack the Prophet, the Prophet called him and said, "O! Shaybah! Come near me." He then placed his own hand on Shaybah's chest and said, "O Lord! Keep Satan away from him." Shaybah was transformed. He devoted his heart and mind towards the Prophet, who knew of his evil intention, yet still treated him with kindness. Then the Prophet told him, "O Shaybah! Fight against

the disbelievers."²²

In the Battle of Ghatfan, the Prophet kept aloof from his own companions. A man named Da'thur intended to attack and kill the Prophet when he saw him without any of his supporters. He drew his sword over the Prophet and said, "O Muhammad! Who will protect your life against me?" The Prophet replied, "God." By the grace of God, Da'thur became anxious after seeing the Prophet's confidence, courage, and belief and the sword fell from his hand. The Prophet then took his sword and said, "Now who will protect you against me?" Da'thur testified to the unity of God and the apostleship of the Prophet. The Prophet gave him back his sword. He swore to abandon any enmity with the Prophet, and went back to his tribe and invited them to Islam.²³

The Prophet's patience with those who took time to accept Islam is particularly noteworthy. In the foray of Nakhlah, one of the pagans named Hakam ibn Kaysan, who intended to kill the Prophet, was captured by the Muslims. When he was brought to the Prophet, he invited him to Islam and had a long talk with him. Omar ibn Khattab protested to the Prophet and said, 'Do you invite him to Islam? He will not accept Islam even if you talk with him forever; let me cut his neck to send him to his place in hell!' The Prophet did not heed these comments and continued to guide him towards Islam. He became a devout Muslim and finally became a martyr in the way of God in the Battle of Bi'r-e Ma'unah. The Prophet said about him: "If I had obeyed you and killed him, he would have left this world without achieving felicity."²⁴

The Prophet never probed into the degrees of faith of others, and indeed there is no way of discovering anyone's inner nature. Osamah has narrated: "After I killed Nahik ibn Mirdas, I became extremely upset about it, and I had no strength to do anything, not even for eating food. When I came to Medina, the Prophet embraced me and said: "O Osamah! Tell me the news of the war." Osamah described it and the killing of Nahik ibn Mirdas. The Prophet stated: "O! Osamah! Did you kill him while he had said 'There is no god except Allah'?" Osamah made excuses and replied, "He said this statement just to save himself." The Prophet then asked, "Did you split open his heart and find out whether he is a truthful person or a liar?" Osamah said, "From now on I will not kill anyone who says 'There is no god except Allah'." Osamah would also say: "I wish I had not become Muslim up to that day."²⁵

When the Prophet and the Muslim army were returning from the battle of Tabuk, the Prophet said to his companions, "Do not speak with those who refused to participate in the holy war unless I permit you." The Muslims obeyed his command and this behaviour caused those offenders to come to the Prophet and present their excuses. But the Prophet and the believers continued to turn away from them. After some time, the Prophet treated them with kindness, forgave them, and accepted their excuses whilst leaving their inner intentions to God.

Three members of this group Hilal ibn Ummayah, Ka'b ibn Malik and Murawah ibn Rabi refused to offer any excuses. The hypocrites were approaching these three men and encouraged them to be offensive towards the Prophet. After a while, the Prophet allowed the Muslims to associate with all the offenders

except those three. After some time, they greatly regretted their actions. They sincerely repented and remorsed, and God revealed verses 117–119 of Surah Tawbah, which confirmed their faith and honesty. The community of Muslims congratulated them and the Prophet warmly received them.

Ka'b wanted to donate all his own property in the way of God and His Apostle in appreciation of the verse that had been revealed about him, but the Prophet said to him, "It is better for you to keep your property for yourself." He said, "I will only keep my share of the spoils and I grant the rest of my property." The Prophet refused to agree, whereupon Ka'b said, "I grant half of it." The Prophet said, "No." Ka'b responded, "I grant one-third of it." The Prophet then agreed. He did not take material advantage from that moment of spiritual excitement, and instead acted justly according to Ka'b's decision.²⁶ This story illustrates a remarkable manner of the Prophet in educating and transforming people by the Prophet, whereby he not only taught a lesson, but also spiritually purified and promoted the wrongdoer.

