

Al-Hádíl Ameen

The Truthful Guide / The Honest Leader

Mawlid SA 1434
PRESENTS

Mass Mawlid 1434

"Commemorating the Light"

Inspired by Muhammad (SAW)

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Tel: 021 696 8256
Fax 021 696 8252

mk@mkattorneys.co.za
www.mkattorneys.co.za



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Editorial

by **Hafiz Mahmood Khatib** (ibn Shaykh Abulhasan Khatib ibn Moulana Abu Bakr Husain Khatib Dammani)

It seems inconceivable that on 27 January (similar to 1952), 60 000 people will gather collectively and in a unified manner to “**Express Delight at the Birth of the Light**”. It took one great scholar and Islamic missionary Moulana Abdul ‘Aleem Siddiqi, 51 years ago, to attract over 36 000 people to welcome him at the Grand Parade and 60 000 people to the Green Point Track to express their attachment to and rekindle their love for Prophet Muhammad Mustapha sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. It was a noteworthy story of love! Cape Town was indeed beautified by the love its inhabitants expressed for the best of Allah’s creation.[See Pictorial Centrespread]. Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique was a man of love and peace and he harnessed and ignited those characteristics to those around him and today he lies peacefully at the feet of his great great grandmother and mother of the Believers, Sayyidah Ayesha in Jannatul Baqee at Medinah.

It was the historical event and the largest moulūd gathering of the last century in South Africa. The question now is; will you be part of the historical and largest gathering of this century expressing love for the one our creator Allah titled as “Mercy unto all existence”? This is an opportunity to participate and create our very own story on 27 January 2013 and perhaps if we express our love with sincerity and showcase the gentleness of our Muhammad it may inspire the rest of the children of Adam and Eve (pbuh) to be introduced to final emissary of the Divine. It is intended to be a day of joy, songs in praise of the universal messenger, poetry and pearls of wisdom in remembering that moment in history when the Almighty destined to change the fate of His creation by sending the best of them to guide all to His light and mercy.

Imagine the scene; we gather at our various mosques or central points and travel by foot or bus or train or car or any other means of transport available to the grand parade on Sunday 27 January 2013 to be there by 7 am and be transported by the MyCiti buses or if you have the energy to take a wonderful stroll on the fan walk to the central demarcated area next to the Cape Town Stadium collectively marching under our respective masājīd; organization; community or moulūd jama’ah banners whilst reciting the ashraqal. In unison and in a very orderly fashion we proceed to the Reddam Field in the Urban Green Point Park next to the stadium all dressed in white, creating a wave of pure mahabbah/love that engulfs everyone and everything in its path. The “rose initiative” sees the youth handing out roses to every person of another faith who wonders what the fuss is about with an attached saying of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The idea is to place your picnic or prayer mat down and in the spirit of the Muhammad inspired sunnah, assist and share with others as well our comforts to make everyone feel comfortable; feeling free to share the contents of your picnic basket with those that you know and those that you don’t. The plan is to spend the entire day sending salawāt and praises on the best of creation whose primary focus was and will always be the welfare and wellbeing of you and me and the saving of us from the torment of the fire.

We pray that Allah, to Whom we are eternally grateful, facilitates that this love story becomes a means to unite our hearts and conduct, and to permanently allow the seed of love for al Mustapha to germinate in the hearts of our children and youth, thereby securing goodness in this world and the hereafter. If we love him it becomes easier to sincerely follow him and if we follow him then that brings us closer to the Creator.

Mawlid SA 1434

The Display of Delight at the Birth of the Light

(extracts from the introduction to *Izhār al-surūr li Mawlid al-nūr*)

Dr. Muhammad bin Yahya bin Muhammad al-Ninowy

All praises are due to Allah, who has given light to the cosmos through the light of the Master of the Messengers (peace be upon him), who took the Covenant from each of the Prophets that they believe in him and support him, to which they admitted and testified—and Allah is with them among the witnesses. Praise be to Him, the Exalted and Sublime, who poured out to His beloved's noble soul and majestic reality the quality of prophethood, and clothed him with the robes of proximity and love, so as to distinguish him and set him apart from the rest of creation, even while Prophet Adam was still between water and clay.

Prophetic Station: The Prophet is the quintessential manifestation of lordly mercy gifted to creation, the epitome of the heavenly messages, and Allah's mercy to all created beings. Our Lord, the Blessed and Exalted, says, and He is the most truthful of speakers: "And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds." (al-Anbiyā': 107)

Allah refuted the plot of the connivers who said "You are not a Messenger": "Ya Sīn. By the Wise Quran. Indeed, you are of the Messengers sent." (Ya Sīn: 1–3) Allah sealed the sacred laws by sending the Prophet Muhammad a last, and He cast light on the world with his beautiful countenance. He has obliged us to obey Him through following the Prophet's way, and brought repose to the souls of the lovers through hearing his mention and life. Allah has chosen the Prophet Muhammad over His creation entire. One of the noble unique qualities of the Prophet is that when the Prophet of Allah and Messiah, 'Īsā ibn Maryam descends towards the end of time, he will follow the lead of the Prophet's Household (ahl al-Bayt) and the Mahdi of this nation. So may our Lord, the Mighty and Majestic, send benedictions, blessings, and salutations upon the one whose intellect He purified: "Your companion has not strayed,

nor has he erred" (al-Najm: 2); and whose tongue He purified: "Nor does he speak from his own desires" (al-Najm: 3); and whose law He purified: "It is but revelation revealed" (al-Najm: 4); and whose companion He purified: "Taught to him by one of intense strength" (al-Najm: 5); and whose heart He purified: "The heart did not lie about what it saw" (al-Najm: 11); and whose vision He purified: "The sight did not swerve, nor did it transgress" (al-Najm: 17); and whose entire being He purified: "And certainly you have an exalted standard of character." (al-Qalam: 4)

