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## THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD: THE UNIFYING VOICE OF ISLAM

**Bismillâh, Alhamdulillah**

**Allâhumma salli wa sallim alâ sayyidinâ Muhammadin,  
wa alâ âlihi wa sahbih**

**Al-hamdu-li-Llaahi, muqaliba-l-quluubi wa-l-abṣaar. Allaahumma thabit  
quluubana ʿala ṣiraaṭika-l-qaweem, wa-jʿalnaa li-wajhika muttajiheen, wa  
ṣalli ʿala-sh-shafeeʿi-l-habeeb, raḥmatil-ʿaalameen, wa manaari-l-najiyeen, wa  
marsaa-l-ʿaarifeen**

Praise be to Allah, the Turner of the hearts and sight. O Allah, fix our hearts on the best of Your ways, and make us face You in our way, and bestow blessings on the beloved intercessor, the mercy of all the worlds, the lighthouse of the survivors, the harbor of the knowers.



*La 'ilaha 'il-Allaahu, Muhammadan Rasulullah.* There is none worthy of worship except Allah (Subḥaanahu wa taʿaalaa), and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Surely he is the best of those created by Allah (Subḥaanahu wa taʿaalaa).

The opportunity to speak on the life and example of of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) is an opportunity to place the Prophet's love of Allah (Subḥaanahu wa taḥaalaa), and his subsequent role as Messenger to humanity, in the right perspective—the perspective of today, of *now*. The Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) plays a role in our day-to-day existence as a model for life. More than this, he is a metaphor for the love of Allah (Subḥaanahu wa taḥaalaa), and an expression of love itself.

Human beings today, especially in the Westernized world (which I remind you is everywhere, not just in the West) hold such fragmented perspectives that even the subject of love has become compartmentalized. It has come to connote primarily physical relationships and love of objects. But it must also be understood as *eshq* and the accompanying state of ecstasy (*wajd*) that provides a seamless awareness and consciousness of swimming in the ocean of *rahmat* that is Allah, that is *Al Haqq*.

### ***Contrasts of Love (Eshq) and Yearning (Himma)***

Each day, our worldly lives confront us with the contrasts between the reality of *dunya*, and the reality within the deep recesses of *qalb*: in the world of love and total submission. Life is filled with vicissitudes, with alternating experiences of nearness and distance from Allah (Subḥaanahu wa taḥaalaa), from the memory of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam), and from one another. The challenges and demands of love, surrender and trust are so intertwined with every day experiences we can get very confused.

What is this *eshq*, this love? It comes from the word *ashiq*: to love passionately; to be loved passionately. It also implies a seamless connection. It has no

beginning, no ending. It is only the Love of Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa). The lover and the beloved are drawn together in their *himma* (ardor, eagerness, and yearning) for one another. We all know this Love.

*Himma* is a yearning that is disquieting. It preoccupies the lover. So, too, it suggests an element of distress, grief, worry, even affliction: all are part of *himma*. This *himma*—this affliction of love (*eshq*)—has two sides, as we see in the life of the Prophet (ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam). On the one hand are the anxieties of life. Yet, amidst these anxieties can be found magnanimity, heroism, gallantry (*humam*), solicitude, care, and attentiveness (*ihitimam*), the gentle lulling of a baby to sleep with a lullaby (*tahmeema*). In *himma*, we begin to understand the seeds of love that were planted in the soil of our souls long ago, to be grown to their maximum potential in the light, the *Nur-i-Muhammad*.

The *himma* that rises in our hearts, that turns our lives around, is a metaphor for unity (*tawhīd*). *Tawhīd* is the reality (and the only reality) that is Islam: this seamlessness of passion and love.

