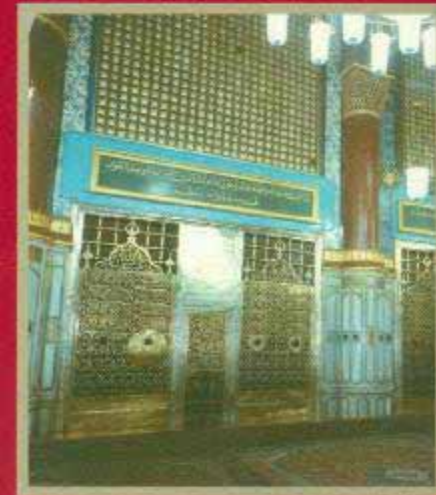


# WHY THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD HAS NEVER BEEN WORSHIPPED



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## INTRODUCTION

**A**LL PRAISE BE to Allah Who revealed the Qur'an to His Servant to give warning to all people and sent him as a mercy to them. He distinguished him with the most honourable characteristics, supported him with the greatest proofs, adorned him with the most noble traits, granted him the right of intercession on behalf of creation in general and his own community in particular. He also granted an exalted position of honour in Paradise, the Pool and the River Kawthar. Allah (swt) promised his Prophet that on the day of Judgement he would grant him so much that he would be satisfied. He attached the Prophet's name to His own and exalted him in fame. Whenever the oneness of Allah (swt) is mentioned, the Prophet is acknowledged as a messenger.

Allah (swt) made being His servant the most honourable of the prophet's qualities. The Prophet was commanded to worship Allah (swt) from the first day of his mission to the last day of his life. He was given such tasks as were never given to the previous messengers. Addressing him in the Qur'an, Allah (swt) says,

*"O you wrapped up in thy raiment, keep vigil the night long, save a little. A half therefore, or abate a little thereof. Or add a little thereto and chant the Qur'an in measure." (73:1-3)*

He also invited the Messenger to stay awake in the night for prayer saying,

*"And some part of the night awake for it will be an additional prayer for you. It may be that thy Lord will raise you to a praised state." (17:79)*

Moreover He said to him:

*"In a part of the night, prostrate to Him (Allah) and glorify Him for a long period at night." (17:26)*

May Allah bless him and his fellow Prophets and Messengers as well as his household and all his Companions abundantly and give all of them peace.

This book is based on three articles that were published in daily newspapers. I have since revised them making some modifications and additions to them. The reader of this book will see how it was impossible that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) be

worshipped be it during his life or after his death. How could he be worshipped when Allah (swt) Almighty directs him to say,

*"I fear, the retribution of an awful Day, should I disobey my Sustainer," (6:15)*

and also says to him,

*"If you ascribe a partner to Allah (swt) thy work will fail and come to nothing and you indeed will be among the losers." (39:65)*

How could the messenger of Allah (pbuh) be worshipped, when the Qur'an directs him to say,

*"I am only a mortal like you. I am only inspired (to declare) that your God is only one God. Whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord let him do righteous work and associate none with his Lord in worship."*

(18:110)

How could the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) be worshipped when there has been no other human being on the face of the earth, whose lineage, roots, life, upbringing, youth, manners, deeds, marriage and offspring were known to people as much as his, even before his prophethood began?

How could he be worshipped there has been no Prophet whose prophetic mission – the persecution he suffered at the hands of his own people and his perseverance and patience until Allah (swt) gave him victory, are so well known as those of Muhammad (pbuh) as indications of his prophethood?

How could he be worshipped when he used to stand in prayer for long periods at night, so that his feet became swollen? He used to weep so much that a bubbling sound came from his breast. His tears would pour down, wetting his beard as well as the spot where he prostrated.

How could he be worshipped when he used to say,

*"Do not praise me as Christians praise the Son of Mary. I am Allah's servant. Therefore say: 'the servant and messenger of Allah'."*

The kind of praise he prohibited in this remark is that of Christians who have exaggerated about Jesus (peace be upon him) by claiming that Jesus is the Son of God and that God is Jesus the son of Mary. They also say, "God is one of three", but Allah is Glorified and Highly Exalted above what they ascribe to Him.

To extol and praise the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is, however, a duty binding on the believers as directed by Allah:

*"That you (mankind) may believe in Allah and his messenger, and may honour him and may revere him and glorify Allah at early dawn and at the close of day." (48:9)*

According to scholars of linguistics and exegesis, the words 'ta'zir' and 'tawqir' in this *ayah* of the Qur'an mean support, honouring and exalting. If such an attitude were to lead to deification of the messenger, Allah would not allow the believers to engage in it towards the Prophet. In numerous occasions in the Qur'an people are commanded to be polite when addressing the Prophet or sitting with him. Furthermore, whenever Allah wanted to command his servants to honour the Prophet He began with himself and his angels saying,

*"Lo! Allah and his angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O you who believe! Ask blessings on him and salute him with a worthy salutation." (33:56)*

O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family as You have blessed Ibrahim and his family; and give benediction to Muhammad and his family as you have given benediction to Ibrahim and his family amongst the inhabitants of the world. You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious.

O Allah make this humble contribution purely for your sake and accept it from me. You are indeed all Hearing and all Knowing.

Dr. M.A. Yamani

15/1/1415 AH



**A**LLAH SENT HIS Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with the final message. He sent him as a mercy to all of creation and gave him the Qur'an, and with it the like of it (celestial wisdom) with which to warn everybody. He made him a protection for human beings and sent him as the greatest blessing from Him (Allah) to His servants, and as a shining sun, lighting up for worshippers the way of faith till the end of time. He is the mercy from Allah, the model prophet, a guiding beacon to the straight path by Allah's permission. Hence, he could not have been sent to cause trouble and turmoil.

The most important and acknowledged phenomenon about the Messenger of Allah (swt) is that he was never worshipped neither during his life nor afterwards. Glory be to Allah Who honoured and blessed him and made him the seal of the divine messages to the earth and the guide to Allah's straight path. Indeed he is – as described by Allah Himself – kind and merciful to the believers.

#### HIS NOBLE LIFE:

From the day the Prophet was born to the day he died his whole life was clearly known to everybody and was a noble biography the details of which are well known. He never worshipped anything other than Allah, making himself an example for his community in monotheism. He did not ask for himself to be glorified or worshipped but rather he called for and taught the worship of the one true God. Allah safeguarded him from polytheism, so he never worshipped anyone other than Allah before his call to prophethood and when he started his mission the first thing he called for was the testimony that there was no god but Allah and that Muhammad (pbuh) was the servant and messenger of Allah.

Obviously all the stages of the prophet's life have been under the light of history: his birth, his childhood, his marriage, his dealings with people before and after he became a Prophet, his life in Makkah, his migration to Al-Madinah and afterwards, his teachings, his battles and his death.

In all these stages of his life, the Prophet was a model of the true servant of Allah. All other prophets were, of course, the same but the details of their lives were never as clear, accurate and well-documented as those of Muhammad (pbuh).

#### A HUMAN LIKE YOU

Muhammad (pbuh) was born as everyone else to a noble couple; Abdullah Ibn Abd al-Muttalib and Aminah Bint Wahab. He lived his life as others do. His father died when he was still in his mother's womb and his mother died when he was six years

old. He was nursed by Halima, just as other children were nursed. The Prophet married Khadija Bint Khuwalid and had children – Al-Qasim, Abdullah, Al-Tayib, Zaynab, Umm Kulthum, Ruqaiyyah and Fatimah.