Following the Prophetic Way: Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, explained that the sign of His love is following His beloved a: "Say: 'If you truly love Allah, follow me; Allah shall love you and forgive you your sins.'" (Āla- 'Imrān: 31) And He explained that obedience to His beloved Prophet is identical to obedience to Him, the Exalted and Sublime: "And whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah." (al-Nisa': 80) And Allah crowed all of this by making the pledge of loyalty to His beloved a equivalent to pledging loyalty to Him, the Glorified and Most High. He said: "Indeed, those who pledge loyalty to you are but pledging loyalty to Allah." (al-Fath: 10)

Rejoicing at his blessed Birth: Imām Muslim narrated in his *Sahīh* collection from Abu Qatāda al-Ansāri who said: "The Prophet was asked about fasting on Mondays, to which he replied: 'That is the day in which I was born and the day when I first received divine revelation.' This hadith is an explicit text (nass) establishing the act of displaying joy and gratitude, and repeating it each week continually. So this day comes each week with a renewed feeling of joy and a fresh blessing, as well as the joy of fasting during the day of the Prophet's noble birth. Whether for or against, a great deal has

the permissibility of commemorating and celebrating the noble birth of the Prophet and displaying delight and joy for that day. Our intention in gathering people together for that day is to assemble them to recite the Holy Quran, learn the noble Sunnah, send benedictions and salutations upon the Prophet a, and to learn about the narrations found in the Sunnah and the noble Prophetic biography detailing his noble birth and its immensity, and what had accompanied it of precursors to the Prophet's mission, and related lessons of mercy to the creation, guidance, justice, and freedom for humanity. Gatherings such as these might involve the singing of poetry in praise of the Prophet a and sitting for a meal and giving out sweets—all out of joy upon the remem-

brance of the Prophet's auspicious birth a—after which people leave, and nothing more.

Rejoicing at the birth of the Messenger of Allah is from faith, and no one with an atom's weight of faith in his heart could ever express hatred with it. The Noble Quran has enjoined the display of happiness with Allah's mercy and bounty upon His servants. He says in Sūrah Yūnus: "Say: 'In the bounty of Allah and His mercy, with that let them rejoice; it is better than what they amass.'" (Yūnus: 58) So what about displaying delight and joy with the supreme mercy (al-Anbiya': 107) gifted by the Creator, Most Exalted, the Bounty of Allah to the entire creation.

Prophet Muhammad: An Embodiment of Gentleness, Care and Love

by Professor Tariq Ramadan

Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University

In his daily life, while he was preoccupied by attacks, treachery and his enemies' thirst for revenge, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) remained mindful of the details of life and of the expectations of those around him, constantly allying rigor and the generosity of fraternity and forgiveness. His companions saw him pray for hours during the night, alone, away from men, in solitude with the whisper of his prayers and invocations which nurtured his dialogue with the One. 'Aishah, his wife, was impressed and surprised: "Don't you take on too much [worship] while God has already forgiven all your past and future sins?" And the Prophet answered: "How could I but be a thankful servant?" [al-Bukhârî and Muslim] He did not demand of his companions the worship, fasting and meditations which he exacted of himself. On the contrary, he required that they ease their burden and avoid excess; to some companions who wanted to put an end to their sexual life, pray all night

long or fast continuously (such as 'Uthmân ibn Maz'ûn or 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As), he said: "Do not do that! Fast on some days and eat on others. Sleep part of the night, and stand in prayer another part. For your body has rights upon you, your eyes have a right upon you, your wife has a right upon you, your guest has a right upon you..." [al-Bukhârî] He once exclaimed, repeating it three times: "Woe to those who exaggerate [who are too strict]!" [Muslim] And, on another occasion, he said: "Moderation, moderation! For only with moderation will you succeed." [al-Bukhârî]

He kept striving to soothe the consciences of believers who were afraid of their own weaknesses and failings. One day, the companion Hanzalah al-Usaydî met Abû Bakr and confessed to him that he was convinced of his own deep hypocrisy because he felt divided between contradictory feelings: in the Prophet's presence, he almost saw

paradise and hell, but when he was away from him, his wife and children and his affairs caused him to forget. Abû Bakr in his turn admitted that he experienced similar tensions. They both went to the Prophet to question him about the seemingly dismal state of their spirituality. Hanzalah explained the nature of his doubts and Prophet Muhammad answered : "By He who holds my soul in His hands, if you were able to remain in the [spiritual] state in which you are when in my company, and remember God permanently, the angels would shake your hands in your beds and along your paths. But it is not so, Hanzalah : there is a time for this [devotion, remembrance] and a time for that [rest, amusement]."[al-Bukhârî and Muslim] Their situation therefore had nothing to do with hypocrisy : it was merely the reality of human nature, that remembers and forgets, and that needs to remember precisely because it forgets ; because human beings are not angels.