### ***Unity: The Basis of Islam***

*Tawhid* is the basis of Islam, the unity that is Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa) the thread that unites all the seemingly disparate aspects of our lives. Outwardly, *tawhid* manifests in community (*ummah*). Consider the many forces that serve to unify people within Islam. All believers are called to bear witness to one Truth, *Al Haqq*. All are held responsible for the same burden: the *khalifat* for which Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa) created us. All are mandated to care for one another, as the Prophet instructed us:

**God loves those who love His creatures, and who for the love of Allah disperse His wealth; who, though longing for it themselves...**

And Allah Swt tells us in Qur'an:

*Wa yut. Cimuna-t.-t. aCaama Calaa h.ubbihii miskiinanw-wa yatiimanw-wa 'asiiraa; 'innamaa nut. Cimukum li-wajhi-l-laahi laa nuriidu minkum jazaaa'anw-wa-wa laa shukuuraa.*

**...bestow their food on the poor, the orphans, the needy and captives; who feed you for the sake of Allah and seek from you neither recompense nor thanks. (76:8-9).**

Finally, all believers are enjoined to be a unified community, functioning as a cohesive whole for the good of humanity.

*WaCtas. imuu bi-h.abli-llaahi jamiiCan-w-wa laa tafarraquu. Wadh-kurruu niCmatal-laahi Calaykum 'idh kuntum 'aCdaaa'an fa'allafa bayna quluubikum fa'as.bah.tum-bi-niCmatihiii 'ikhwaanaa....*

**And hold fast all together by the rope Allah stretches out to you, and be divided not among yourselves. And remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became brothers... (3:103)**

*Waltakum-minkum 'Ummatun-y-yad'uuna 'ilaal-khayri wa ya'muruuna bil-ma'ruufi wa yanhawna 'ani-l-munkar: wa'uulaaa'ika humu-l-muuflih.uun.*

**And let there be of you an *umma* to call to the good, to enjoin virtue and forbid vice. Those who do so are the felicitous. (3:104)**

As Muslims, we see *tawhid* as a fundamental principle; “creating unity” is therefore an oxymoron. Fragmentation and disunity are more apparent than real. Unity always underlies our diversity. Without the foundation of *tawhid*, without the sense of community, without diversity in unity, there could be no Islam.

Yet, Muslim societies today are fraught with schisms. Fear and contractiveness characterize much of the communication among our brothers and sisters. One need spend only a short time on the Internet to come across dialogues turned into diatribe. The sweet, subtle melody of the love of Nebi Muhammad (s̄. alla-llaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is lost under a cacophony of *takfir*.

How far we have come from the *himma* of the lover for the beloved! How distant we are from the seamless, ceaseless exchange of love (*hubb*) between the Lord (Subh̄. aanahu wa ta'aalaa) and his Prophet (s̄. alla-llaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and between the Prophet (s̄. alla-llaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and his Lord (Subh̄. aanahu wa ta'aalaa).

### ***Nurturing the Seeds (Habbaa) of Love (Hubb)***

Let us look again at the word *hubb*, and how comprehensive it is. *Hubba* means to love, to evoke affection, amicability. *Habeeba* means beloved, sweetheart.

Related words include *habaab* (aim, goal); *muhabbab* (agreeable, pleasant, desirable); and *tahabub* (mutual love, concord, harmony). *Mahabba* is the love that rises up in the heart. *Ahabba* describes the state of the camel who kneels down and refuses to stand up again. Such is the determination of the lover, who will not budge from the state of love.

From the same root comes the word *habbaa*, meaning “seeds.” In the thirty-third *ayat* of Sura Ya Seen, we read:

*Wa 'Aayatul-lahumu-l-'ard,u-l-maytah: 'ah,yaynaahaa wa 'akhrajnaa minhaa h,abban faminhu ya 'kuluun.*

**And the sign to them is the lifeless earth in winter. We give it life and bring forth from it seeds so that from it, they may eat of it (36:33).**

The seeds, the *habbaa*, are potential, waiting to be realized. The potential comes to fruition when the seeds break out of their shells and emerge in a new state, in which they re-create their own seeds. The dynamic of life repeats through the power of *hubb*. This is the story of the lover and the beloved, the story of the lovers of Allah (Subh,aanahu wa taCaalaa), the story of the lovers of Nebi Muhammad (s,alla-llaahu Caalayhi wa sallam).

