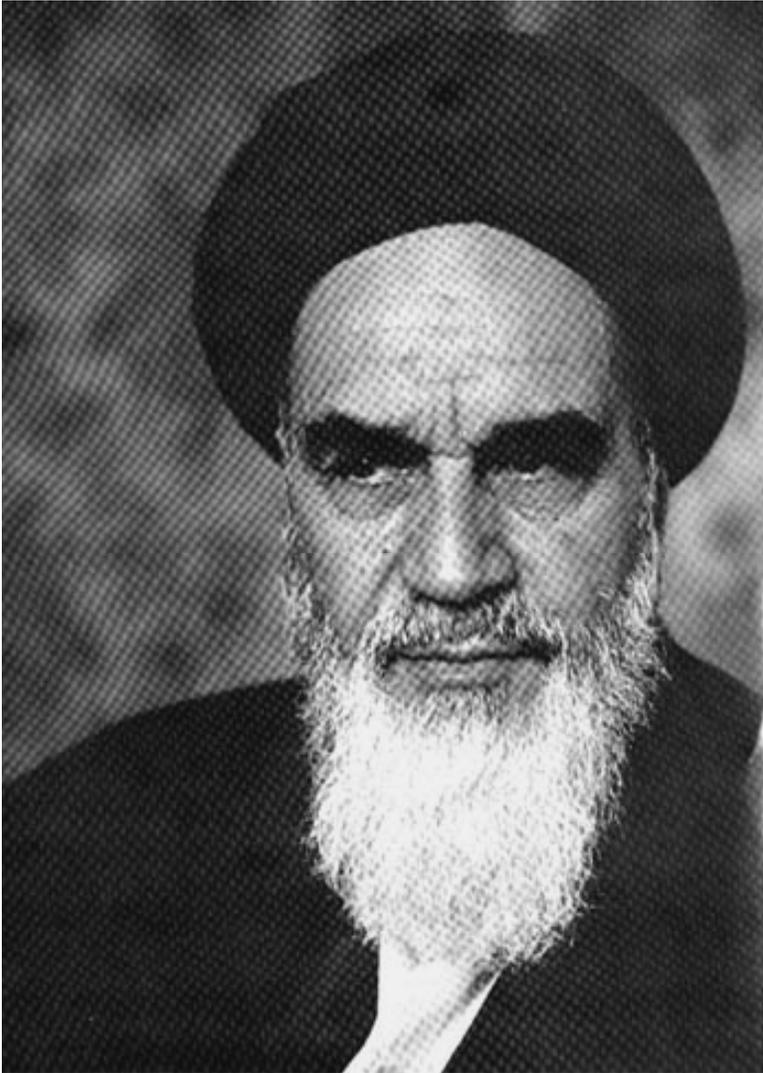


*In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful*



**Behavior and Character of the Holy Prophet of
Islam from Imām Khomeinī's Viewpoint**

*The Institute for Compilation and Publication
of Imām Khomeinī's Works
(International Affairs Department)*



**Behavior and Character of the Holy Prophet of Islam from
Imām Khomeinī's Viewpoint**

Publisher: International Affairs Department,
The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imām Khomeinī's
Works

Written By: Mostafa Dilshad Tehrani

Translator: 'Alī Shahbaz

Editor: Jafar Razi Khan

First Printing: 2007

Copies: 2000

Price: 5000 R.