Social Management Based on Ethics

The most important factor in the nurturing of the Islamic community was the personal conduct of the Prophet. As much as the Prophet's power increased, his mercy and forgiveness similarly increased. Through his conduct, the Prophet taught people merits such as freedom, mercy and kindness, philanthropy, forgiveness, good-naturedness, and humility. The people felt comfortable and free in the presence of the Prophet.

Once, Abi Lubabah ibn Abd al-Mandhar was arguing with an orphan regarding the ownership of a date palm. When the Prophet judged that it belonged to Abi Lubabah, the orphan cried and complained. So the Prophet said to Abi Lubabah, "Grant it to me so that I give it to the orphan and God will grant you similar in paradise." Abi Lubabah refused to accept. Ibn Dahdahah came to the Prophet and said, 'If I buy this date palm and grant it to the orphan, will I have similar in paradise?' The Prophet said, "Yes." Ibn Dahdahah came to Abi Lubabah and said, "I buy this tree against my palm grove." And he accepted. Soon after, Abi Lubabah became a martyr in the Battle of Uhud.²⁷

The Prophet was very attached to his companions and would express his fondness to them in various ways. In the Battle of Khaybar, when Mahmud ibn Muslimah fought along with the Muslims, the scorching heat became so unbearable, especially with the armour he was wearing, that he sat under a fence to benefit from its shade, and imagined that it would be free from any soldiers because it was used to house horses and goods. At this moment, one of the pagans named Marhab threw a millstone toward Mahmud ibn Muslimah and severely wounded his forehead and face as such the skin of his forehead was suspended on his face. The Prophet then returned the skin, cured his wound, and closed it with a cloth.²⁸

In the Battle of Uhud, when all were dispersed, five persons from amongst the Ansar came to assist the Prophet and drove the enemies back with determined fighting. One of them was 'Ammarah ibn Ziyad who was injured after fighting bravely. When 'Ammarah passed away, he did so while being embraced

by the Prophet and resting on his leg.²⁹

On his last night, Sa'd ibn Ma'adh's wound bled without him knowing. The Prophet came to visit him along with some of his companions and saw Sa'd wrapped in a white cover. He sat beside him, embraced his head, and said, "O God! He struggled in your way and assisted Your Apostle, receive his life in the way that you receive the life of your best servants." Sa'd woke up and said, "You have surely executed your divine mission." The Prophet left and Sa'd died after some hours.³⁰

The Muslims bathed and shrouded the corpse of Sa'd ibn Ma'adh, the loyal companion of the Prophet, and placed him into a coffin. They then witnessed the Prophet carry a corner of the coffin on his shoulders. 'Aishah said, "I saw the Prophet who was moving in front of Sa'd's coffin."³¹ The Prophet buried Sa'd ibn Ma'adh himself. After the grave was dug, he placed the corpse in the grave and prayed for him. The people present were so many that the cemetery of Baqi' was full of men.³²

Mazani was a fighter who had said "yes" many times to the call of the Prophet and would fight amongst the enemy and rout them. After his martyrdom, the Prophet personally wrapped him in a shroud, placed him in the grave, and buried him, even though he himself was wounded and could hardly stand on his feet.³³

The Prophet ordered the Muslims to bury the corpses in large and well-formed graves, advising them to bury first those who were familiar with the Qur'an, and then the other the dead.³⁴ He would not forget the martyrs, and once a year he would visit the grave of Hamzah and other Muslims who were martyred in the Battle of Uhud.³⁵

He also did not like extravagance in mourning. On the day after the Battle of Uhud, a group of men and women came to the Prophet's home to continue mourning for those that fell at Uhud, especially Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle. But the Prophet said, 'This act is not correct and I do not ask for such acts.' He strictly forbade them from excessive wailing.³⁶