He lived in Makkah for forty years before his mission and for thirteen years after the start of his mission, experiencing what every human being experiences. He migrated to Madinah and stayed there for ten years, living there like any other human being, and he died and was buried, just as any other human being dies and is buried. Therefore, his human attributes were quite obvious in all the stages of his life. These attributes were confirmed in many passages of the Qur'an, such as 18:110, where Allah directed him to say:

*"I am a human being like yourselves; I am only inspired to say 'Your God is but one God. Therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Sustainer, let him work righteousness, and in the worship of his Lord admit no one as partner.'"*

On many occasions the Prophet (pbuh) himself made it quite clear that he was a human being. The Qur'an further emphasises the human nature of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and those prophets sent before him and confirms that none of them claimed divinity or deity. Allah says:

*"It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Book and Wisdom and the Prophetic Office, should say to people, 'Be you my worshippers rather than Allah's'. On the contrary, (He would say), 'Be worshippers of Him Who is truly the Cherisher of all; for you have taught the Book and you have studied it earnestly.'"* (3:79)

#### ALL PROPHETS PREACH MONOTHEISM

The message of all prophets and messengers was the same. (7:59, 65, 85, 73) (11:50, 61, 84)

There has always been the warning against deifying prophets and pious people the worst kind of associating others with God. He says:

*The Jews call Uzayr a son of God and the Christians call Christ the Son of God. That is a saying from their mouth. (In this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the truth!*

*They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Allah, and they take as their Lord Christ, the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One God. There is no god but He. Praise and glory to Him; (Far is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him). (9:31-32)*

Those people did not deify their monks and rabbis as such; they only followed their falsities and innovations in forbidding what Allah has allowed or allowing what He has forbidden. People followed them blindly even in matters not in their religion nor taught by their prophets. Hence such monks and rabbis became like lords beside Allah. Jesus (peace be upon him) and his mother never claimed the divine status that is attributed to them,

*"And when Allah says: 'O Jesus, Son of Mary! Did you say unto people: take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah?' He says, 'Be glorified! It was not mine to utter that to which I had no right. If I used to say it, then You knew it. You know what is in my mind and I know not what is in Your mind. Lo! You, only You art knower of things hidden.'" (5:116-117)*

#### BEGINNINGS OF IDOL WORSHIP

Many pious men were worshipped after they passed away. People revered them during their time but later on unsubstantiated miracles and claims were attributed to them. With the passage of time and increased admiration, such reverence transformed into sanctification. Images, pictures and statues were made for those men and then worshipped. Al- Qurtubi relates that Ibn Abbas interprets the verse:

*"And they have said forsake not your gods. Forsake not Wadd, not Suwa, not Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr." (71:16)*

He says that the names mentioned in the verse were those of pious men among the people of Noah. When they died, the satan influenced their folks to erect memorials on the places they used to sit in. But when those men passed away their statues gradually became objects of worship.

#### THE TRIAL OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WITH EZRA

Some prophets were worshipped, such as Ezra. He went away from his family and people for a hundred years, during which period he was dead by Allah's will and Allah raised him after that. He came back to them as young as he had been – about forty years of age. He found that his son was a hundred and eighteen years old and his grandchildren aged over eighty and ninety years old. He used to memorise the Torah. Seeing all that had happened to him, his people said 'Ezra is the son of God.' The Qur'an tells the story of Ezra and his ass:

*"Or (think of) the like of him passing by a township which had fallen into utter ruin, who exclaimed, 'How could Allah give this township life after its death?' And Allah made him die for a hundred years, then brought him back to life. Allah said, 'How long have you tarried?' (The man) said, 'I have tarried a day or part of a day.' Allah said, 'Nay, but*

*you have tarried for a hundred years. Just look at thy ass! And, that We may make you a token to mankind, look at the bones, how We adjust them and then cover them with flesh!' And when (the matter) became clear unto him, he said, 'I know now that Allah is able to do all things.'" (2:259)*

Had those people thought deeply about Ezra's story they would have realised that Allah made him die for such a long period then brought him to life to prove to him Allah's ability to resurrect His creation. Ezra saw by himself how the rotten bones of his ass were put together as they were before the ass died, then the bones were covered with flesh, and hide and the ass was brought to life as it was before. He saw by himself how his food and drink did not change as if it was left the night before. When Ezra saw all that he said, "I know that Allah is able to do all things."

#### THE TRIALS OF CHRISTIANS WITH JESUS (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

When Jesus, the son of Mary (pbuh) performed great miracles by the permission of Allah his people fell into the temptation of sanctifying him despite the fact that he used to tell them that he performed the miracles by the permission of Allah and that he was only a servant and a messenger of Allah.

Allah Almighty wanted to show people one of His signs. He created Jesus without a father so that they might know that He is able to do everything. As He had created Adam without a father or mother, and created Eve from Adam without marriage, He created Jesus from a mother but without a father. Allah Almighty creates what he wills, with or without means, because means are His creation. No one other than Allah can do that.

Among the greatest miracles of Jesus (peace be upon him) were raising the dead, healing the blind and the leper and telling people about things he did not physically see them do or keep in their homes. Allah created Jesus by a word, 'Be!' He did not create him from a father.

*"And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel. And will make him a messenger unto the Children of Israel, (saying): 'Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and breathed into it and it became a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce unto you what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Lo! Herein verily is a portent for you, if you are to be believers.'" (3:48-49)*

*"And because of their saying: we slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allah's messenger – they slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them, and Lo! those who disagree concerning it are*

*in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain, but Allah took him up unto Himself. Allah is ever Mighty, Wise.” (4:157-158)*

#### EMPHASIS ON THE HUMAN NATURE OF THE MESSENGER:

When we read the Qur’an and ponder on it, we find clear commands from Allah to His messenger (pbuh) to declare his human nature. In *Surat Al-Kabf* as well as *Fussilat* we read:

*“Say: ‘I am only a mortal like you. I am only inspired to declare that your God is only one God.’” (18:110)*

Even when the people of Makkah demanded miracles from the Prophet the Qur’an reaffirms his human nature.

*“And they say: we will not believe in you till you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us. Or you have a garden of date palms and grapes and cause rivers to gush forth therein abundantly. Or you cause the heaven to fall upon us piecemeal, as you have pretended, or bring Allah and the angels as a warrant. Or you have a house of gold, or you ascend up into heaven and even then we will put no faith in your ascension till you bring down for us a book that we can read.” Say (O Muhammad): ‘My Lord be glorified! Am I anything but a mortal messenger?’” (17:90-93)*

In Ibn Ishaq’s biography of the Prophet (pbuh), Ubaydah ibn al-Samit narrated:

*“I was present on the day of al-Aqabah and we were twelve people who pledged to the messenger of Allah not to associate others with Allah, not to steal, not to fornicate, not to kill our children, not to fabricate falsities and not to disobey him in good deeds etc.”*

That was indeed the first pledge, which started with a monotheistic statement not to associate others with Allah. All the letters sent by the Prophet to the People of the Book included this *ayah*:

*“Say: ‘O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for Lords besides Allah.’ And if they turn away then say, ‘Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him).’” (3:64)*