Address: No. 5 Sudeh Alley, Yaser Street, Bahonar Avenue,
Jamaran, P.C. 19776, P.O. Box 19575/614, Tehran, Iran

Tel: (009821) 22283138, 22290191-5

Fax: (009821) 228304072

E-mail: international-dept@imam-khomeini.ir

سیره نبوی از دیدگاه امام خمینی (س) به زبان انگلیسی

Table of Contents

Preface	9
1. Principle of Observing 'Limits and Boundaries' Set by God	13
2. Principle of Leading a Simple Life	19
3. Principle of Devoting to Worship	25
4. Principle of Modesty and Humbleness	35
5. Principle of Mercy and Blessings-Love and Affection	43
6. Principle of Equality	49
7. Principle of Care for the Oppressed	59
8. Principle of Confronting Oppressors	71
9. Principle of Patience and Endurance	79

Preface

Meaning and Concept of *Sīrah*

The term *Sīrah*, grammatically is an infinitive extracted from its original root which is formed of three Arabic letters “*Sīm, Yā and Rā*”. It is applied to convey the following meanings:

To pass by, flow and stream, and to move about,¹ it is also applied on departing and undertaking a trip on earth, and traveling.²

Rāghib Isfahānī presents an explanation in this regard as following:

The term means to move about on earth, to walk, bypass and to go around the earth.

So by the combination of three letters ‘*Sīm, Yā and Rā*’ ‘above-mentioned term is formed which conveys the sense of moving on the night or the day. If this movement takes place secretly then it could be a token that the movement had been taken place at the night. Such a meaning has been confirmed and used in the first verse of *al-Isrā*’ chapter, in holy Qur’an.³

¹ *Mu‘jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, vol. 3, p. 120.

² *Lisān al-‘Arab*, vol. 6, p. 453.

³ *Kitāb al-‘Īn*.

The term '*Sīrah*' has also been defined as a tradition, religion, method, behavior and conduct. Whenever the term was used with regard to an individual, it would represent his book of creed and way of conduct.¹

Rāghib Isfahānī gives more explanation of the term as following:

'*Sīrah*' is a certain state or condition which has been set in existence of human and non-human, whether it was instinctive, or consciously learned. It is said that someone is a man of excellent character or adopts a bad and rough behavior.²

The experts of linguistic have defined the term '*Sīrah*' as a tradition, religion, state or condition, method, conduct and custom. We can conclude that the term can be applied to the type of conduct, way of behavior and style of leading a life.

Recognition and Exposition of the Term '*Sīrah*'

'*Sīrah*' means to become familiar with principles undertaken by someone or the character practiced by a person throughout his life. To become acquainted with '*Sīrah*' necessitates becoming familiar with certain methodologies and patterns.³ Ultimately, it is applied on the constant principles and standards practised by the holy prophet which are clear and follow-able.

The character of holy prophet (*SAWA*) is the best exemplar to follow and lead a blessed life in this world and the world hereafter. God, the almighty affirms:

¹ *Asas al-Balāghah*, p. 226; *Aqran al-Mawārid*, vol. 1, p. 562, *al-Munjad*, p. 368.

² *Al-Mufradāt*, p. 427.

³ *Al-Mufradāt*, p. 247.

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much”¹

The holy prophet is the source, mine and nucleus for the Muslims, and they can explore all their actions, behavior and duties from this valuable source and mine,² and they must do their best to match all of their actions with him. This is a constant principle and matter of never-ending. It is an obligation links us his to mission and part of the Muslims’ faith to follow him in their sayings and actions.³

The holy prophet has been set as a perfect exemplar in all aspects and his character must be evident and visible in all the matters. The Muslims are obliged to absolutely follow their blessed prophet (*SAWA*). The dearest to God is such a person who observes and follows the holy prophet in all aspects of his life. It has been affirmed by God, the almighty:

“If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your faults...”⁴

“The man can be guided toward perfection if he follows such a perfect prototype and sufficient exemplar. Due to this reason his following has been undertaken as an obligation for the Muslims.”⁵

¹ *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:21.

² Consult to “the actions of the holy Prophet and its application with regard to legal and jurisprudential commands”, vol. 1, pp. 189-201.

³ *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 16, p. 281.

⁴ *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:31.

⁵ Commentary to *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 3, p. 285.

The late Imām (r) paid attention to this matter of great significance in his sayings and actions. He himself paved this way and highlighted the conduct of holy prophet in different aspects so he could make the way to salvation and guidance plainer for all.