The story begins in the seed of love within our hearts. The dead earth is a heart that is not awakened. What nourishes the heart? Love. Not just selfish love, but mutual love, as in the *Hubb* of the Prophet Muhammad (s,alla-llaahu Caalayhi wa sallam) towards Allah (Subh,aanahu wa taCaalaa), and of Allah (Subh,aanahu wa

taʿaala) towards the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). Not love focused solely on one's own well-being, but love that encompasses everyone, as did the love of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam).

### ***A Model of Kindliness, Compassion, and Tolerance***

How aware are we of the limitless ability of the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) to love and respect others, without distinction of race or creed?

Following the Battle of Badr, a Meccan by the name of 'Umayr ibn Wahb of the Quraysh came to Medina, intent upon killing the Prophet. As he approached the mosque where the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) was, Umar ibn al-Khattab (*radiy Allahu Taʿaala ʿanhu*) took note of his sword and moved to stop him. But the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) called to Umar to let the man enter. Inviting Umayr to sit near him, he began to speak to the would-be assassin. He talked to 'Umayr with great affection, kindness, and sweetness. Then, he recounted in exact detail the assassination plot that he and an accomplice had devised. 'Umayr was astonished, for they were the only two who had known of their intentions. So impressed was he by the Prophet's insight and generosity that he accepted Islam. Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) neither reprimanded nor punished 'Umayr for having set out to kill him.

What kind of power lies in an individual who could unify enemies and strangers? How many people in the history of humanity has remained a major global force, more than 1400 years after their passing? Clearly, we are discussing a person of strength and courage, gentleness and concern.

Not only in words but in deeds, the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) was true to the guidance:

**Make things easy, not difficult.**

He avoided attending the Taraweeh prayer one night because he did not want to place an undue burden on the believers. He arrived at the mosque, saw the people gathered, and retreated to his quarters, for he realized that if he did the prayer every evening, it would be interpreted as a *fard*. On another occasion, when Mu'adh (*radīy Allahu Taḥaalaanahu*) extended the congregational prayer, the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) said, “O Mu'adh! Are you putting the people on trial?” He repeated this three times, ensuring that Mu'adh understood his disapproval.

He continually guided his *sahaba* to express care and concern towards all people. A man asked the Holy Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam), “O Messenger of Allah! How am I to know whether I did good or bad?” The Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) said,

**Idhaa samiḥta jiiraanaka yaquuluuna qad ah,santa faqad ah,santa;  
wa'idhaa samiḥtum yaquuluuna qad asa'ta faqad asa'ta.**

**When you hear your neighbors say, “You have done good,” then you have done good; and when you hear them say, “You have done bad,” then you have certainly done bad.**

The Holy Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) had so much mercy for others that he was pained whenever he saw anyone in need and thought always of others before himself. In the battle of Uhud, when the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) was struck in the face and his teeth were broken, he said:

**O, Allah! Forgive my companions for abandoning me. They are ignorant. I remain with them, because I am your servant and slave, in order to illumine their hearts.**

If we aspire to be counted among the lovers of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam), then surely we must contemplate, humbly and sincerely, where we stand in the long shadow of the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam). How do we act towards our families and neighbors, let alone our enemies? How do we respond when we see others in pain, misery, grief, loss, and disbelief?

### *The Transforming Power of Love*

Do we hesitate to love as the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) loved? Perhaps we are too aware of the distrust with which kindness is likely to be met in this day and age. What a world, where generosity and goodness are suspect! We know why they are suspect: we know their power, and we know that people have misused that power. Yet, how sad to think that if someone of even half the caliber of the Prophet Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) or the Prophet Isa (*Ḍalaihi-s-salaam*) were to visit our society today, his or her kindness would evoke more suspicion than gratitude.