This was a clear command from Allah to His messenger to invite the People of the Book to worship Allah alone. In his sermon delivered on the occasion of the surrender of Makkah. The Prophet said:

*“There is no god but Allah, He has fulfilled His covenant, supported his servants and defeated the clans by Himself.”*

Moreover, one of the things that the Prophet did on the day he conquered Makkah was that he destroyed the idols around the Ka’bah. He went around stabbing at the statues with a stick in his hand saying,

*“The truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Lo! Falsehood is ever bound to vanish,”*

and

*“The truth has come and falsehood will not show its face and will not return.”*

From that day until now and as long as Allah wills, the *mu’adhdhim* in the Ka’bah or anywhere on earth will call out,

*“I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad (pbuh) is the Messenger of Allah.”*

At the battle of Uhud, where Musab ibn Umayr, who looked in figure and behaviour like the Prophet (pbuh), was killed and rumours spread that the Prophet (pbuh) had been killed, the Muslims could not believe it, and so a revelation came down with a clear statement confirming the human nature of the Prophet, just like any other previous messenger,

*“Muhammad is but a messenger. Messengers have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels? He who turns back on his heels will do no harm to Allah.”*

(3:144)

When some of the unbelievers of the tribe of Quraish wished death to the Prophet, the revelation came,

*“We appointed immortality for no mortal before you. What! If you die can they be immortal?” (21:34)*

Moreover, when some of Quraysh questioned whether the messenger would die, the Qur’an replied,

*“Lo! You will die and. Lo! They will die. Then Lo! On the Day of Resurrection before your Lord you will dispute.” (39:30-31)*

The Qur’an also tells us of the polytheists wondering how could the messenger be a human;

*“And they say; what sort of a messenger is this who eats food and walks in the market?” (25:7)*

These texts and more like them are found on almost every page of the Qur’an.

They are recited and read by every scholar or reader. There was the Messenger of Allah suffering as he did in the battle of Uhud, and falling in one of the ditches dug and covered by Abu 'Amir al-Rahib. The Messenger (pbuh) fainted and his knees were buried. Urbah Ibn Abi Waqqas hurled a stone at the messenger, injuring his face and his cheeks and breaking his tooth. When the messenger said, 'How can they succeed, these people who paint the Prophet with blood?' Allah revealed to him:

*"It is no concern at all to you (Muhammad) whether He (Allah) relents toward them or punishes them; for they are evil doers."* (3:128)

It has been related however, that this verse was revealed when, in the fourth year AH, after Uhud, he had delegated seventy teachers to Bir Ma'unah a place between Makkah, Usfan, and the land of Huhdayl, to teach them the Qur'an. The group was under the leadership of al-Munthir Ibn al-Amr. 'Amr b. Al-Tufayl, enemy of Allah, brutally murdered the delegation and the Messenger of Allah felt very sad and spent a whole month praying and invoking the wrath of Allah against the murderers. Al-Bukhari narrated that Ibn Umar heard the Messenger of Allah during the *Fajr* (dawn) prayer saying, on rising from *ruku'* in the last *rak'ah*:

"O Allah curse so and so, and curse so and so."  
Then Allah revealed to him,

*"It is no concern of yours at all (Muhammad) whether He (Allah) relents toward them or punishes them; for they are evil doers."* (3:128)

All these *ayats* clearly indicate that Muhammad was a servant of Allah, His messenger and His prophet. They form a clear evidence of the human nature of the Prophet and that he was never worshipped whether during his life or afterwards. He actually taught his people the principle of monotheism and guided them to the straight path and was a mercy to all creatures. He worshipped Allah with sure knowledge and sincerity. He destroyed all signs of polytheism and anything that led to it. He never allowed anyone to deify or worship him. No one ever claimed that the Prophet was god or that anyone should worship Muhammad for the simple fact that everything mentioned in the Qur'an and *sunnah* forbids any such thing.

The repeated confirmations in the Qur'an of the human nature of Muhammad (pbuh) and indeed all the prophets and messengers are there for everyone to see. The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad and memorised by his Companions and generations of their followers after them and so on until today. It is recited and interpreted all the time. Such repetition is a constant reminder and prohibition against deifying him. In *Surat al-Isra* Allah says,

*"And what prevented mankind from believing when the guidance came to them save that they said, 'Has Allah sent a mortal as his messenger?'"* (17:94)

In another place in the Qur'an it is reported that some people said to their messengers, "... You are but mortals like us," (36:15) and others said,

*"... Shall mere mortals guide us?"* (64: 6). In the story of Pharaoh, Musa and Harun we read, "And they said, 'Shall we put faith in two mortals like ourselves, whose folk are servile to us?'" (23:47)

The Qur'an quite clearly states the status of Muhammad (pbuh) as a messenger and that he was an Arab.

*"Allah verily has shown grace to the believers by sending to them a messenger of their own."* (3:164)

And

*"There has come to you a messenger, one of yourselves."* (9:128)

*"... In that we have sent among you we have sent a messenger of your own,"* (2:151)

#### HE CHOSE TO BE A SERVANT OF ALLAH

In the noble biography of the Prophet it is narrated that he was given the choice of being a king-messenger or a servant-messenger. He chose the latter – to be patient when he was hungry and thankful when he ate his food. Aishah (RA) said,

"We, the household of Muhammad used to spend a whole month sometimes without kindling fire in the house. We used to live on dates and water only."

She also said,

"The messenger of Allah never had his wheat bread for three consecutive days until the last day of his life." (Narrated by Bukhari)

When the Messenger and His Companions were digging the trench he tied a stone to His stomach to ease the pain of hunger. This and many similar incidents all confirm the human nature of the Messenger and give a clear example of his patience, perseverance and servilities to Allah. This biography is studied by Muslims and non-Muslims alike every day.

When the Messenger of Allah died, 'Umar (RA) could not believe the reality and said that Muhammad had not died. Then Abu-Bakr (RA) gave a speech and said,

"O people whoever worshipped Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead, and whoever worshipped Allah, let him be assured that Allah is All Living and does not die."

He then recited,

*"Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (like him) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels?"* (3:144)

This is yet another emphasis from Allah that Muhammad is a servant and a Messenger. He was subject, as any other human, to dying or getting killed. It is possible after all this, for the Prophet to be worshipped? Abu Bakr's speech was clear evidence that worshipping the Prophet never came to the mind of any of his Companions. He reminded them of his attributes, which they knew very well, and that he was a human being, one in a chain of other Messengers before him and that Allah had preordained for him what He had preordained for other Messengers and the rest of mankind.

*"Lo! You will die, and Lo! They will die."* (39:30)

And

*"We appointed immortality for no mortal before you. What! If you died, can they be immortal?"* (21:34)

It is as if Allah is saying to people, "You know, from the life of your Prophet and from his teachings and from his guidance, that he is a servant and a messenger of Allah. He conveyed the message as Allah ordered him and then died in fulfilment of Allah's promise. So what are you going to do after his death? You have been commanded to follow his guidance and convey his message, as Allah commands you to do. Therefore you should carry out the command because you will be responsible for this mission. Allah says,

*"Thus we have appointed you a middle nation, that you may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you"* (2:143)

Evidence of this can be found in *Hadith*. Abdullah Ibn al-Shakbir said,

*"I came to the Messenger of Allah and found him praying with a sound like the bubbling of a cooking pot by reason of his weeping."* (Sound *hadith*, narrated by Abu Dawud and Al-Tirmidhi)

Also it is narrated that Al-Mughira said,

*"The Messenger of Allah stood up in prayer until his feet became swollen."*

In another version of this *hadith* it is related that he used to pray until his feet became swollen. When asked why he took all that trouble while his past as well as his future sins had been forgiven, he said,

*"Shall I not be a grateful servant?"* (Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi.)