In other circumstances, he would surprise them by stating that the sincerity of a prayer, a charity or an act of worship found expression at the very heart of their most human needs, in the humble acknowledgement of their humanity : "Enjoining good is charity, forbidding evil is charity. In having sexual intercourse with your spouses there is charity." The companions, surprised, asked : "O Messenger of God, when one of us satisfies his (sexual) desire, does he also get a reward ?" Prophet Muhammad replied : "Tell me, if one of you had had illicit intercourse, would he not have committed a sin ? That is why he is rewarded for having lawful intercourse."[al-Bukhârî and Muslim]

He thus invited them to deny or despise nothing in their humanity and taught them that the core of the matter was achieving self-control. Spirituality means both accepting and mastering one's instincts : living one's natural desires in the light of one's principles is a prayer. It is never a misdeed, nor is it hypocrisy.

The Prophet hated to let his companions nurture a pointless feeling of guilt. He kept telling them that they must never stop

conversing with the One, the Most Kind, the Most Merciful who welcomes everyone in His grace and benevolence and who loves the sincerity of hearts that regret and return to Him. This is the profound meaning of "at-tawbah" offered to every conscience : "sincerely returning to God" after a slip, a mistake, a sin. God loves that sincere return to Him and He forgives and purifies. The Prophet himself exemplified that in many circumstances. Once, a Bedouin came and urinated in the mosque : the companions rushed on him and wanted to beat him up. The Prophet stopped them and said : "Leave him alone, and just throw a bucketful of water on his urine. God has only sent you to make obligations easy, and not to make them difficult."[al-Bukhârî] Again, 'Aishah reports that once, a man came to the Prophet and told him : "I am lost !" The Prophet asked : "Why ?" The man confessed : "I had intercourse with my wife during the fasting hours of Ramadan." Muhammad answered : "Give charity !" The man replied : "I own nothing !" Then he sat down at a short distance from the Prophet. Some time later, a man arrived, bringing a dish of food [probably dates] The Prophet called out : "Where is the man who is lost ?" "Here", he answered. Muhammad told him : "Take this food and give it away in charity." "To one poorer than myself ? My family has nothing to eat !" "Well then, eat it yourselves", the Prophet replied with a smile.[al-Bukhârî and Muslim] That gentleness and kindness were the very essence of his teaching. He kept saying : "God is gentle (Rafîq) and he loves gentleness (ar-rifq) in everything."[al-Bukhârî and Muslim] He also said : "He gives for gentleness what He does not give for violence or anything else."[al-Bukhârî] He declared to one of his companions : "There are in you two qualities that God loves : clemency (al-hilm) and forbearance [nobleness, tolerance] (al-anâ).[Muslim] He invited all his companions to that constant effort of gentleness and forgiveness.

A number of new converts to Islam, who had no home and often nothing to eat, had settled around the mosque, near the Prophet's dwelling. They were destitute

(sometimes intentionally since some of them wished to lead an ascetic life detached from worldly possessions) and their subsistence depended on the Muslims' charity and gifts. Their number kept increasing and they were soon called "ahl as-suffah" (the people of the bench).

The Prophet was most concerned by their situation and showed them continuous solidarity. He would listen to them, answer their questions and look after their needs. One of the characteristics of his personality and of his teachings, with ahl as-suffah as with the rest of his community, was that when asked about matters of spirituality, faith, education or doubt, he offered varying answers to the same questions, taking into account the psychological makeup,

experience and intelligence of the questioner. The faithful felt that he saw, respected, understood and loved them, and indeed, he did love them, he told them so, and he moreover advised them to remember to tell one another of their mutual love : *"When someone loves their brother [or sister] let them tell them that they love them."* [at-Tirmidhî] He once took young Mu'âdh ibn Jabal by the hand and whispered : "O Mu'âdh, by God, I love you. And I advise you, O Mu'âdh, never to forget to say, after each ritual prayer : 'O God, help me remember You, thank You and perfect my worship of You.'" [an-Nasâ'î.] Thus the young man was offered, in one outburst, both love and spiritual teaching, and the teaching was all the more deeply assimilated as it was wrapped in that love.

The Light of the Prophet

by **Dr. Mustafa al-Badawi**

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth . . . " [Qur'an 24:35] The Light is one of the ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah. Light is that by which things become known. Things may exist in the dark, but they cannot be seen. Light may be physical, such as the light of the sun or the moon, or intelligible, like the light of the intellect. The latter is that which illuminates the darkness of ignorance with the light of knowledge. Total darkness is non-existence, thus light is that which brings created beings out of non-existence into existence. It is the creative act of Allah and this is one of the meanings of *"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth . . . "* The other meaning is that every light in the universe is but a reflection of His mercy, every knowledge a reflection of His knowledge and so on. "Allah created His creation in darkness," said the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, "then He sprayed them with His light. Those whom this light reached became rightly guided, while those it did not reach went astray." [al-Tirmidhi] And he also said, as recorded by Muslim, "Allah, August and Majestic is He, wrote the destinies of creation fifty thousand

years before He created the Heavens and the earth. His throne was on the water. Among what He wrote in the Remembrance, which is the Mother of the Book, was: Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets."