Principle of Observing' Limits and Boundaries' Set by God

The Honorable Prophet himself was a follower of Divine Law¹

Significance of Observing the Limits set by God in Character of Honorable Prophet (SAWA)

The honorable prophet of Islam was sentinel of the rights and limits, observer of sanctuaries and boundaries, and protector of laws and Divine criterions. He did not take it lightly and he had never committed even a slight violation in this regard. Imām Husayn ('a), the doyen of martyrs said: "I inquired my father about conduct undertaken by holy prophet outside of his house." At this he replied:

"He neither neglected the truth, and nor violated it"²

Ibn Sa'd and Balazari has narrated by Imām Husayn ('a), the doyen of martyrs and Imām 'Alī ('a) the

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 10, p. 310.

² *Al-Muwaḥḥiqiyāt*, p. 375; *Akhlāq an-Nabī wa Adabuhū*, p. 24; *'Uyūn Akhbār ar-Ridā*, vol. 1, p. 318; *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār*, p. 82; *Dalā'il an-Nabuwwah al-Baihaqī*, vol. 1, p. 289-90; *as-Shifā beta'rīf Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, vol. 1, p. 205.

commander of faithful about the character and behavior of holy prophet as following:

“He did not take the truth slightly and he had never stepped over the boundaries of Religion”¹

Honourable prophet (*SAWA*) never played down the truth and he had never stepped over the boundaries of religion. Ibn Sa‘d has narrated from ‘*Ayeshah* who gave her comments about the conduct and character of the holy prophet as following:

Whenever the holy prophet had an option to choose a task between of two, he used to adopt simple and easier one if it were not a sin. If it were a sin or a prohibited action from perspective of Dive law he had prevented from it more than any other. The prophet of God (*s*) never retaliated for his personal matters except in some cases where the limits set by God were subject to a danger. In such a situation he used to carry out the penalties set by God.²

The holy prophet was a protector of the limits set by God, and he used to observe limits and boundaries and made the rule of law dominant in its all aspects. The sayings of Late Imām’s in this regard are as under:

“It has been narrated with regard to ethical attitude of the holy prophet (*s*) that he used to show his anger against tyranny and if Divine sanctities were the subject to an offence. In such circumstances, he used to show his wrath for the sake of God, the almighty.”

¹ *At-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 424; *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 1, p. 388.

² *Ibid.* vol. 1, p. 366; *ash-Shamā'il an-Nabawiyyah*; p. 170.

The prophet of God was more committed to Divine limits and religious regulations than any other. He did not step over any of Divine boundaries and he had never violated the law. Imām Khomeinī said in this regard:

“The rules of Islam or the commands of God have a right to an absolute rule over all individuals and the Islamic Government. All the individuals including the holy prophet (s) himself and his caliphs (infallible Imāms) are also subject to eternally follow Divine law.”

The messenger of Justice neither went against Divine laws nor did he consider himself beyond the law. God has also showed his firm stance in this regard and addressed to his messenger as following:

“And if he had fabricated against us some of the sayings, we would certainly have seized him by the right hand, then we would certainly have cut off his aorta, and not one of you could have withheld us from him.”¹

Imām Khomeinī (*r*) presents his analysis with regard to role of the holy prophet in undertaking Divine Limits and respecting the rule of law. In this regard he says:

The rule of law has the right to rule in Islam. The honorable Prophet (s) himself was a follower of Divine law and he himself could not violate it. God, the almighty, affirmed that if he had fabricated against us some of the sayings, we would certainly have seized him by the right hand, and then we would certainly have cut off his aorta.”²

¹ *Al-Hāqqah* 69:44-47

² *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 10, p. 310-11.

Subsequent to observing into the character and conduct of the holy prophet; we come to a conclusion that none is beyond the rule of law and he himself was the best example of such a commitment.