Before the Battle of Ta'if, when the Prophet was looking at the grave of Abi 'Uhayhah ibn Sa'id ibn 'As, Abu Bakr said, "May God curse this grave's occupier who had enmity toward God and His Apostle." The two sons of Abi 'Uhayhah said about their own father: "May God curse him, he was neither generous towards guests, nor did he fight against injustice." Hearing this, the Prophet said, "To abuse the dead is a source of annoyance to the living. If you want to curse the pagans, curse them in a general manner."³⁷

The Prophet not only despised abusiveness toward the dead but also toward his own enemy. After the Battle of Uhud, Abu Qutadah observed the deep sadness of the Prophet at the killing and mutilation of Hamzah, and began to curse the Quraysh. The Prophet asked him three times to be silent. On the fourth time, he said, "I will summon you in God's presence because of your abusiveness, O Abu Qutadah! The people of Quraysh are trustworthy people. Were it not for their arrogance and hostility toward their own Prophet they would have reached a high status in the presence of God." Abu Qutadah explained that he said what he said upon seeing the Prophet's upset and the Prophet forgave him.³⁸

The Prophet was very humble and against arrogance. Those who met the Prophet for the first time were not able to distinguish him from his companions because his conduct and appearance did not resemble any superiority, pride, or haughtiness.³⁹ He would speak carefully,⁴⁰ would offer his hand to the one who was met or greeted him, and would not be the first of the two to release his hand. Whilst sitting, his knee would not stretch beyond the knee of his companion.⁴¹ He would also warmly greet children.

When during the middle of the Battle of Uhud, the sword of Abu Dujajah, one of the commanders of the Muslim army became blunt; the Prophet sharpened it and returned it to him. When he received it from the Prophet, he then walked proudly amongst the two armies. And when Prophet observed that, he said, 'Walking in this manner is not liked by God, unless it is done in a war situation.'⁴²

Once, when Abu 'Abas ibn Jubair went to the Prophet and said, "I do not have enough money for my daily expenses," the Prophet gave him a piece of clothing. Abu 'Abbas sold it for eight dirhams, and bought some dates for himself with two dirhams, laid aside two dirhams for his family's expenses, and bought a slave with the remaining four dirhams.

One night on the way to Khaybar, the Prophet saw someone wearing striped clothing which was shining bright like the sun. He enquired, "Who is he?" He was told, "He is Abu 'Abbas." The Prophet ordered his companions to take hold of him. They held him, and he began to imagine he must have done something wrong and perhaps a verse of the Qur'an had been revealed about it. He said, "I have not committed any crime." The Prophet said, "Why do you move in front of others and do not walk along with them? What did you do with the piece of clothing I gave to you?" He narrated what had happened, and the Prophet smiled and said, "O Abu 'Abbas! If you and your poor friends remain healthy and live for a short time more, then your wealth will increase and you will leave much wealth for your family." Abu 'Abbas later said, "What the holy Prophet said, happened."⁴³

The Prophet was always smiling, even in difficult situations.⁴⁴ After the conquest of Mecca, Sa'd ibn Abi Surah would move away whenever he saw the Prophet. When the Prophet observed this, he smiled and said, "Does he not know that he can come and pay allegiance to us?" He was told, "He knows, but he fears when he remembers his own past sins." The Prophet stated, "Accepting Islam forgives the past sins." This news reached Sa'd and he along with other people came to the presence of the Prophet to pay him respects.⁴⁵

Abu Dharr narrates: "We had slept in our tent after we had watered and milked the Prophet's she-camels.'Uyyanah attacked us with forty mounted men and stood over us, shouting at us. My son resisted and they killed him. I distanced myself from them and they became unaware of me. I opened the camels' fetters and they began to ride the camels. I then went to the Prophet and told him what had happened, and he smiled."⁴⁶