The Mother of the Book is the source of all knowledge, including the Divine Scriptures. It is the essential knowledge of Allah before He created creation. This is why it is said to have been written fifty thousand years before the creation of the cosmos, a symbolic number, since without stars and planets there cannot be days and years as we understand them. Allah conceived His creation in the darkness of non-existence, then with the light of His creative act brought them out into existence. Thus the First Light was created, a being appearing against the dark background of non-existence. "The first thing that Allah created was the Intellect", said the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him [Tirmidhi]. He also said, "The first thing that Allah created was the Pen," which amounts to the same thing, since the first intellect is the primordial light in its passive aspect as recipient of the knowledge of what is to be, while the Pen is the primordial light

in its active aspect of writing this knowledge on the Guarded Tablet at Allah's command. "The first thing that Allah created was the Pen and He said to it: Write! So it wrote what is to be forever." [Tabrani] From this First light all of creation, with all its varied forms and meanings till the end of time unfolds.

This primordial light is what is called the Light of the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, since he is the created being who received the major share of it. This light was also the origin of the lights of all other Divine Messengers, of the angels, then of all other beings. This is how the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, could say, "I was a Prophet when Adam was still between spirit and body." [Tirmidhi] The power of this light made the Prophet's radiation so powerful, once he appeared on earth, that Allah calls him in the Qur'an "an illuminating lamp." Allah describes the sun and the moon in the Qur'an in like manner explaining what He means when He says that He made the Prophet "an illuminating lamp". He says, Exalted is He:

"Have you not seen how Allah created seven heavens, one upon another, and set the moon therein for a light and the sun for a lamp?" [Qur'an 71:16] Here he calls the sun a lamp, since its light is self generating, but He calls the moon a light, since it but reflects the light of the sun. He also says: "... and We appointed a blazing lamp..." [Qur'an 78:13]

The sun's light being extremely hot, and, "Blessed is He who has set in the sky constellations and has set among them a lamp and an illuminating moon," [Qur'an 25:61] emphasizing that the moon's light is light with little heat. When He says to His Prophet: "O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness, a bearer of good tidings and of warning, as a caller to Allah by His leave and as an illuminating lamp," [Qur'an 33:45 - 46] we are to understand that He made the Prophet's light powerful like the sun's, yet cool and gentle like the moon's.

Some of the Prophet's Companions were given to see this light as even brighter than both the sun and moon, for when they walked with him they noticed that he cast no shadow on the ground. [al-Tirmidhi] Those who saw him in the full moon noticed that his blessed face was brighter than the moon, [al-Tirmidhi]

and one of his Companions, the Lady Rubayyi', when asked to describe him, said, "My son, had you seen him, you would have seen the sun shining." [al-Tirmidhi]

The light of the Prophet shone at all levels, it filled the material, intermediary, and spiritual worlds, dispelled the darkness of ignorance and disbelief, and is destined to shine across the ages till the end of time. In the famous description of the Prophet by Hind ibn Abi Hala, son of Lady Khadija, "He was dignified and awe inspiring, radiant like the radiance of the moon on the night it is full..." [al-Tirmidhi] Ibn 'Abbas described how he saw light shining from between his front teeth. [al-Tirmidhi]. Abu Qursafa, as a boy, went to swear allegiance to the Prophet, together with his mother and her sister. When they returned home they told him, "My son, we have never seen the like of this man, nor anyone better looking, cleaner dressed, or gentler in his speech; and we saw as if light came out of his mouth." [Tabrani]

Lady Amina, when she became pregnant, saw in a dream-vision that a light came out of her that lit the land as far north as Syria. [Musnad Ahmad] She was also told in her dream that she was pregnant with the master of this nation and the sign of that would be that when she gave birth to him she would see a light coming out with him that would shine over Bosra in Syria. "When this happens", she was told, "call him Muhammad!" [Ibn Ishaq] Later, the Prophet's uncle, 'Abbas, praised him with a poem, on his return from the Tabuk expedition, saying: "You, when you were born, the earth was lit and with your light so was the sky". When the Prophet's foster mother, Halima al-Sa'dia, first saw him, she laid her hand on him and he smiled. "When he smiled," she said, "a light appeared from his mouth that rose to the sky." [Bayhaqi]

Commenting on the verse of Qur'an, "There has come to you a light from Allah and a clear Book," [Qur'an 5:15] the well-known scholar al-Alusi says that the light in question is no other than the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him. Qadi 'Iyad, the famous author of al-Shifa', is of the same opinion as al-Alusi, an opinion, an opinion shared by other famous commentators such as Tabari and Qurtubi.

Reminiscing the Moulūd-un-Nabi with Moulana Abdul 'Aleem Siddiqi in Cape Town... All those years ago.