But similar distrust confronted the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam), and it never deterred him from his mission. The Quraysh heaped hostility upon their

kinsman, a man so patient, kind, tolerant, forgiving, and willing to suffer for others that he was intolerable to the likes of Abu Lahab and Abu Jahl. Even when Abu Jahl openly reviled him, the Prophet (ﷺ) could not be provoked. When Hamza (*radiy Allahu Ta'alaanhu*) beat Abu Jahl for insulting his nephew, the Prophet took no pleasure in it. He said to Hamza, “I have nothing to do with revenge.” Is that the attitude of Muslims today?

The enthusiasm of the Prophet (ﷺ) for bringing the love and the Truth of Allah (Subhānahu wa ta'alaanahu) to the people was equaled by their resistance. But he did not alter his conviction. Rather, the world changed around him. The Prophet was so far above pettiness and extreme behavior, selfishness and personal greed, that his love was transforming. People who had not been able to see, now saw. People who had not been willing to hear, now heard. Such was the *baraka* of Nebi Muhammad (ﷺ).

### ***Polishing the Heart***

The Prophet’s strength of character, values, and ethic became an irresistible inspiration to others. Just as it can be in today’s fractured world.

Thumama bin Uthal of the Hanifah tribe was captured in battle and brought to the Prophet, who ordered him tied to a pillar of the mosque. When the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) came and asked him what he had to say about his attacks on Islam, he replied, “O Muhammad, if you kill me, you will kill a murderer. If you are benevolent, you are benevolent to a grateful person. If you demand compensation, that person himself will pay for it.” The Prophet said nothing and went away. The next day, he visited the mosque again. He asked the

same question, and received the same answer. The scene repeated itself the following day. Having heard the identical reply three days in a row, the Prophet (ṣalla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) ordered Thumama released. The latter was so impressed by this generous treatment that he did *wudu*, returned to the mosque, and embraced Islam of his own free will.

The Prophet manifested the essential character (*fitruh*) of the human being: the “natural disposition” or “inborn, intuitive ability to discern between right and wrong, true and false, and [thus] to sense God’s existence and oneness” (Asad 621). In so doing, he drew forth the essential character of the individuals who came into contact with him. Through his *hubb*, he evoked and continues to evoke the *habbaa*—the seeds of Allah (Subh.aanahu wa taʿaalaa)’s intention within every human being.

One unravels the complexity of life through the simplicity of the Prophet (ṣalla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). Moreover, by looking at Nebi Muhammad (ṣalla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam), we deepen our awareness of our nearness to Allah. In a Hadith Qudsi, Allah (Subh.aanahu wa taʿaalaa) said,

**...My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him, I am the ears with which he hears, the eyes with which he sees, the hands with which he strikes, and the feet with which he walks.**

We see this most clearly in Nebi Muhammad (ṣalla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). The Prophet was a conduit for the attributes of Allah (Subh.aanahu wa taʿaalaa) as they are expressed in Allah’s creation.

The Prophet Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) spent his days toiling in the world and spent his nights in prayer and *fikr*. This is the model that we must follow.

***“Our Knowledge is a Process”***

When looking at the life and role of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam), we are looking not at a collection of individual incidents and sayings, but at an unfolding process: the process of inviting, the process of loving, the process of sacrificing, the process of having faith. All of these are processes, not things. Indeed, Islam itself is a process.

The Prophet Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) said,

**Our knowledge is a process that can be used successfully by anyone’s senses who believes in and intuits that there is a fundamental unity that binds us together.**

Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) is the bridge between the absoluteness of the Truth that is Allah, and the relative truth as we manifest it in *dunya*. He was continually responsive to the unique demands of each circumstance. On one occasion, a man came to confess a sin and receive the punishment due him. The Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) ordered him to free a slave. The man replied that he had no slaves to free. The Prophet said that he should fast for two months. He said he was too weak to do that. The Prophet instructed him to provide food for all the poor, but he said he did not have the means to do so. Then the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu Ḍalayhi wa sallam) said,

“Please wait here.” After some time, a person came with a basket of dates for the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam). The Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) gave them to the man, telling him to use them to feed the poor. “Am I to give them to someone poorer than I?” the man asked. “For I swear by Allah, there is no one poorer than my family!”

The Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) laughed. Then he told the sinner, “Give the dates to your family, and eat!”

Nowhere do we find evidence of rigidity or dogmatism in the behavior of the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam). Rather, we find testimony that the most effective “law enforcement” takes place with gentleness and kindness; with sweet words, encouragement, and models of what it means to live a principled life, while covering the faults of others.

Today, our *ummah* is plagued with *takfir*, rigidity, factionalism, and excessive concern with details rather than essence. All such attitudes and behaviors belie a lack of confidence in one’s own faith. If Allah has enough faith in us to give us the responsibility of the *khalifat* and the power to make choices, then surely we need to have the faith in ourselves to be able to go beyond doctrinaire approaches and cultural sectarianism.

How, then, can any one group claim a monopoly on the “correct” expression of Islam? Indeed, why would anyone presume that homogeneity is even desirable in Islam? The Prophet himself said,

**The differences among my followers are a mercy.**

This tolerance for diversity amidst unity is the core of the love of the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam). This was the atmosphere that gave birth to the

*ummah* of Islam: an *ummah* that today is the majority religion in at least thirty-two countries and includes more than one billion people worldwide.

Allah (Subh<sup>h</sup>aanahu wa ta<sup>h</sup>aalaa) describes this *ummah* in the Holy Qur'an in the following terms:

**... Qul lillaahi-l-Mashriq wa-l-Maghrib: yahdii many-yashaaa'u  
'ilaa S,iraat,im Mustaqiim. Wa kadhaalika ja<sup>h</sup>alnaakum  
'Ummatan-w-Wasat,al-litakuunuu shuha-daaa'a <sup>h</sup>alaa-n-naasi wa  
yakuuna-r-Rasuulu <sup>h</sup>alaykum Shahiidaa....**

**... Say: To Allah belongs the East and the West. He will guide  
whom He will to the way that is straight. Thus, We made you the  
community of the center (*ummata wasit.a*) that you might be a  
witness to the people, and the Messenger, a witness to you... (2:142-  
143).**

The phrase *ummata wasita* contains clues to the nature of the unity that binds all Muslims together. *Ummah* is related to *imaama*: to lead the way, to lead by example. It derives from the same root as the word *umm*, meaning “mother; origin; foundation.” *Ummee* means “maternal, motherly,” while *umamee* means “international.” We see how closely interwoven are the ideas of establishing unity, both locally and internationally; leading by example; and bringing to our community the nurturing attitudes of the mother. Even in English, the word community reflects the idea of coming (to) unity: come-unity.

*Wasita* is the middle, the center. It also means “heart” (*qalb*), and so the community of the center is a community of the heart. The heart turns around a center. It revolves around love. Love, therefore, should and must be the

infrastructure of the relationships that define our community. Until we truly love without exceptions, without excuses, and without self-protection, we do not love enough.

Love achieves what cannot be accomplished by force, for it is a gentle breeze that touches human souls. One of the simplest forms of love is kind speech. The Qur'an states:

**Wa qul-li<sup>l</sup>l<sup>l</sup>ibaadii yaquuluu-llatii hiya 'h,asan: 'inna-sh-Shayt,aana yanzagu baynahum: 'inna-sh-Shayt,aana kaana lil'insaani <sup>l</sup>caduwwam-mubiinaa.**

**And tell my servants that they should speak in the most kindly manner [unto those who do not share their beliefs]; verily, Satan is always ready to stir up discord between people, for, verily, Satan is an open foe! (17:53)**

Our beloved Prophet (s,alla-llaahu <sup>l</sup>calayhi wa sallam) proved the power of soft and gentle language to reach the hearts of others.