After all this confirmation of the Prophet's human nature, is it reasonable to think that he was God, or should be worshipped along with Allah? God forbid!

#### HIS HUMILITY

Humility was one of the Messenger's noble characteristics that he urged his followers to emulate. (Hadith narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Hayyan) Ahmed narrated that the Messenger of Allah used to lift his water bucket by himself, clean his clothes, mend his shoes, milk the ewe, serve himself and use to ride on the donkey and have someone ride behind him.

It is also narrated that Aisha said,

*"The mattress on which the Messenger of Allah used to sleep, was filled with palm tree fibres."*

The Messenger himself used to say,

*"Abase yourself / Be humble, so that no one should vie in boasting with another."*

He also prohibited haughtiness by saying,

*"Anyone who has an atom's weight of haughtiness in his heart will never enter Paradise."* (Narrated by Muslim.)

He further described himself

*"I eat as any servant would eat and sit down as any servant would sit down."* (Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, p. 101, quoting from *Al-Shifa'*.)

Abd Allah ibn Umar said,

*"The Messenger of Allah came into my house and I gave him a leather cushion filled with fibres. However, he rather sat on the floor leaving the cushion between me and him."*

(*Al-Adab Al-Mufrad*, p. 173)

On page 101 of the book *Al-Shifa'*, al-Bukhari narrates that,

*"The Messenger of Allah used to sweep clean the house, tie the animals up, feed his she-camel, eat with his servant, kneaded dough with him and use to carry his shopping."*

Such a person cannot be worshipped whether during his life or after his death. When Adi Ibn Hatim fled from the Messenger of Allah to the Ghassani kings in Syria, he saw for himself their luxurious life-style. His sister Sufana requested him to come to the Messenger of Allah saying to him,

*"If he is a king, you will get some gift and if he is a Prophet, you will be guided by him."*

When he arrived in Madinah he asked about the Prophet and he was shown how to get to his house. When he entered the Prophet's home he did not see any luxurious furniture or the grandeur of royal courts and magnificent places. He was led into a



small room where the Prophet was. The Prophet offered Adi the only cushion that was there and sat on the floor. Adi could not prevent himself from embracing Islam.

#### HIS PERSEVERANCE

The Prophet was frequently hurt and harassed by the polytheists of the Quraysh tribe. One day they put a sheep's intestine on his back while he was prostrating in prayer. He remained prostrated until Fatimah, his daughter, removed the intestine from his back, weeping.

When the Messenger returned from the town of Taif, the leaders of Quraysh sent some of their servants and common folk after him to harass him. Musa Ibn Uqbah related that they threw stones at him. They hit his feet and blood came out of his heels until it filled his shoes. He sat down to protect his feet from the stones. Zaid ibn Harithah bent over the Messenger of Allah to protect him and he himself received many injuries to the head. The Messenger then moved to sit under a tree and made his famous prayer.

"O Allah! I raise to You my weakness, lack of strength and my being lightly estimated by people. O Most Merciful, You are All-Compassionate and the God of the oppressed. Who will you leave me to? To an enemy who frowns in my face? Or someone remote who has the ruling of my affairs? If you are not displeased with me, I care not. I seek refuge with You, Who lighten the darkness and by Whom the affairs of the world and the hereafter have been put right, from your wrath or displeasure. I shall not be content until you are pleased. There is no power but through You."

All these incidents confirm the Prophet's status as a servant and distance him from one to be worshipped either in his lifetime or after his death.

#### DO NOT PRAISE ME

The Messenger warned his community to avoid over-praising him, as did the Christians with Jesus when they elevated him above his human reality and claimed that he was god or the Son of God. The Messenger said,

"Do not praise me as the Christians praised Jesus. Address me only as a servant and messenger of Allah" (*Hadith*: narrated by Al- Bukhari)

It is not forbidden however, to talk about the characteristics of the Prophet and his miracles and his status with Allah, nor about the respect and reverence and honour due to him. All such qualities that the Prophet possessed are already stated in the Qur'an or in his noble *Sunnah*. The Muslim community should learn all that in order to increase their faith and their love and awareness of the status of the Messenger of Allah. What a beautiful line composed on the Messenger, which says:

The boundless merits,  
Of the Prophet of God are such,  
That none can speak of them  
With all the eloquent tongues.

#### BEING ALLAH'S SERVANT WAS HIS GREATEST ATTRIBUTE

One proof of his being Allah's servant, is that he taught us to say in *tashabbud* during the daily prayers,

"... and I bear witness that Muhammad is His (Allah's) servant and His Messenger."

He directed us to open every speech or lesson with a prayer for him, and confirmation that he was the servant and messenger of Allah. The same statement is read during the "*Adhan*" (call to prayer), which is chanted five times every day and all Muslims repeat that statement.

In the Qur'an, Allah describes his Messengers as servants to Him, and being His servant as the noblest of attributes:

"And make mention of Our servants Ibrahim, Isaac and Jacob, possessors of power and vision." (38:45)

and,

"And make mention of Our servant David" (38:17)

and about Job Allah says,

"Lo! We found him steadfast, he was an excellent servant! Lo! He was ever turning in repentance (to his Lord.)" (38:44)

When the Qur'an tells us the story of the Prophet's night journey Allah says,

"Glorified be He who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship (Makkah) to the distant place of worship (Jerusalem.)" (17:1)

Reference to the prophets being servants is made in the opening lines of many Qur'anic *Surahs*, so people may remember that in *Surah* 18, for example, Allah reminds His servants of the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) and the Qur'an. He starts by praising Himself, saying,

"Praise be to Allah who has revealed the scripture unto his servant, and has not placed therein any crookedness." (18:1)

and in another place Allah says,

"Blessed is He Who has revealed unto His servant the Criterion (of right and wrong), that he may be a warner to the peoples" (25:1)

Even when the Prophet was dying and about to go to his Lord he said,

"There is no good except in Allah. Death has an agony indeed."

Hence, his grave remains a noble place inside his room by the side of the mosque. People pray in the mosque and then go to greet him. It has never happened, either in the past or in the present, that the grave was worshipped. It will remain preserved, by-the-will of Allah, from loss or obliteration or any possibility of worship. It was never worshipped and it never will be. How could the Prophet be worshipped in his grave when he was never worshipped in his life? Allah actually sent him as a mercy to all people and not as a trial to anyone, for mercy cannot be a trial. So all praise is to Allah for such a mercy.