“Islam is the religion of law and it observes rule of law to such an extent as the holy prophet himself neither could step over the law, he nor thought of its violation. God, the almighty, addresses his prophet as if he had fabricated against the will of God, then He would certainly have cut off his aorta. The right to rule does not exist for anyone except for undertaking Divine laws.”¹

Despite of being head of the Islamic state, the holy prophet had neither uttered even a single expression nor set a law and issued a command on his own part, but he was assigned to implement Divine Law.

In this way, individuals and society can pave the way to wellbeing and adopt a functional phase where all type of relations and interactions are healthily established, and healthiness and prosperity for all are guaranteed.

Imām ‘Alī (‘a) the commander of faithful in this regard said:

“If you undertake the limits set by God, the Almighty, in return, He will also bless you with his promised bounties and mercies.”²

The bounties and blessings of God can shower upon the mankind if they are supposed to observe the limits set by God, undertake his sanctuaries and take care of Divine

¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 353.

² *Ghurur al-Hikam*; vol. 5, pp. 115-16

measures and Laws, and ultimately all these factors are decisive in hastening the advent of promised one.¹

¹ For more details consult; A Commentary of *Ghurar al-Hikam*, vol. 5, pp. 115-16.

Principle of Leading a Simple Life

The holy prophet used to lead a very simple life. He never took an advantage of his position or status in promoting his material life or leaving huge inheritance behind him. He left the legacy of knowledge which has priority over all other matters, especially the knowledge granted by God, the Almighty.

Simple Life of the Honorable Prophet (SAWA)

Leading a simple life is too significant throughout his prophet-hood mission as his simplicity, forwardness in behavior, way of socializing, and his circles and associations and various perspectives of his life can be considered a source of attraction for all. The holy prophet extremely disliked materialistic types of pomp and shows. He used to fill the hearts of friends with his friendship. Although he used to consume less yet he was very hard working. His simplicity had provided a seedbed in getting rid of the bounds of excessive welfare and palace dwellings, so he could take essential and significant steps toward the guidance and salvation of the mankind. Biographical writers have recorded their comments in this regard as following:

“The holy prophet was a less consumer and his consumptions were too little.”¹

Although the holy prophet used to consume a little, yet he was a very hardworking and his life was full of blessings. There exists close linkages between his less consumption and hard working, and it is expected from a believer to hold the same status. It has also been demanded in following tradition:

“The assistance offered by a believer is a blessing and he is of less consumption”²

The man seeking for an excessive welfare and place-dwelling is unable to lead a fruitful and blessed life. The tendencies of palace-dwelling and trends of pomp and shows keep the man busy within his self-desires and ultimately prevent him from reaching to the real perfections. Imām Khomeinī (*r*), the real revivalist and devotee to the character of the holy prophet says in this regard as follows:

“Perhaps many assume that material comforts and having bank deposits, property or owning land or parks and their likes brings happiness to a person; this is a mistake that a person makes.

A person is under the impression that his prosperity lies in owning so many orchards; owning so many villages; having money deposited in banks; being so and so in trade; perhaps this is what a person imagines. However, when we take notice and measure happiness, we see that those persons were happy that were dwelling in slums. Those that are in palaces are not

¹ *Islamic Government (Governance of the Jurist)*, p. 92.

² *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 241.

happy. The scale of blessings that circulates around the world from the slums is not found at all in the palaces. We had a four to five person slum at the dawn of Islam and that slum dweller was Fāḥimah Zahrā (ؓ). There are far more humble slums than this one, but what are their blessings? The blessings of this few occupancy slums are such that it has filled the whole universe with radiance and the road is long for a person to attain those blessings. These slum dwellers in their humble slums are at such a lofty level in the field of spirituality that the hands of heavenly beings also cannot reach them. In the field of training, it has been to such an extent that whatever blessings exist in the Muslim lands and especially in lands such as ours is by their blessing. The honorable Prophet himself—may God’s peace be upon him and his household—who is at the head of all had a slum-dwelling existence. Do not think that they had a single room like those of the middle-class families of this society. It had a few chambers; humble chambers. In addition, the light of this high-ranking person illuminated the earth and the heavens from this humble chamber and the range of his message extended throughout the world. Although what he wanted has not been opened and humankind cannot reach up to him except God willing, his pious successor.”¹

Perfect Exemplar of Leading a Simple Life

The holy prophet is a perfect exemplar of leading a simple life Imām ‘Alī (‘a) said in description of his character as following:

“Certainly, in the Prophet of Allah, is a sufficient example for you. The Prophet used to eat on the ground, and sat like a

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 17, p. 373.