Once a group of Jews in Medina greeted Nebi Muhammad (s,alla-llaahu <sup>l</sup>calayhi wa sallam) by saying, "Al Samu <sup>l</sup>calaykum," which means, "Death be upon you." Aisha (radiy Allahu Ta<sup>l</sup>caalaa <sup>l</sup>canha) grew angry and retorted, "May death be upon you, and curses!" The Prophet (s,alla-llaahu <sup>l</sup>calayhi wa sallam) disapproved of what Aisha (radiy Allahu Ta<sup>l</sup>caalaa <sup>l</sup>canha) had said, commenting,

**Innallaaha yuh,ibu-r-rifqa fi-l-amri kulih.**

## **Truly Allah loves kindness in everything.**

Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa) loves kindness in everything, from everyone, in every circumstance. Even if there is no kindness in return, still, there should be kindness.

### ***Following the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) in the Post-Modern World***

Today, the need to follow the Prophet's example of tolerance and compassion is greater than ever, for we confront diversity every day. Fewer and fewer people live in mono-cultures. Increasingly, we interact with different belief systems, lifestyles, ethnic groups and values on a daily basis. As our world grows smaller, it becomes even more incumbent to be non-biased, open, and flexible, as Nebi Muhammad (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) was.

For those of us who live in the Westernized world, such qualities may be the most effective means to share the bounties of our affection for the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). Westerners who were not born into Islam have difficulty identifying with Nebi Muhammad (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). The closeness that most Muslims feel towards the Prophet is based on their cultural background. They grew up with stories, lessons, and reminders that instilled a sense of their relationship with the Prophet (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam). Westerners lack this context. For them, the Prophet Muhammad becomes most meaningful when modern-day Muslims translate his qualities into their lives.

How can we model ourselves after the example of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ.alla-llaahu ʿalayhi wa sallam)? A key tool is conscious reflection, encompassed in the

Islamic concept of *muhasabah*. Muhasabah literally means to reckon, to reconcile, or to take an account of (as in balancing an organization's financial accounts).

**Qaala Rasuulu-llaah, s.alawaatu-llahi wa salaamuhu alayh:  
h,asibu 'anfusakum qabala an tuh,asibu wa zinu 'amalakum  
qabala 'an tuuzanu alaykum.**

**The Messenger of Allah (s,alla-llaahu alayhi wa sallam) said,  
"Account for your 'selves' before you are accounted; weigh your  
actions before your actions become a weight upon you."**

. The Prophet (sal) said,

**No one will commit a sin, then get up and purify himself, then  
pray, then ask Allah's forgiveness without Allah forgiving him.  
(Tirmidhi)**

Then he recited,

**Wa-lladheena idhaa fa-aluu fa-aishatan aw dhalamuu  
afusahum dhakaruu Allaaha fa-staghfaruu  
lidhunuubihim...ulaaa'ika jazaaa'uhum maghfiratum-mir-  
rabbihim....**

**And those who, when they do something to be ashamed of or  
wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their  
sins...the reward of such will be forgiveness from their  
Lord...(Qur'an 3:135-6).**

*Muhasabatu-n-nafs* entails the examination of one's self, of one's intentions, decisions, actions, and conscience. *Muhasabah* also has a collective implication. Let me return again to the *ayat*:

**And thus We made you a middle nation (*ummata wasita*) to be witnesses to mankind, and the Messenger is a witness to you (2:143).**

Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa) tells us that the Messenger (ṣalla-llāahu ʿalayhi wa sallam) is going to be a witness to all Muslims. This suggests that Muslims as a collective entity would be wise to assess how well they are following the message brought by the Prophet (ṣalla-llāahu ʿalayhi wa sallam).