A Glimpse into the Past (from Muslim Digest December 1952)

"One of the biggest receptions ever accorded to a visiting religious leader" was how the Cape Times described the tremendous welcome given to His Eminence Moulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqi, Al-Qaderi, when he arrived in Cape Town by air on Sunday, 12th October 1952. Cape Town, The Mother City of South Africa, was the third large centre visited by His Eminence on his South African tour. Against the magnificent background of Table Mountain, thousands of people gathered to acclaim his arrival. Stepping onto the tarmac, loud cheers resounded over the aerodrome as His Eminence was garlanded by representatives of various Muslim organisations and introduced to the City



His Eminence photographed on his arrival at the Wingfield Airport, Cape Town on October 12, 1952 on his impact making lecture tour of the Cape. With him are (left to right): Imam Ismail, Mr Safee Siddiqi, Councillor S. Dollie and Sayed Abdul Kader

Vast Crowds

Vast multitudes of people, who had waited many hours at the foot of Adderley Street, rose in tremendous cheer at the sight of the carriage moving along slowly through the city while hundreds of people crowded about the windows of public buildings

waving and cheering. Only by long lines of police linking arms with the Guard of Honour and other officials could a clear space be kept for the moving procession. The whole spectacle of people looked like a vast field of red tulips, as the Cape Times reported, broken by the gay colourful clothing of Malay Women. On the Grand Parade the magnificent colourful figure of His Eminence, capped by his brown beard, mounted the platform surrounded by dignitaries of the Muslim community.

Inspiring Address

Stepping forward in his flowing garb, His Eminence, obviously deeply moved by the immensity of the welcome he received, expressed his gratitude for their affection and said in an inspiring address that he had come to the shores of South Africa to serve all mankind of whatever colour-white,

brown, yellow or black – for in the Kingdom of God all are equal and that he had brought the true meaning of Islam – the religion of peace. "Islam," he said, "had never waged an aggressive war to further the belief in Islam. The very word Islam means peace. Had they done so there would today not be a single person in India, China or Europe who would not be a Muslim. Instead, the Muslims tried to bring to people the message of universal brotherhood."

His words were punctuated by loud applause. "But," he continued, "I feel that the people of Cape Town did not welcome me as Abdul Aleem Siddiqi in my personal capacity, but as an ambassador of the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace (loud cheers), and as for the enthusiasm you have shown in welcoming me, the Almighty



One view of the historic mass gathering of over 60 000 people at the Green Point Track, Cape Town on the occasion of the Milad-un-Nabie (Prophet's [saw] Birthay) commemoration lecture by His Eminence

alone will recompense you because you are actually respecting the Government of Almighty Allah, whose humble servant I am."

His eminence then continued to give illustrations regarding the Oneness and Unity of Almighty God and said the abstract of Islamic teaching could be explained in three minutes. "Firstly, belief in one God; secondly, belief in all the divine messengers of Almighty God who brought messages to mankind in different times and in different ages; and, thirdly, all members of the human race were members of one great family as they are the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, and all the human beings are just like different parts of the body."

After his inspiring talk, as they slowly drive

away, the people continued waving and cheering and above the tumult could be heard the great call of all Muslims all over the world. Allahu-Akbar! Allahu-Akbar! God is Greatest! God is Greatest!

May Allah Bless the soul of this great savant of Islam and humanity.



His Eminence is seen leading the procession accompanied by Sayeds, Shaikhs and Imams, during the historic Holy Prophet's Birthday celebration held at Cape Town's Green Point Track

Haqīqah Nūr Muḥammadiyyah

by Shaykh Nuh Hamim Keller

The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is the Light of Allah, something a believer can say because the Qur'an affirms it in the verse "There has come to you a Light from Allah, and a Manifest Book" [Qur'an 5:15]. in which the word Light has been explained by a number of classic Qur'anic exegetes as follows:

- (Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti:) "It is the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace)" (Tafsir al-Jalalayn).
- (Ibn Jarir al-Tabari:) "By Light He means Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace), through whom Allah has illuminated the truth, manifested Islam, and obliterated polytheism; since he is a light for whoever seeks illumination from him, which makes plain the truth" (Jami' al-bayan).
- (Fakhraddin al-Razi:) "There are various positions about it, the first being that the Light is Muhammad, and the Book is the Qur'an" (al-Tafsir al-Kabir).
- (al-Baghawi:) "It means Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace), or, according to a weaker position, Islam" (Ma'alam al-Tanzil).
- Qurtubi (Ahkam al-Qur'an) and Mawardi (al-Nukat wa al-'uyun) mention that interpreting Nur as "Muhammad" (Allah bless him and give him peace) was also the position by the Imam of Arabic grammar, Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Zajjaj.

All of this shows that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), is a light from Allah, according to the Qur'an. This is the interpretation of the earliest exegetes, for al-Tabari was the sheikh of the *salaf* (early Muslims) in *tafsir*; while explaining Nur as "Islam" is an interpretation that came later.

As for the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) being a bashar or 'human being', there is no doubt of this, because it is Qur'an and 'aqidah.