A woman named Salma says: "I saw one of the milk-giving she-camels of the Prophet at the door of his home and went and told him: 'This is your she-camel.' He happily came out and I saw that the she-

camel's head was in the hand of Ibn Akhi 'Uyyanah. The Prophet asked him: 'What do you say about this?' He replied, 'I have brought this she-camel as a present for you.' The Prophet smiled and took it from 'Uyyanah. After two or three days, the Prophet ordered that some silver should be given to him, but he was not pleased. Salma says, 'I told the Prophet: 'Do you give him money in return for your own she-camel?' He replied, 'Yes, but he is still dissatisfied with me.'" 47

One of the other features of the Prophet was his forgiveness and mercy even towards the worst of his enemies. Abu Sufyan ibn Harith says about the manner of the Prophet's forgiveness: "When I reached Abwa', I covered and hid myself, because Muhammad had announced that I deserved death and I was fearful of being killed. When his horse appeared I placed myself in front of the Prophet, but when he saw me he turned his face to the other side. I went to the other side but he turned his face again. This act was repeated several times. I said, "I will be killed before he casts a look at me." When the Muslims saw the Prophet had turned his face from me, they did the same." 48

Abu Sufyan ibn Harith narrates: "When the Prophet descended at Adhakhir, he had reached the valley of Mecca. At that time, I went to the Prophet's tent. He suddenly looked at me gently, which was gentler than his first look. The women of the family of 'Abd al-Muttalib including my wife went to the Prophet and managed to make the Prophet to some extent kinder with me. The Prophet then left to go toward the Holy Mosque and I was with him, and I did not become separate from him." 49

Regarding Abu Sufyan ibn Harith, Umm Salamah said to the Prophet: "O Apostle of Allah! He is one of your relatives and if he has said anything then all of Quraysh have done so as well. Of course, the Qur'an has mentioned him, but you have forgiven those who had committed crimes more severe than Abu Sufyan and you are more worthy to forgive him than anyone else." The Prophet responded, "I do not need any of those two people." When Abu Sufyan heard this, he said, "I swear by God! If Muhammad does not forgive me, I will grab my son's hand and go to the desert until I die of thirst and hunger. Whereas O Apostle of Allah! You are more patient and generous than others." When his statement was narrated to the Prophet, he forgave him. 50

Before the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet's uncle, 'Abbas entered his tent. He had brought Abu Sufyan, Hakim ibn Hizam, and Badil ibn Wirqa' along with himself, and said to the Prophet, "I have given shelter to them and they want to meet you." The Prophet agreed to meet them and they spent the night in the tent of the Prophet. He asked them for some news, and called them to Islam, stating, "Say: 'There is no god except Allah' and testify that I am Apostle of Allah." Two of them testified, but Abu Sufyan said, 'There is no god except Allah,' and after that he said, "O Muhammad! There is an upset in my heart about this subject, let it be for later." The Prophet said to 'Abbas, "I give them protection. Take them to your tent." 51

After some time, Abu Sufyan testified to the prophetic mission of the Prophet; he narrates: "The Prophet went to the Battle of Hunayn and I was with him. I wished to be killed defending the Prophet and he was looking at me. 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib had held the reins of the Prophet's horse and I was protecting

him from the other side. The Prophet asked, "Who is he?" 'Abbas replied: "He is your brother and cousin, Abu Sufyan ibn Harith. Please be satisfied with him." He said: "I forgive him, may God forgive him for all his enmity towards me." I kissed the Prophet's foot on the horse and he said: "O my brother! For my sake, do not do such a thing."⁵² The Prophet did not like to despise people, even though they may have been his enemies in the past.