Of course, this mandate poses a problem, for there is no singular collective identity that encompasses all Muslims in the world today. However, the concept of *muhasabah* may still be applied to the *ummah*. Lacking a single entity, the process becomes the responsibility of each subgroup of Muslims. Just as one drop of water is, in essence, the whole ocean, so too, any *ummah* is the *ummah* of Islam. We must not only account for ourselves individually before we are accounted for, but account for ourselves as a group, as if we were a unified whole. If we can remain mindful of the intra-relationship between our identity and the identity of the whole, then our “self” and the *ummah* will become as one in our mentality.

### ***Conclusion***

At this time in history, when Western values and civilization have been dominant for nearly three hundred years, we find communities and individuals yearning for

a sense of meaning, for a foundation rooted in something deeper than the material world. Muslims have the experience of sustaining a dynamic civilization longer than almost any other society in recorded history; and yet, the potential of Islam today is clouded by the fragmentation of our *ummah*. By the policalization of our Deen.

As we enter the next phase of crises in civilization, we must decide what role we wish to play. At one extreme, we can remain passive spectators while the forces of Westernization pervade societies everywhere. At the opposite extreme, we can react so vehemently that our reactions become as detrimental as that which we react to.

There is a third option, a middle path: to re-establish an Islamic civilization that is envied and copied by others, as was the lifestyle of Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam) and his *sahaba* fifteen centuries ago. We can take the lead in creating a truly civil society, based on goodness, tolerance, diversity within unity, and love of Allah (Subḥ. aanahu wa taḥaalaa) and His creatures and creation.

The model is clear. The task before us is to make our choice, and act on it.

May Allah (Subḥ. aanahu wa taḥaalaa) allow us to be aware of the truth of the example that He created for us in our beloved Prophet, Nebi Muhammad (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam). Amidst the simplest circumstances of life, let us find guidance; and in the most difficult circumstances of life, let us also find strength and guidance from the Prophet (ṣ. alla-llaahu ḥalayhi wa sallam). O Allah

(Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), protect everyone here in the *Nur-i-Muhammad*, and in your *Nur*, Allah Subhanallah wa'ta'ala.

O Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), grant that we may be aware of the presence of all of Your prophets and of the last of the prophets, Muhammad Abdullah (ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam). O Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), let us understand the real meaning of Islam in submission, safety, and security. O Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), let us walk on the wide boulevard of Sharia, and let us take that small path, the Tariqah, on that boulevard, and make it a safe and secure place, a fast walk for all those who want to know You and devote their lives to You.

O Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), let us pray for all of these brothers and sisters and their families. Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), protect them all, as they strive and dedicate their lives to this work, and are willing to accept what You give them with gratitude.

O Allah (Subhānahu wa taʿālaa), Most of all, Allah swt, let us bask in the shade of the love of Prophet Muhammad (sal) help us to emulate the pure character of your Prophet and remember what our Prophet sal said:

*'The example of me and you is like that of a man who kindled a fire. Grasshoppers and butterflies start falling into the fire and the man continued protecting them against it. I am holding you back from falling into the fire and you are slipping off my hand.'* Bukhari/Muslim.

Ya Allah, Ya Rasool...Help us to understand that Compassion is a sign of humility, It removes our arrogance. Help us to do good to all, to do as your

Prophet Muhammed (sal) did...to assist the needy , help the sick and disabled, feed the hungry and have concern for the affair of their fellow men and women...enjoining for the good and forbidding evil.

*Wa Llaahu lahu-l-h\_aqqi wa huwa yahdii-s-sabiil.*

*H\_asbunaa-Llaahu wah\_dahu wa niCma-l-wakiil.*

*Wa s\_alli C\_alaa sayyidinaa Muh\_ammadin wa aaalihi wa s\_ah\_bih\_i ajmaCiin*

*wa-l-h\_amdu li-Llaahi rabbi-l-C\_aalamiin.*

Truth belongs to Allah; it is He who shows the way.  
Allah, alone, suffices us, and what a fine guardian is He!

Blessings upon our Master Muhammad  
and his family and Companions altogether  
and praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

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