Successor means: holiness the promised Messiah Mahdī (may God hasten his advent).

slave. He repaired his shoes with his hand, and patched his clothes with his hand. He would ride an unsaddled ass and would seat someone behind him.”¹

The prophet of mercy and justice used to lead a very simple life in all of its aspects. Although it is natural that ways of living are a subject to change and passes through an evolution by the passage of time, yet the boundaries of leading a simple life remain constant. The values such as preventing from extravagances, squandering, wastage and excessiveness, and living a life of chastity, contentment, sufficiency and hardworking are required for all the ages. The holy prophet was an excellent and perfect exemplar to lead such a simple life. He undermined all of the formal protocols. His seating was arranged in such a manner that the distinctions had not been observed between him and his companions. He used to simply take a seat among the circle of his companions² and none of the priorities were observed. It has been narrated by Anas Bin Mālik:

“We were supposed to sit in a circle if we had come to see the holy prophet”³

The holy prophet used to sit among a circle of his companions as if it had not any priority over others. It was not easy for a stranger to distinguish between holy prophet and others. It has been reported by Abūdhār, he said:

“The prophet of Allah used to sit among the circle of his companions with no distinctly. If a stranger entered their circle

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 160.

² See also: *Atratib al-Idāriyah* (Management arrangements), vol. 2, pp. 217-18.

³ *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 22; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 16, p. 236.

he was not able to recognize the prophet unless he asked others”¹

The late Imām presents a clear picture of this custom and tradition adopted by the holy prophet as following:

“Whoever has written about how the Holy Prophet himself actually lived, has told of how he in fact led a life more simple than that led by the ordinary people in Medina at the time... He used to ride a donkey and would seat a passenger behind himself. He would discuss religious issues with his passenger during their journey and would give him instruction and guidance. Now just name one governor, one chief of police, one village headman who is like this, who behaves toward the people as did the Prophet. It is related that when the latter used to go to the mosque—which is where governmental administrative affairs were conducted—and he used to sit and talk with the people there, anyone who did not know the Prophet and entered the building would not be able to distinguish who was the ruler and who were the ruled, who was the Prophet and who was not.”²

All life of the holy prophet including his Meccan period—earlier than becoming a ruler and Medina’s Era—after becoming the Islamic ruler passed in this way. He did not store any of worldly material assets, or palace dwellings for him. Imām ‘Alī, the leader of faithful in this regard said:

“Allah made Muḥammad (*SAWA*) a sign for the Day of Judgment, a conveyor of tidings for Paradise and a Warner of

¹ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, vol. 2, p. 527; *Akhlāq an-Nabī wa Adabuhu*, p. 60, *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 16, *Almahajat al-Baydā*, vol. 4, P, 152, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 16, p. 262.

² *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 4, p. 219.

retribution. He left this world hungry but entered upon the next world safe. He did not lay one stone upon another (to make a house) until he departed and responded to the call of Allah. How great is Allah's blessing in that He blessed us with the Prophet as a predecessor whom we follow and a leader behind whom we tread."¹

Imām Khomeinī (*r*) has given a description of this legacy and custom of the holy prophet as following:

“The holy prophet used to lead a very simple life. He never took an advantage of his position or status in promoting his material life or leaving huge inheritance behind him. He left the legacy of knowledge which has priority over all other matters, especially the knowledge granted by God, the Almighty.”²

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 160.