On the day of the conquest of Mecca, a thousand armed fighters along with the Prophet entered Mecca. When Sa'd ibn 'Ubada passed in front of Abu Sufyan with the Prophet's flag, he shouted, "O Abu Sufyan! Today is the day of spilling blood, and God will dishonour and degrade the Quraysh." When the Prophet reached Abu Sufyan, Abu Sufyan said to him, "Have you ordered your relatives to be killed? I implore you by God in the matter of your family members, and surely you are the most trustworthy and righteous." The Prophet said, "Today is the day of mercy and kindness. Today is the day in which God will honour the Quraysh with faith."⁵³

After the conquest of Mecca, when the Prophet came out from the Ka'bah, and said, "Thanks be to God, who has fulfilled His promise and assisted His servant." He asked the people who were around the Ka'bah: "What do you say?" They replied, "We have no thought except goodness. You are an honourable brother and nephew, and now you have attained power." The Prophet said, "There is no reproach on you today; may God bless you and He is the Most-merciful."⁵⁴

On the day of the conquest of Mecca, Hind, the daughter of 'Utbah and the wife of Abu Sufyan, Omm Hakim, the wife of 'Ikrimah ibn abi Jahl, Bighum, the wife of Safwan ibn Umayyah and the daughter of Walid ibn Muqayrah, Hind, the wife of 'Amro 'As along with ten women of Quraysh came to the Prophet to convert to Islam. Others were also present there such as Fatimah, the Prophet's daughter, his wife, and also some women of the family of 'Abd al-Muttalib. Hind, who had a veil on her face, began to speak and after thanking God and asking His forgiveness, took off her face veil and introduced herself. The Prophet welcomed her. Then Hind said, "To make your family abject was my only wish, but now my only wish is to honour them." The Prophet recited the Qur'an for them and accepted their oaths of allegiance. Hind requested to pay allegiance by shaking the Prophet's hand, who replied, "I do not shake hands with women."⁵⁵

Following the conquest of Mecca, 'Akramah ibn Abi Jahl ran away, fearful that he would be killed for his crimes. He was second to Abu Sufyan as the most important and stubborn enemy of the Muslims. After the conquest of Mecca, he went to the Tahamah coast to escape by ship. His wife asked the Prophet to ensure his safety. She reached her husband and asked him to become a Muslim, and returned to Mecca with him. The Prophet said to his own companions, "Now 'Akramah comes to us to become Muslim. Never abuse him or his father who had passed away. To abuse the dead is the cause of annoyance to the living, and abuses do not reach the dead."⁵⁶

He came to the Prophet who offered Islam to him and he accepted, saying, "You, even before inviting to Islam, were more truthful and generous than others." After 'Ikrimah accepted Islam, the Prophet told him,

"I grant you what you wish, as I have granted others." 'Ikrimah said, "I want you to forgive me any enmity that I have done to you." The Prophet declared, "O God! Forgive him any enmity he has displayed toward me and any act he has done to try and diminish Your light, and bless him."⁵⁷

After the conquest of Mecca, Ibn az-Ziba'ray had fled to Najran. When he heard the news of the complete conquest of Mecca, he predicted that the Prophet may then attack Najran. He therefore went to the Prophet in order to accept Islam. The Prophet was sitting among a group of his companions. When he saw Ibn az-Ziba'ray, he said, "The light of faith is clear on his face." He came forward and greeted and testified to the unity of God, and the servitude and prophetic mission of the Apostle of Allah. He said, "I was your enemy and provided armies to fight against you. I attempted to fight with you on foot, horse, and camel. I fled and did not take a decision to become Muslim. God inspired in me love for Islam and I realised my depravity and knew that the worship of stones which do not understand anything and to make sacrifices for them is not a wise act." Ibn az-Ziba'ray wanted to know if God had forgiven him or not. The Prophet said, "Islam effaces everyone's past."⁵⁸

After the conquest of Mecca, Wahshi, the killer of Hamzah [leader of the martyrs], escaped to Ta'if. The Prophet issued that he should be killed. The Muslims were seeking to kill him. Wahshi, who had heard about the Prophet's mercy, came to the Prophet along with representatives of Ta'if. When the Prophet saw him, he asked, "Are you Wahshi?" He replied, "Yes, and I have come to become Muslim." The Prophet accepted his allegiance and forgave him, but said to him, "Keep yourself away from my eyes."⁵⁹