*"Lo! Allah is, For mankind, Full of pity, Merciful" (22:65)*

#### A WARNING AND ADMONITION

Allah warned the Prophet against disobedience. He said to him,

*"Say I fear, if I rebel against my Lord, the retribution of an awful day."*  
(6:15)

Although the verse addresses the Prophet, it is his community that is intended. Also, when Jibril informed the Messenger of Allah that Zaid would divorce his wife and that the Messenger of Allah would marry her, the Messenger felt uneasy about this and felt that the people would say that Muhammad was married to the wife of his adopted son. But there is strong blame expressed in what Allah says to him:

*"...and did you fear mankind whereas Allah had a better right that you should fear Him. So when Zaid had performed the necessary formality (of divorce) from her, We gave her unto you in marriage, so that (henceforth) there may be no sin for believers in respect of their wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have performed the necessary formalities (of release) from them. The commandment of Allah must be fulfilled," (33:37)*

Allah wanted to abolish the adoption system that used to prevail during the time before Islam and to tell the believers that an adopted child is not a son,

*"...Nor has He made those whom you claim (to be your sons) your sons." (33:4)*

He then asked His Messenger to attribute the adopted son to their real parents,

*"Proclaim their real parentage. That will be more equitable in the sight of Allah" (33:5)*

Such a warning and such an admonition are clear evidence that Muhammad was a servant of Allah, sent with guidance and a religion of truth,

*"O Prophet! Lo! We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And a summoner unto Allah by His permission, and as lamp that gives light." (33:45-46)*

Moreover, Allah has ordered the believers to read in each *rak'ah* of prayer,

*"You (alone) we worship, and you (alone) we ask for help." (1:4-5)*

He also made the declaration of faith a condition for entering into Islam whereby the individual says,

*"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The Qur'an also says,*

*"Muhammad is but a Messenger, Messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that when he dies or is slain you will turn back on your heels?" (3:144)*

How then could he be worshipped during his life or his death?

#### MONOTHEISM, THE BASIS OF ISLAM

Calling people to monotheism and to abandon polytheism took thirteen years. When the Prophet started calling to Islam, he focused on two main issues: (a.) the call to believe in one Allah and (b) belief in resurrection after death for judgement.

The polytheists believed in the existence of Allah but associated others with him. They also denied resurrection after death. The majority of the Qur'anic verses, however, emphasise the necessity of clearing the brains and hearts of polytheists and being sincere in service to Allah alone. The Qur'an also calls the Messenger of Allah to be a leader and an example to the believers, of perfect service,

*"Therefore, worship Him and be steadfast in His service." (19:65)*

and

*"And serve thy Lord till the inevitable (death) comes to you." (15:99)*

and

*"...But call (mankind) unto thy Lord, and be not of those who ascribe partners (unto Him) and cry not unto god along with Allah. There is no god save Him. Everything will perish save His countenance. His is the command, and unto Him will you be brought back." (29:87-88)*

and,

*"Say: Lo! I control not hurt or benefit for you. Say: Lo! None can protect me from Allah, nor can I find any refuge beside Him." (72:21-22)*

and,

*"Say: I am commanded only that I serve Allah and ascribe unto Him no partner. Unto Him I cry, and unto Him is my return." (13:36)*

There are also many other verses in the Qur'an such as,

*"Who so ascribes partners to Allah, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin."* (4:48)

*"Who so ascribes partners unto Allah has wandered far astray."*  
(4:116)

*"Lo! Who so ascribes partners unto Allah, for him Allah has forbidden Paradise. His abode is Hell Fire. For evil-doers there will be no helpers."* (5:72)

*"Say: (O Muhammad) Lo! I am commanded to worship Allah, making religion pure for Him only. And I am commanded to be the first of those who surrender unto Him."* (39:11-12)

It is narrated in the Hadith that the Prophet said,

"Shall I tell you of the gravest sins? They are three: Polytheism, disrespect towards parents and false testimony."

He was leaning back then he sat up and repeated that statement until we wished he would stop.

It is also narrated that the Prophet was once asked which sin was the greatest? He said,

"To associate others to Allah, Who created you. The man who asked the question replied, 'Yes, that is a great sin. Then what?' The Prophet said, 'To kill your child for fear of shortage of food.' The man said, 'And what else?' 'To commit adultery with your neighbour's wife,' answered the Prophet (pbuh).

#### WARNING AGAINST SHIRK

The Prophet warned the community against polytheism. On one occasion he said,

"Polytheism is the worst that I fear for you."

Polytheism or *shirk* is the greatest of sins a person could ever commit. It comes as the first of the sins that Islam warns about. All sins are forgivable except this one:

*"Lo! Allah pardons not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. He pardons all save that to whom He will."* (4:116)

Moreover it is well known to every Muslim that *shirk* is a major sin:

*"...to ascribe partners unto Him is a tremendous wrong."*

Such a misdeed will further abrogate any good deed no matter how great such good may be.

*"And we shall turn to the work they did and make it scattered notes."*  
(25:23)

If the disobedient do not repent, their case is to be referred to Allah who forgives or punishes them as He wills. If they repent sincerely, Allah will accept their repentance because Allah stretches His hand during the night so that those who have sinned during the day may repent and He stretches hand during the day so that those who have sinned during the night may repent.

The Prophet says in this regard,

"By Allah, I ask Allah for forgiveness and return to Him more than seventy times every day." (Narrated by Al-Bukhari.)

This was in spite of the fact that Allah had forgiven his past as well as his future mistakes. Therefore, how can Muhammad, who repeated his turning to his creator more than seventy times a day, be the one to be worshipped?

#### PROSTRATION TO ALLAH ALONE

Some of the Prophet's Companions travelled to places where they saw the subjects prostrating to their kings or patriarchs as an expression of respect. When they came back they told the Prophet about this and added that he was more worthy of respect and prostration. He objected and taught them that prostration was due to Allah only and that no human should prostrate to another human (Ahmed and Al-Nasai).

Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) related that a family from the Ansar people used to have a camel for fetching water from the wells. The camel became obstinate and unruly so they could not control it. They complained to the Prophet about the lack of water for them and for their plants because of the camel's behaviour. The Prophet went with some of his Companions to a fruit garden where the camel was. When the Prophet started walking towards the camel the owners told him that the camel had become like a mad dog and they feared for the safety of the Prophet. When the camel saw the Prophet, however, it came towards him and put its head down in front of him in total submission. The Prophet led it by the forepart of its head back to work. His Companions said to him,

"O Messenger of Allah, this is just an animal that does not understand anything but prostrated to you. We should prostrate to you." The Prophet said,

"No human should prostrate to a human. If any human were to do so I would order the wife to prostrate to her husband because of the significance of his rights on her." (Narrated by Ahmed and Al-Nasai)

Hence the miracle was clear and obvious and yet the command that followed it was, "No human should prostrate to another human". Is it conceivable, therefore, that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would be worshipped in his lifetime or even after his death?

There is a great lesson for his community about the oneness of Allah in his

response when a man said to him, "Allah willing, you willing." The Messenger of Allah was worried that people might understand that he had a will like that of Allah the Almighty, although the Qur'an clarifies that point quite clearly,

*"And say not of anything: 'Lo! I shall do so-and-so tomorrow, without saying 'If Allah will.' And when you forget, remember your Lord and say: 'It may be that my Lord will guide me to a nearer way of truth than this.'"* (18: 23-24)

and

*"Yet you will not, unless Allah wills. Lo! Allah is Knower, wise."* (76:30)

and

*"Lo! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom He loves, but Allah guides whom He will."* (28: 56)

The Messenger quickly corrected the man by saying to him,

*"Are you putting me as an equal to Allah? Say 'Allah willing' first, then say what you will."*

He knew very well that the man did not intend to say that Muhammad was an equal to Allah because he knew that Muhammad was a servant and a Messenger of Allah and a human being who lived like other human beings, eating, buying and selling as others do. He possessed all the characteristics of a human being except that he was distinguished by the honour of the prophethood and that he received revelations from Allah Almighty. All the Companions knew this fact.