Yet the Qur'an does not simply state that he is a human being, but rather says, "Say: I am but a man like you who is divinely inspired that your God is but One God" (Qur'an 18:110). The important qualificatory phrase in this verse shows us that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) was a completely different sort of human being from anyone else, then or now. For none of us can say he is divinely inspired as the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) was. Rather, as is said in a poetic ode to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) which is often sung at gatherings after singing the Qasida al-Burdah [Ode of the Prophetic Mantle] by al-Busayri: *Muhammad is a human being, but not like human-kind; He is a ruby, while people are as stones.*

Though the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is the Light of Allah, he is of course a created light. Someone who believes otherwise has made the mistake of the Christians with Jesus (upon whom be peace), or the Hindus with their Avatars. We saw in the discussion at the end of question (5) above that an ascriptive (*idafa*) construction like Nur Allah does not show that this Nur or 'Light' is an attribute of Allah. Rather, the ascriptive construction in this case is a kind called *idafa tashrif*, or an 'ascription of ennoblement', like the title Bayt Allah 'The House of Allah' for the Kaaba in Mecca, named this for its nobility, not that Allah lives inside, much less that it is divine attribute. Or like the she-camel that was sent to Thamud, which was called in the Qur'an Naqat Allah 'The She-Camel of Allah' as an ascription of ennoblement; namely, because of its inviolability in the Shari'a of that time—not that it was ridden by Allah, or was a divine attribute.

As for the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) being the first of creation, among the Islamic scholars who have compiled works on his characteristics

is the hadith master (hafiz) Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti with his two-volume hadith work *al-Khasa'is al-kubra* [The greater compendium of unique attributes], of which the first chapter is entitled "The Uniqueness of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) in Being the First of the Prophets to Be Created, the Priority of His Prophethood, and the Taking of the Covenant with Him." The chapter's first hadith was reported by Ibn Abi Hatim in his *Tafsir* [Qur'anic exegesis] and by Abu Nu'aym in *Dala'il al-Nabuwwa* [Proofs of prophethood], from numerous chains of transmission, from Qatada, who related it from Hasan al-Basri, from Abu Hurayra, that of the Qur'anic verse "And behold, We took from the prophets their covenant, and from you, and Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus son of Mary; and We took from them a momentous covenant" (Qur'an 33:7) that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, "I was the first of the Prophets to be created and the last of them to be sent." Suyuti records nine other hadiths indicating that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) was the first of the prophets to be created; among them the hadith reported by Bukhari in his *Tarikh* [History], and by Ahmad, Tabarani, Hakim, and Bayhaqi, that Maysara al-Fajr (Allah be well pleased with him) said, "I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace), when were you a Prophet?' and he said, 'While Adam was between soul and body'" (*al-Khasa'is al-Kubra*).

As for "a hadith in Tirmidhi that states that the prophets (upon whom be peace) were created from the Nur of Allah and the first amongst them was the prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace)," I find it hard to imagine that it is in Tirmidhi or elsewhere with an acceptable channel of transmission, for Suyuti would hardly have failed to mention it in his *Khasa'is*, since this is the sort of thing the book is about, and Suyuti is a hadith master (hafiz), yet it is not there. In any case, the Qur'an is sufficient about the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) being a light from Allah.

Finally, in the metaphysic of the Sufis, or at least those whom I have met, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is both the 'Light of Allah' and 'a human being', and the inability to join between the two aspects is a lack of understanding of the greatness of *al-Haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah*, the 'Muhammadan Reality'.

We cannot ever claim to know all of the Prophet's perfections (Allah bless him and give him peace), only that Allah describes him in His book as 'light'; while at the same time, he had to be a human being, in order that the Sacred Law could be manifest, and the imperative of obeying it be binding on every human being. And Allah knows best



Birth of the Greatest Benefactor to Humanity

by Shaykh Sadullah Khan

The Final Prophet is Born

TAt a chaotic period in history when the murky clouds of impropriety covered the firmament of the world; when injustice, tumult and turmoil was rampant; when human dignity was at its lowest ebb, when young girls were entombed alive for being female, when the crevice between the exploiter and exploited was incessantly mounting; when corruption, lascivious modes of behavior, moral degeneration were increasing; when superstition, racial discrimination and oppression was the order of the day ... at that time, a Prophet was born; descending from the dynasty of Abraham the idol-breaker, Moses the pharaoh-fighter, and Jesus the benevolent. *"Four years after the death of (Roman emperor) Justinian, in 569 A.D., was born at Makkah in Arabia, the man who of all men, who exercised the greatest influence upon the human race, Muhammad"* - [Anglo-American historian and philosopher, Dr John William Draper, A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe; volume 1 page 329] –

When we consider our situation today; over fourteen hundred years after the exemplary mission of the Final Messenger, we realize that we are more than ever in need of such inspiration and motivation; more in need of such a role model who represents the best legacy of our human heritage and whose life message was an embodiment of the universal values that we all can share.

Rejoice

The birth of the Prophet (pbuh) is indeed worthy of rejoicing. If any occasion that is significant is worth remembering; it would be more so on the occasion of the commemoration of the arrival of the *best of creation, the ideal exemplar, the noblest of character* ... the Final Messenger (peace be upon him). Allah commands us in the Qur'an [10:58] to rejoice in the favor and mercy of Allah and He re-affirms that Prophet Muhammad [Q 21:107] was sent as a manifestation of that

mercy unto all the worlds. In the words of the contemporary devotional poet, Bekal Utsahi;

نہیں ہیں اگر آمنہ کا دولا را
یہ قرآن نہیں ہے شریعہ نہیں ہیں
کہاں سے سب سے گئی شریعت کے محفل
اگر ذوق ذکرے ولادت نہیں ہیں

"If it was not for the mission of the son of Aminah, we would neither have the Qur'an nor the Shari'ah ;

How would we ever be able to engage in discourse about the law, when we do not even have the desire to celebrate the arrival of the one through whom Allah sent that law."