Hibar ibn Asrad was one of the obstinate enemies of Islam and Muslims. He hit the back of the Prophet's daughter Zaynab with a spear, causing her to have a miscarriage. The Prophet had issued an order that he should be killed, but forbade that he should be burned, because only God can punish anyone with fire. For a long time the Muslims were not able to arrest him even in the conquest of Mecca. One day, he appeared whilst the Prophet was sitting with his companions in Medina. He was an eloquent man and accepted Islam among his other statements and the Prophet accepted his excuses and prohibited any abuse or aggression against him and forgave him.⁶⁰

The Prophet's behaviour would change his enemies. Abu Bakr narrates, "Suhayl ibn 'Amr had joined the journey of Hajj. I saw him while he had stood near the slaughterhouse, and he brought his camel to the Prophet who sacrificed it with his own hand. When the Prophet asked someone to shave his own head, I saw Suhayl pick up the Prophet's hairs and put them on his eye. I recalled how he could not bear to accept the writing of "In the Name of Allah" and the title of "Apostle of Allah" in the peace treaty of Hudaybiyyah."⁶¹

The Prophet would praise the women of Quraysh because of their kind manners. After the conquest of Mecca, some of the Helpers and Emigrants disputed with one another about the excellences and beauty of the women of the Quraysh. The Prophet spoke in favour of the women of the Quraysh, saying, "You are seeing these women while they are afflicted with the death of their own fathers, brothers, and husbands. The women of Quraysh are the best women because they are more merciful and generous

toward their own children and husbands."⁶²

The Prophet did not like the natural feelings of any person to extinguish through involvement in violent situations. In the Battle of Uhud, when the Prophet was wounded by the pagans, Sa'd ibn abl Waqqas was angered with his own brother who was among the pagan army, and wanted to kill him. When the Prophet was aware of Sa'd's intention, he deemed it better that Sa'd's brother was not to be killed. The Prophet dissuaded Sa'd by saying to him, "Do you wish to kill yourself?"⁶³ The Prophet devoted special attention to the vulnerable strata of society and liked to compensate through his own behaviour and by changing the culture and the historical oppression which had been imposed on them.

Once, a slave from Bani Khuza'ah who was dressed in old clothing had brought presents. The Prophet seated him in front of himself, and asked, "Where have you left your family?" He replied, "In Oajnan and lands around it." The Prophet asked, "What is the situation of those lands?" The slave replied, "The trees have given forth leaves, fragrant grasses have grown, and the land is full of water and grass." The Prophet was surprised by the eloquence of his speech and ordered that he be given clothes. He said to the Prophet, "I would like to take your hand in mine so that blessing and good are allotted for me." He took and kissed the Prophet's hand and the Prophet put his own hand on the slave's head and prayed for him. The slave lived many years and possessed magnitude and merit among his own tribe. He died during the time of Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik.⁶⁴

In a sermon which the Prophet delivered at the end of his life in 'Arafat, he put forward his worry about slaves and the rights of women: "About women, fear God because they are His trusts to you. It is obligatory for you to provide their food and clothing properly."⁶⁵

Before the advent of Islam, when a man was dying and if he did not have a son, his brother would inherit his wealth, while his daughters would not inherit anything. When Mahmud ibn Muslimah was wounded in the battle and was passing the last days of his life, he said to his brother, "Do not let my daughters ever go to beg among the tribes." Very soon after, the Prophet said, "Who wants to give good news to Mahmud that God has sent down the rulings of inheritance of daughters?" J'jal ibn Suraqah went to Mahmud ibn Muslimah and gave the news him. After hearing the news, Mahmud attained martyrdom.⁶⁶

Safiyah, who was previously the wife of Kunanah ibn Abi al-Haqiq, was captured and the Prophet sent her along with Bilal to a certain place. Bilal led her and her cousin through the dead bodies of one of the battles. Safiyah's cousin bitterly cried and the Prophet became upset at the act of Balal and stated, "Do you have not any mercy that you pass an underage girl through the dead?" Balal said, "I did not know this act disturbs you, and I wanted them to see the deceased of their own relatives."⁶⁷ Later, Safiyah became one of the wives of the Prophet. She narrates, "Some of the Prophet's wives were proud and sarcastically called me "Jewish woman". But the Prophet treated me with great mercy and kindness. One day, while I was crying, the Prophet came to me and said, "What has happened?" I told him about the teasing. He became upset and said: "From now, if they pride themselves or repeat this then say to them, 'My father is Aaron and my uncle is Moses.'"⁶⁸