The Messenger wanted to teach the community how to be precise in talking about Islamic faith. He made it clear to the Muslims that the will of Allah is absolute and is not attached to the will of any human being, not even the Messenger himself, the best of Allah creation and the master of the Children of Adam.

#### SOME OF HIS MIRACLES

Allah supported his Prophets with miracles that proved their truthfulness. Every Prophet was given one or more of the miracles that made people believe him. Our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was supported by the greatest of material as well as moral miracles: the inimitable Qur'an. Both humans and jinn failed to come up with anything similar to it, not even one *surah*.

His other miracles, however, are many and cannot all be enumerated here. One of these miracles was the night journey of the Prophet from Makkah to Jerusalem and coming back in the same night. Allah says:

*"Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the far distant Place of Worship the neighbourhood where of We have blessed, that We might show him our tokens!*

*Lo! He, only, He is the Hearer, the Seer."* (17:11)

This verse is a clear and express statement that the Prophet did not carry out the journey by his own power or that of any of the angels. It was by the power of Allah, the All Powerful. He carried the Prophet to the far distant mosque and then ascended him to the seventh heaven and showed him His great signs. The verse started with a glorification of Allah, a clear sign that such a miracle was not within the power of Muhammad (pbuh); it was an act of Allah. It is as if the verse was telling us that the miracle of *al-Isra* and *al-Mi'raj* cannot be measured in terms of what we know: laws of gravity, means of transport and speed limits. Rather, it is measured by the power of the Creator of the earth and heavens, Who does what He wills; the One that is unlike anything and nothing compares to Him. The text also signifies the status of the Prophet as 'His servant' So he is a servant-messenger. In another Qur'anic *surah* where the story of that miracle is more detailed the status of the Prophet as a servant is also clearly stated:

*"By the star when it sets. Your comrade errs not, nor is deceived. Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired."* (53: 1-4)

This is a clear indication that the Prophet was protected against erring and deceit and that whatever he brought was a revelation from Allah the Almighty. The revelation was brought to him by Angel Jibril (pbuh) and it is a fact that the Prophet saw him twice in his angelic form with six hundred wings. The first one was when he appeared to him in the cave of Hira, about which we read in the Qur'an:

*"...which one of mighty power has taught him, one vigorous, and he grew clear to his view, when he was on the upper most horizon. Then he drew nigh and came down, till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer. And he revealed unto His slave that which he revealed. The heart lied not (in seeing) what it saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what he sees?"* (53:13-15)

The signs that the Prophet saw during *al-Isra* and *al-Mi'raj* were, however, so many: riding al-Buraq as a mount, leading all the prophets in prayer as an *imam* in Jerusalem, his ascension to the seventh heaven, meeting a Prophet in every heaven, seeing Prophet Musa in the sixth heaven, seeing Prophet Ibrahim in the seventh, seeing the much-frequented house '*al-Bait al-Ma'mour*' in the seventh heaven, his ascent to the Lote- tree, his talking to Allah, seeing Paradise and the people there, seeing Angel Jibril in his angelic form with six hundred wings and the prescription of fifty prayers a day then the number was reduced to five, are just a few of such miracles. Such great miracles were not performed by any other Prophet. Yet when he came back from that journey, he further stressed to the people that he was only a servant of

Allah and that he was a human messenger sent by Him.

The Qur'an also cites the miracle of the splitting of the moon. When the people of Quraysh asked the Prophet to show them a sign. He asked them to look at the moon. When they did they saw it split into two parts and they saw the mountain and the cave of Hira standing between the two parts. The people then claimed that Muhammad had performed magic on them. Of this event Allah says:

*"The hour drew nigh and the moon was rent in two. And if they behold a portent they turn away and say: Prolonged illusion." (54:1-2)*

The Hadith also contains accounts of many miracles narrated through authentic chains of narrators. We will give here some examples.

Abu Hurayrah said that during the battle of Tabuk the army experienced a shortage of food and was struck by hunger. They asked the Prophet to allow them to slaughter some camels used to carry water so they might get something to eat. The Prophet (pbuh) agreed, but Umar ibn Al-Khattab said,

"O Messenger of Allah! If we do that we will run out of camels. Will you ask people to bring whatever food they may have in one place and ask Allah to bless it?"

The Prophet agreed and asked the people to put whatever food they had left on a rug. Some of them brought a handful of grain, others a handful of dates and others brought pieces of bread. When they all put food on the rug it looked so little in quantity! The Prophet prayed to Allah to bless it, then said to the people, "Now you can fill your containers." All the food containers in the camp were filled up and still there was some food left over on the rug. The Prophet said,

"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah. Any servant of Allah who meets Allah with this belief will never be barred from Paradise."

The Prophet draws attention here to the fact that the miracle was from Allah and by his power and permission, and that Allah supports who he wishes by His miracles whenever He wishes so that the believers may increase their belief in Allah and His Messenger.

In another occasion and during the battle of Uhud, Abu Qatadah's eye was badly injured and it actually came out of its socket over his cheek. The messenger of Allah put it back with his hand and it healed up and became better than the other eye.

It is also narrated that Ukasha broke his sword during the battle of Badr. The Messenger gave him a stump of a tree to use instead. The stump turned into Ukasha's hand a strong steel sword.

Also on the same day of Badr the Messenger picked up a fistful of dust and threw it towards the army of the polytheists. The dust reached every one of them either in

their eyes, nostrils or mouths. The result was that they all fled away. To avoid any misunderstanding by some of the people of what had happened, the revelation came to the Messenger,

*"And you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw." (8:17)*

As a human, Muhammad could not make the dust reach as far as it did without the permission of Allah.

Allah gave His Prophet many great miracles such as the water that gushed between his fingers, the little food that became sufficient for a multitude of people, and the stone that used to greet him in Makkah.

Imam Muslim narrates in the 'Book of Jihad' that during the battle of Hunain, the Messenger of Allah dismounted from his mule, took a fistful of dust and threw it at the enemies. They ran away and the Muslims won.

Buraidah (may Allah be pleased with him) related that a man who had just become a Muslim asked the Prophet to show him a miracle to strengthen his belief. The Prophet said to him, "Say to that bush over there that the Messenger of Allah is calling you." The bush leaned right then left, forward then backward till its roots were all cut. It came forward and stopped in front of the Messenger of Allah and said, "*Assalamu Alaikum ya Rasul Allah.*" (Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah.) The man then asked the Prophet to command the bush to go back to its place. The Prophet did and the bush went back and laid down its roots and settled down where it was. The man then said, 'Would you allow me to prostrate to you.' The Prophet refused and replied, 'If I were to order anyone to prostrate, I would order the wife to prostrate to the husband.'

Al-Hakim related in his book that the Prophet was travelling with a group of his Companions when a man approached them. The Prophet asked him,

"Where are you going?" "To my family," the man replied. "Shall I tell you something good for you?" said the Prophet.

"What?" said the man.

"That you testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is his servant and Messenger."

"Do you have any proof of what you are saying?" asked the man.

"This bush" replied the Prophet. He called the bush by the side of the valley and the bush came, furrowing the ground behind it and stopped in front of him. The Prophet asked it to testify and it did three times. Then it returned to its original place. The man said to the Prophet,

"I am going back to my people. If they follow me, I will bring them to you. Otherwise, I will come back by myself and stay with you."