² *Islamic Government (Governance of the Jurist)*, p. 92.

Principle of Devoting to Worship

It has been reported by some wives of the holy prophet that sometimes he used to get busy in talking with us, and we too talked to him. Whenever the time for prayer approached, it seemed as if he was not supposed to recognize us and we were also not supposed to identify him. He neglected all other things due to his devotion toward God, the Almighty.

The Holy Prophet's devotion to Worship

The holy prophet accessed to the peak degree in worshipping God, the Almighty, he touched the heights and became entitled to Divine's appreciation. God, the Almighty, affirms:

"Then he drew near, and then he bowed, so he was the measure of two bows or closer still"¹

The honorable prophet was the lord of all the people in worshipping and serving his God. Imām 'Alī in this regard said:

¹ *An-Najm* 53:8-9.

“I bear witness that Muḥammad (*SAWA*) is the servant and messenger of God and lord of other people and the best of all.”¹

He was a messenger of beauties with regard to worshipping and serving God, the Almighty; he thought the worship as the best source and he used to worship truthfully and devotedly. He used to get engaged in worshipping God as he loved to remain in this state and he did not want to leave it. Sometimes he used to say his prayers such an extent as his feet got hurt and impaired, or sometimes he used to shed tears extensively because of his devoutness to God, that he went to coma. He was asked: “Why do you oblige yourself to such a degree despite of having such an excellent position and brilliant record before God.” At this, he said:

“Should I not become a thankful servant and devotee to God, the Almighty?”²

It has been narrated through some of traditions that honorable prophet used to worship and devote himself to God, the Almighty after descending of a revelation, and particularly he got engaged in worshipping until his feet were impaired, yet he was devoted to worshipping and serving his truthful God, as he saw these sufferings nothing for the sake of his adored one.

The Late Imām (*r*) in this regard says as following:

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 214.

² *Miṣbāḥ ash-Sharī'ah*; p. 170; *at-Tabaqat al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 384; *Musnad-e Aḥmad Bin Ḥanmbal*, vol. 4, p. 251; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 2, p. 494; vol. 6, p. 510.

“Seal of the prophets; the holy prophet of Islam, suffered hardships and undertook uprising for the sake of truth to such an extent as his feet became impaired”

The holy messenger became liberate of any engagements for worshipping and serving his God. The worldly pomp and shows, and deceptive beauties were presented to him yet he preferred to become a devotee to the truthful God. Imām ‘Alī (‘a) the commander of faithful said:

“The worldly pomp and shows were presented to him and he could select among them, yet he reused to accept it”¹

The Sunnis and Shiite sources have reported that the servant and great devotee to God said:

“A huge amount of gold equivalent to Batha valley of Mecca was offered to me. I responded in following way: O, my Lord! No, I wanted to quench my hungriness a day while on other day I intended to remain hungry (for three days or likes of it). If my hungriness was quenched I would praise you and express my thanks, and if I remained hungry I would call you and remember you”²

He was someone with whose existence the both of cosmos came in to existence³, yet he used to observe the

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 160.

² *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 131; the same expression were reported in *Kitāb az-Zuhd*, p. 52; *Şahīfe-ye al-Imām ar-Rida (‘a)*, p. 116, *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 381; *Sunan at-Tirmidhī*, vol. 4, p. 497; *‘Uyūn al-Akhhbār*, Vol 2, p. 30; *‘Uyūn al-Akhhbār ar-Rida (‘a)*, vol. 2, p. 30; *Amali al-Mufīd*, p. 124.