So, on the occasion of the commemoration of the noble birth of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), we rejoice (as we ought to throughout the year) in the acknowledgement of the selflessness, piety, wisdom and compassion of this Last Prophet; whose mission to humanity was the teaching of submission to the Supreme, of globally applicable values, of adherence to the Straight Path; the combating of immorality, impropriety, injustice, ignorance and oppression; and who conveyed the divinely revealed Final Testament as a universally relevant text, a testimony to his abiding mission.

Model of Excellence

A study of the Prophet's illustrious life reveals immense suffering, principled dedication, unwavering faith and exemplary character. From the early Makkan period he championed the cause of the oppressed and the needy. A humble shepherd in his youth who gained fame as as-sadiq (truthful) and al-amin (trustworthy) eventually had to discharge duties in Madinah as supreme-court judge, commander of the armed forces and head of state of a volatile heterogeneous society; and he executed all this with

exemplary style and prophetic excellence. *"Head of the State as well as of the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legion of Caesar. Without a standing army, without a body-guard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammad."* [Reverend Bosworth Smith - Mohammad and Mohammadanism -]

Eighteenth century French poet and historian Alphonso da Lamartine, in his well-known work, - Histoire de la Turquie - observes: *"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern 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 and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race... Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational beliefs, a founder of twenty terrestrial empires and one spiritual empire. Of all standards by which human greatness can be measured, we may well ask ... is there any man greater than Muhammad?"*

How true the well-known Sufi saying ...

محمد بشر لا كالبشر بل هو كل ياقوت بين الحجر

*Muhammad is human, but not just like any other human;
Just as a ruby is indeed a stone, but a gem among stone.*

The life of the Prophet is both, history and biography, a code of law and mode of guidance. The sirah (life example of the Prophet) should not only be stated, narrated and analyzed but be internalized and utilized as a

principled model for righteous and wholesome living. To fully appreciate the significance of the Prophet's life in this millennium we need to evolve our perception of the sirah from a mere historical narrative into a contemporary map of guidance. It should serve as a source of inspiration and a model for excellence. In commemorating the birth of the Prophet, we celebrate his life, appreciate his sacrifices, and consider his impact; while we commit ourselves to implement and manifest his noble life example in our times.

Salutation on the Prophet

"It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty prophet. [Dr Annie Besant - The Life and Teachings of Muhammad -] Since Allah and His angels salute you, O Prophet of Allah [Qur'an 33:56]; we, in keeping with that Divine and angelic tradition, convey our salutations on you. And after 14 centuries, we still echo the sentiments of the poet, Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi, who expressed his appreciation of the Prophet (pbuh) in these poetic words ...

بلغ العلى بكماله كشف الدجى بجماله
حسنت جميع خصاله صلوا عليه و آله

The Prophet reached the highest state by his sublime character

*He removed darkness by his beauty;
Excellent are all his characteristics and achievements ...*

Salutations upon him and his family.



Prophetic Expression of Mercy

by Sayyed Shaykh Muhammad Maliki al-'Alawi

The two sheikhs (Bukhari and Muslim) narrate on the authority of 'Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) said, "I start the prayers, intending to lengthen them. I then hear a child crying so I make them shorter, knowing how emotional a child's mother gets."

An example of his mercy (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) with the children is that he used stroke their heads and kiss them. It was mentioned in the two books of Al-Bukhari and Muslim that 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) kissed Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein (his grandsons) while Al-Aqra' ibn Hobis Al Tamimi was present. So Al Aqra' said, "I have ten children. I have never kissed any of them!" Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) looked at him and said, "He who does not have mercy will not have mercy upon him."

The two sheikhs and At-Tirmidhi narrate that Al-Bara' (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I saw the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) carrying Al-Hassan on his shoulder, saying, "Oh Allah! I love him so love him." At-Tirmidhi narrates that 'Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was asked, "Which member of your family do you love the most?" He said, "Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein." He used to tell Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her), "Bring me my two sons" and then he would embrace them closely, may Allah be pleased with them.

Among the examples of his mercy and his love to please children happy that whenever he (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) was given the first of the harvest

of fruits, he would give it to give it to the children in his circle. At-Tabrani, said that Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him) used to hold the first of any seasonal harvest, he used put it on his eyes then on his lips and say "Oh Allah! Like you have made us see its beginning (of the season), allow us to see its end." Then he would give it to any child sitting around him."

An example of his mercy was his crying on the passing of his son Ibrahim (may Allah be pleased with him). On the authority of 'Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), "The Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) entered the room while Ibrahim was dying. Upon that, his eyes started dropping tears. Then 'Abdur-Rahman ibn 'Awf said, 'Even you, messenger of Allah!' Then he said 'Oh Ibn 'Awf! It is but mercy.' He continued (crying) some more and then said, "The eyes weep, the heart is full of grief, and we are nothing but that which does not please our Lord. Verily, we are sorrowed for your departure O! Ibrahim." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

On the authority of Osama Ibn Zaid (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) when the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him and his house) was handed his daughter's son who was dying, his eyes flooded with tears (peace and blessings be upon).