Jaber said,

"We were travelling with the Messenger of Allah when we came to a valley. The Prophet went to answer the call of nature and I followed him, carrying a water skin for him. The Prophet looked around and could not find anything to conceal him. There were only two bushes by the edge of the valley and he went to one of them. He held some of its branches in his hand and said, 'Submit to me by the permission of Allah the Almighty' The bush followed him as a camel led from its nose follows its owner. He did the same to the other bush. When he stood between them he said, 'Be joined together by the permission of Allah.' And they were."

In all these miracles one can clearly see how prostration to a human being, the Prophet in particular, is forbidden although it was allowed for people before Islam and it was not for worship. After Islam this act was totally forbidden as unlawful.

The Prophet (pbuh) was given a status that put him above other people and made him the best among the prophets. He says of himself,

"Without boasting, I am the master of the children of Adam,"

and

"Adam and those who came after him are under my banner on the day of judgement." (Narrated by Muslim.)

That was the limit of human perfection and a gift from Allah; all Muslims have appreciated this fact throughout history. Muhammad was a human being like other human beings, yet he was like a ruby and other people are like stones.

The Qur'an confirms that the Prophet is a human being just like any other person in the way he was born, and that he lived and died as any human being. The other prophets come below him in status in the sight of Allah and the angels. The Qur'an mentions that Allah has made a covenant with the prophets that when they hear the Message of Muhammad, they should believe in him. The Messenger's name was also described in the Torah as well as in the Gospel along with his signs as well as his Companions. Allah promises in the Qur'an that he will give to the Prophet until he is satisfied. On the other hand we find in the *sunnah* and the Hadith many texts emphasising the human nature of the Prophet and forbidding prostration to him.

One of the characteristics of the Prophet was that he used to see anything behind him at the same time as in front of him. Abu Hurayrah related that the Prophet said,

"Do you see my Qiblah here? By Allah neither your piety nor your bowing in prayer are concealed from me. I can see you behind my back." (Narrated by Muslim.)

Imam Al-Nawawi explains this ability by that Allah had given him a way to see behind his back. Qadi Iyad, however, maintained that the Prophet saw behind him through his eyes.

When people came to the Prophet to solve their problems or judge among them on their disputes with each other he used to say to them,

"I am just a human and you refer your cases to me to judge between you. One of you may put his argument forward more intelligently than his opponent, then I may judge accordingly. If I make such a judgement to someone it is as if I have cut a piece of fire for him."

In all his actions and behaviour the Prophet demonstrated his qualities as a true and sincere servant of Allah.

Even his enemies never claimed that he asked people to worship him. Rather, they accused him of being a sorcerer, a monk and sometimes a crazy person. On the contrary the Prophet was the wisest person, the leader of the pious, the seal of the prophets and the messengers and the most beloved to Allah. How beautiful is the saying of the poet who composed:

Our utmost knowledge about him says  
That he is a human being  
He is the most distinguished  
And the best of all creation.

Whoever reads the teaching of the Messenger and the instructions to his Companions, will clearly realise his clever device to link people in their behaviour and prayers with Allah, the Almighty. He repeatedly told them that it was Allah who caused good or bad and that He alone was the Giver of gifts. One day Abd Allah was riding behind the Prophet, his cousin, when the Prophet said to him,

"Boy, I am going to teach you a few words. Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find him in front of you. If you ask, ask Allah; if you seek help, seek help of Allah. Know that if the nation were to gather together to harm you with anything, it will benefit you only with something Allah has prescribed for you. The pens have lifted and the pages have dried." (Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi.)

Would it be believable then that the Prophet is worshipped? He guided his Companions to the depth of the trust in Allah,

"And who so ever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him." (65: 3)

He taught them to fear nothing save Allah and to connect their hearts with him and to rely on Him. He taught them how to believe in fate whether it is good or bad and that whatever happens is from Allah. If the Muslim believes in this, he will never worship anyone else but Allah.

When Abu Amr Sufyan ibn Abd Allah, may Allah be pleased with him, asked the Messenger,

"O Messenger of Allah, tell me something about Islam which I can ask of no one but you," the Prophet said,

"Say, I believe in Allah and thereafter be upright." (Narrated by Muslim)

Allah preserved the *sirah* of the Prophet clear and pure. He started and ended with monotheism. He was never worshipped either during his life or after his death. Ibn Umar related that the Messenger of Allah said,

"I have been ordered to fight against people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and until they perform the prayers and pay the zakah. If they do so, they will have gained protection from me for their lives, unless they do acts that are punishable in accordance with Islam, and their reckoning will be with Allah the Almighty."

And here is the Prophet teaching the community the meaning of trust in Allah and having faith in Him and relying on Him. On the authority of Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari from the Prophet, among sayings he relates from his master, is that he said,

"O my servants, I have forbidden oppression for my self and have forbidden it amongst you, so do not oppress one another. O my servants, all of you are astray except those I have led, so seek food of me and I shall feed you. O my servants, all of you are naked except those of you I have clothed, so seek clothing of me and I shall clothe you. O my servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of me and I shall forgive you.

O my servants, you will not attain harming Me so as to harm Me, and you will not attain benefiting Me so as to benefit Me. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you the jinn of you, to be as pious as the most pious heart in anyone man of you, that would not decrease my kingdom in anything. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you the men of you and the jinn of you, be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any men of you, that would not decrease my kingdom in anything. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the men of you and the jinn of you to rise up in one place and make requests of Me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it.

O my servants it is but your deeds, that I reckon up for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good praise Allah and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself." (Narrated by Muslim.)

Uqba ibn Nafi related that the Prophet said,

"I am a witness against you. By Allah I am looking at my pool. I have been given the keys of the treasures of the earth by Allah. I do not fear that you would be atheists afterwards but I am afraid that you may compete over this world." He said this in a speech he made a few days before he died. Obviously he was confident that the principle of Allah's oneness was deep rooted in his community and that they would not associate others with Allah. He actually swore that they never would.

The Messenger, however, did warn the community against covert polytheism. He was once asked,

"Would your community become atheists after you died?" He said,

"They do not worship the sun, the moon or idols but they show off by their deeds."

In his last sermon the Prophet confirmed this by saying,

"The Satan gave up trying to be worshipped in this land of yours."

This is the Messenger of Allah the teacher of monotheism and the noble Prophet who taught us to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and to worship Allah alone. Would it then be believable that he is worshipped? No. He left us on the straight and clear path, its night is like its day so only the doomed will stray from it. He conveyed the message and strove in the cause of Allah to the last minute of his life.

We pray to Allah the Almighty to keep this community in its religion and guide us to follow His Prophet and emulate his *sunnah*, and to enable us to reach his pool and drink from his noble hand a wholesome drink after which we may never feel thirsty. May all the prayers and blessings of Allah be on Muhammad, the household of Muhammad and the Companions of Muhammad, May Allah be pleased with all the followers till the day of judgement and may He be pleased with us by his mercy.

#### CONCLUSION

It has been made quite clear that the Messenger of Allah is the Messenger of *Tawhid* and the seal of Messengers and Prophets. His message is based on worshipping Allah only. He came to take people out of darkness to light, from idol-worship to the worship of one god, the All Powerful. The Messenger warned his community against all types of *shirk* and brought them up on the principle of *Tawhid*. He is the Messenger of mercy who was given to all mankind. He came with the final message and Allah Himself has taken the responsibility of preserving the Qur'an, not leaving it to the people.