The Prophet did not like anyone to disturb or annoy anyone else, even in devotions. In the last Hajj and at the time of performing the rites of Hajj, the Prophet advised 'Umar, 'You are a strong man; if you see the area around the Black Stone is empty then touch it, and if not, then do not cause inconvenience to people and yourself.'⁶⁹The Prophet appointed 'Uthman ibn Abi Waqqas as the prayer leader among the Bani Thaqif and advised him, "If you pray alone then pray in any manner you wish, but when you pray in congregation then be attentive to the weakest of them."⁷⁰

Overall, Prophet Muhammad took into consideration the duties of each citizen, eradicated idol worship, encouraged public participation, used wise management of war and peace-making strategies, and carefully dealt with opposition forces while bearing in mind the use of consultation and leniency and compassion with war captives. He also sought to eradicate differences based on social class, race, tribal differences, and gender for all people to have equal rights. The Prophet truly succeeded in his mission to establish a community based on moral principles in which he was the perfect exemplar for all people to follow.

1. Ibid., pp. 636–637.
2. Ibid., p. 665.
3. Ibid., p. 668.
4. Ibid., p. 665.
5. Ibid., pp. 639–640.
6. Ibid., p. 681.
7. Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah, vol.4, p. 92.
8. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, vol. 1, p. 359.
9. Waqidi, Maghazi, vol. 1, p. 133.
10. Qur'an, 3: 186.
11. Ibn Hisham, Sirah, vol.2, p. 723.
12. Maghazi, p. 436.
13. Ibid., p. 571.
14. Ibid., p. 568.
15. Ibid., p. 572.
16. Ibid., p. 144.
17. Ibid., pp. 414–415.
18. Ibid., p. 722.
19. Ibid., p. 733.
20. Ibid., p. 734.
21. Ibid., p. 736.
22. Ibid., p. 694.
23. Ibid., p. 142.
24. Ibid., p. 11.
25. Ibid., pp.552–553.
26. Ibid., p. 779–803.
27. Ibid., p. 381–382.
28. Ibid., p. 491.
29. Ibid., p. 175.
30. Ibid., p. 379.
31. Ibid., pp. 398–399.

32. Ibid., pp. 399–400.
33. Ibid., p. 199.
34. Ibid., p. 224.
35. Ibid., p. 225.
36. Ibid., p.228.
37. Ibid., p. 705.
38. Ibid., p. 209.
39. Ibid., pp. 35–73.
40. Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, vol.1, p. 361.
41. Ibid., vol.1, p. 361.
42. Maqhazi, p. 187.
43. Ibid., p. 483.
44. Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, vol.1, p. 353.
45. Waqidi, Maqhazi, vol.2, p. 655.
46. Ibid., p. 408.
47. Ibid., p. 415.
48. Ibid., p. 617.
49. Ibid., p. 618.
50. Ibid., p. 620.
51. Ibid., p. 623.
52. Ibid., pp. 618–619.
53. Ibid., p. 628.
54. Ibid., p. 639.
55. Ibid., p. 650.
56. Ibid., p. 651.
57. Ibid., vol.2, p. 652.
58. Ibid., p. 628.
59. Ibid., vol.2, p. 660.
60. Ibid., vol.2, pp. 655–657.
61. Ibid., p. 464.
62. Ibid., vol.2, p. 663.
63. Ibid., p.178.
64. Ibid., p. 449
65. Ibid., p. 824.
66. Ibid., p. 502.
67. Ibid., p. 514.
68. Ibid., p. 515.
69. Ibid., p. 840.
70. Ibid., p. 737.

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