Sa'd then told him, "What is this, Prophet of Allah!" He said, "This is a mercy that exalted Allah has made in the hearts of His servants. And surely Allah has mercy to merciful ones among His servants." [Muslim]

From his mercy is that he (peace and blessing be upon him and his house) never used

to disdain from walking along with a widow or with a poor person and fulfill their needs 4. He used to visit weak and sick Muslims and attend their funerals [at-Tabarani]. He used to treat orphans well and charitably. He used to commend people to sponsor them and treat them with excellence and he also used to announce the consequent

virtues of that saying, "I and a patron of an orphanage are as close in Paradise (while waving with the index and middle finger and parting them)." [Al-Bukhari.] He also said that the best house in Muslim houses is the one with an orphan being treated well in it." [Ibn Majah]



Loving the Prophet of Beauty, Character and Compassion

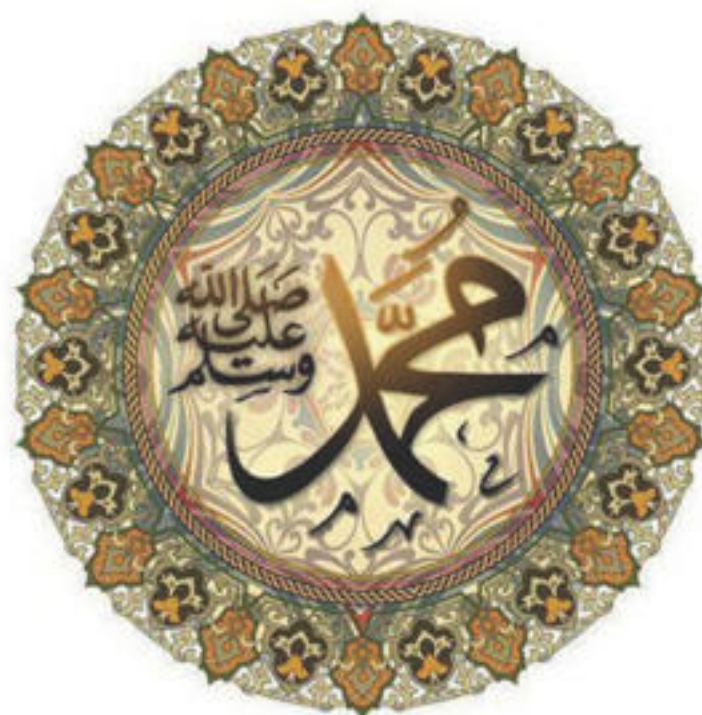
by Shaykh Hamza Yusuf

One of things about the scholars, they say mahabbah (love) for most human beings arises out of three things.

1. The first is the physical love. You see something beautiful and your heart inclines towards it. So He put the love of beauty in the hearts of human beings. If you see something beautiful, you incline towards it. Your eye delights in it. If you see a human being that is beautiful, you can fall in love, it can happen just from sight. The ulema have maintained the physical description of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) because that is a level of mahaba – to actually hear how beautiful he was. He was the most beautiful human being. He was more beautiful than Yusuf. One of the gifts of this ummah is that we have an exact description of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), it is as if you are looking at him. There was a desire to keep the description of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) so people could have a physical attraction to him as well as the first stage of love.
2. The second type of love comes when you hear about the beautiful qualities. You have outward beauty and inward beauty which is akhlaq. They moved to the akhlaq of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam)
3. The third level of love is love you feel for somebody who has done good to you or that you find out somebody made a sacrifice for you. If somebody does good to a good person, they love them more and more for that reason. But other people, if you do good to them, they have envy and start feeling resentment towards that person because their heart is diseased. So they actually get sick because they feel indebted and they do not like to feel indebted so they begin to

1. use strategies in themselves to not feel indebted to the person. These are the sick people, this is why the munafiqun are the sickest people, they are in the lowest place. If people do good to you, human hearts by nature love those who do good to them. If somebody does good to you and then you do not have love for them it is because your heart is not in a natural state. It is in a diseased state.

If you knew what the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) did for you, you would fall in love with him. Not just for you, but for humanity. His concern was not just for his sahaba, his family. Most human beings, their concern is limited. Their concern might be their wife, children, husband, family, extended family. Some people, their concern is the community. They care about the poor people in the community. They want to find them and help them because it is about the heart. The bigger the heart, the more capacity for love. The smaller the heart, the lower the capacity for love. It grows like a seed. Haba is seed in Arabic. That is the nature of mahaba, the bigger it gets the bigger the heart has to be to bear the love.



دل كے پردے كہول دے
عشق كامل كر عطا
عشق كامل كر عطا
عشق كامل كر عطا

**Remove the Veils from the Heart
Fill it with True Love (for You O Allah)
This is the humble request to You
From this poor Khateeb**

Al Hamdulillah

**The community of Daman, India built a Mazaar for
Moulana Abubakr Husain Khatib (RA)
which was officially opened during Safar ul Muzaffar 1434**



**The Founder of Al-Hadil Ameen,; Moulana Abu Bakr
Khatib (may Allah bless his noble soul)**





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