"We have sent down the message, and We will assuredly guard it." (15:9)

Because the Messenger of Allah is the seal of the Prophets, Allah guaranteed him protection,

*"Allah will protect you from mankind."* (5:67)

and confirmed that whatever the Prophet brought was a revelation,

*".....nor does he speak of his own desire. It is nothing less than an inspiration that is inspired."* (53:3-4)

This is how Allah Almighty has preserved His book and confirmed the Prophets greatness. He protected, honoured and valued the status of His Messenger. At the same time Allah reminds us that the Messenger was a human who was the best one to truly worship Allah and the best to call to the worship of Allah. He then explained the Messenger's status with his Lord and commanded the community to respect this Messenger and to love him and to praise him within the limits prescribed by Allah Almighty. In this context, it would be appropriate to refer here to the Companions of the Messenger, who respected and revered the Prophet. Many of the Prophet's poets praised him and extolled his qualities. Hassan ibn Thabit, may Allah be pleased with him, composed the following poem:

O supporter of the reliant,  
O haven of the refugee,  
You are the Prophet and the best of Adam's children,  
O you who give generously,  
Like the overflow of the sea,  
Michael and Gabriel both are with you,  
A reinforcement to support you,  
From One All Powerful and All Noble.

In a poem dedicated to the Prophet, Hassan also said,

One better than you my eyes never saw,  
To one more beautiful than you no women gave birth,  
You are created free of any flaw,  
It is as if you were created as you wish.

Abd Allah ibn Rawaha also composed on the Prophet:

You are the Prophet,  
And whoever is deprived of his intercession  
On the day of judgement is no doubt lost,  
May Allah support and confirm,  
Whatever he has given you,  
As He did to Musa.

He also said:

May my soul be a ransom to the one whose manners  
Testified that he was the best,  
Born human,  
His virtues have spread to all the people,  
As have the lights of the sun and the moon.

If we wanted to look into what the poets have composed in praise of the Prophet when he was alive and the lamentation after his death, we would need volumes to do so. Many poets later followed the footsteps of the Prophet's poets. They enumerated his virtues, their love for him and for his message and composed on his miracles. They achieved a high standard of artistic proficiency and creativity.

It may be mentioned here that Al-Busairi, the great poet, is considered to be the most honest in praising the prophet. His famous poem '*Al-Burdah*', which consists of over a hundred and sixty lines, is known to be a masterpiece in praise style. It has been memorised and read by millions of Muslims throughout the World for over seven centuries now. It is still, like Al-Busairi himself, the best example of how to praise the Prophet. An example of this can be seen in his lines:

Leave all those things, which Christians claimed  
While praising their own Prophet,  
But say and assert with confidence,  
Whatever you wish  
To pen down in your encomium

So let us read some more lines of that great poem:

Muhammad is the Leader of the universe,  
And the Hereafter,  
The guide of both  
Arabs and the non-Arabs,  
He is the Friend of Allah,  
From whom we are have high hopes of intercession  
In all the woes  
That have descended on the human race.  
He surpasses all the prophets,  
Both in appearance and in qualities,  
None could be comparable to him in knowledge and,  
Generosity,  
Leave all those things, which Christians claimed,  
While praising their own prophet,  
But say and assert with confidence,  
Whatever you want to pen down in thy encomium,  
Ascribe to him all reverence and all honour,



As you like,  
 And as much as you wish assert his eminence,  
 Because the boundless merits of the Messenger of Allah,  
 Are such that none can speak of them,  
 With all the eloquent tongues,  
 Our utmost knowledge about him says,  
 That he is a human being,  
 He is the most distinguished,  
 And the best of all creation,  
 Exquisitely he was formed,  
 And then he was endowed with amiability,  
 And ideal beauty,  
 Which consists in freshness, happiness and joy.  
 Like bright, fresh flowers  
 And in grandeur as a full moon  
 He is bounteous like the ocean and  
 Like time in fortitude  
 He is unique and nonpareil,  
 In glory and in majesty  
 Perchance one sees him single and alone  
 Even then he seems to have in full attendance,  
 All his suite and retinue,  
 When he beckoned the trees;  
 They rolled towards him,  
 With their branches bowing,  
 They moved towards him on their trunks  
 For trees possess no feet.

Trust and the testifier of Truth  
 Both in the cave remained unseen.  
 And those searching for them said,  
 "There is no one inside"  
 They saw the wild pigeons and the spider,  
 And concluded wrongly,  
 That they had never laid eggs,  
 Nor woven cobwebs,  
 For the best of all creation.  
 It was Allah's protection,  
 Which gave strength,  
 To do away with all,  
 The double coats of amour,

And the lofty ramparts of the forts.  
 You must not reject or disbelieve  
 The messages he received in his dreams.  
 No doubt his eyes appeared to sleep,  
 But the heart was always awake.  
 Praise be to Allah,  
 Because by one's own personal efforts,  
 No revelation can be acquired,  
 Nor any Prophet can ever be blamed,  
 That spoke of the unknown by himself.

The Prophet's prayer transformed the barren year,  
 Resurrecting its fertility,  
 To such an extent that it was made distinct,  
 Among the years of surplus plenitude.

Praising the Prophet has always inspired Muslim poets throughout history. It remains a dream and a hope they look forward to achieve as this unique art was started by some eminent poets among the Companions of the Prophet.

Since the art of Prophetic praise and analogy started with Hassan ibn Thabit Al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him) and still up to now, many poets have joined this effort and reached high standards.

The *Burdah* poem of Al-Busairi is no doubt the best. Many poets tried to imitate or compose similar poems in its style. Ahmed Shawqi wrote a famous poem called '*Nahj Al-Burdah*' which starts with:

An antelope in a valley,  
 Between Ban and Alam,  
 Allowed shedding my blood during,  
 The sacred months.

He also composed another poem imitating Al-Busairi:

How could other Prophets ascend to the level you ascend?  
 You are a sky that no other sky could match in height.  
 The guidance is born so the creation illuminated,  
 The month of time is all thankful and smiling,  
 Allah gave the skies the glad tidings of your comings,  
 And the earth smelled musk,  
 A day which can boast on time,  
 Both its morning and evening are radiant,  
 When you give,  
 You reach the utmost of generosity,

Even more generous than blowing winds,  
And when you show kindness you are a mother or a father,  
Both are the kindest in the world,  
You alone have the honour of intercession,  
And you are too exalted to need intercession  
You are under the throne of the powerful,  
You are by the side of the pool giving water to others,  
May Allah pray on you whenever,  
A cameler travelled in the down,  
And whenever a she-camel in,  
The wilderness yearned to her baby.

Hence anyone wishing to praise the Messenger may do so knowing that the Prophet was the Messenger of the *Tawhid*, he was a human and a Messenger. Since the advent of the Islam, this community has honoured, loved and praised its Messenger. They know he was a human and a servant of Allah. Therefore, the Prophet has never been worshipped during his life or afterwards. This is a great favour from Allah on him as well as on the community. So exalted be He who protected him, brought him up and made him the best character and sent him as a mercy.

Praise be to Allah who made us followers of Muhammad and we pray to Him to keep us steadfast on this noble religion and make us lovers of the Prophet and of his household and his great Companions. Ameen.