³ Both of cosmos came in to existence due to his existence – the throne also got settled due to his blessing.

worship of God as the most precious asset, and he perceived to stand in the need of Allah for insufficiencies relating to existence and spiritual deficiencies¹ through his worship². He saw himself in the need of Allah in all aspects and he was proud of it, and he said in this regard as following:

“Insufficiency (being in the need of Allah) is a source of pride for me”³

“Someone who showed his disengagements to material world, and made the core of his heart and nucleus of his mind devoted to self-sufficient one (God Almighty), and believed in substantial insufficiency of the creatures, and understood that none of these creatures has nothing by their own self. Furthermore, he observed that there existed no power, esteem or kingdom except of the truthful holy God, the Almighty. He heard and received this message by the core of his heart from source of the spiritual dominion and kingdom of heaven. *O, men! You are they who stand in need of Allah, and Allah is He who is self-sufficient, the praised One.* At this stage, a man can become sufficient of both of the worlds, and it seems as his heart becomes sufficient and he believes no significance for the kingdom of Sulaymān. If the keys to treasures of the earth were presented to him he would neglect it. It has been reported through some of the Islamic traditions that Gabriel presented the keys to treasures of earth to the seal of the prophets (Prophet of Islam) from God, the Almighty, and honorable prophet showed his modesty and did not accept it, and

Manṭiq at-Ṭayr; p. 17.

¹ You might say: O, my Lord! Increase to my knowledge.

² O, men! You are they who stand in need of Allah, and Allah is He who is self-sufficient, the praised One. (*Farir* 35:15).

³ *‘Idat ad-Dae’i*, p. 123; *‘Awālī al-La‘ālī*, vol. 1, p. 39; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 72, p. 55.

ultimately he considered his insufficiency (need in Allah) as a source of pride.”¹

Devotion of the Holy Prophet toward Prayer

The messenger of God was more committed to saying prayers than any other worship. He used to say his prayer with a great devotion as the prayer was the most comprehensive form of worship to him.

“The men holding inner knowledge believe that all and entire worships are observed as a praise for God, the Almighty, and each of these is considered as a kind of praise, or holy names of truthful God, but the prayer is a praise of truthful God comprehensive of all of his names and attributes.”²

The holy prophet used to maintain and say his prayers in such a way as his devotion never seemed an end. His heart was filled with spiritual lights of mid-night prayers and he used to pave his way to Allah by this source, and he used to advise to his followers:

“Your main concern should be saying your prayer and you must exert your efforts in this regard”³

It has been narrated various traditions with regard to how the prayers and mid-night prayers were said by the holy prophet, and all these reflect his devotion to perform perfect worships and his constant engagement and commitment for saying prayers. Late Imām has recoded a part of tradition which shows how the holy prophet used to say his mid-night prayers:

¹ *Chehel Hadīth*, p. 433; An exposition on forty *Hadīth* by Ḥadrat Imām Khomeinī (*r*), pp. 444-45.

² *Ibid.* p. 433.

³ *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 19; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 77, p. 127.

“Honorable Prophet used to keep some water for ablution close to his bed on the nights, and he used to cover the pot of the water. He used to clean his teeth with a brush (made of some herbal) and took an ablution. He used to say four *Rak'ahs* (a unit in a prayer) and then he used to take some nap. Afterward, he used to get up again from sleep, and cleaned his teeth with a brush made of some herbal, and took an ablution and said his prayers”.¹

The worships of the holy prophet were purified of any formality or artificiality and cleansed of any trouble or fatigue, but it was full of spirit and spiritual devotion. Imām Khomeinī in this regard writes as following:

“Each of the worships and religious rites not only contains a heavenly and spiritually forms, and physical outcomes of these are called as building up of the heaven, *Hūrī* and handsome lads dwelling in paradise, as it has been reported in *Hadīths* and confirmed by some arguments, but each of these worships also leave a certain impact on soul, and to eventually make our soul stronger and its power turns to a perfect one. As a result, if the worships contained some suffering even then these would be desired, as the hardest slogs are the best of all other tasks.² It seems necessary to bring an example in this regard. For instance; on a cold night of the winter season, to sacrifice some of sweet nap, and to undertake an uprising for the worship of God, the Almighty, make the soul dominant over a physical body and turns the determination to stronger one. And if it were a bit harder and undesirable at an outset, but

¹ See also: *al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 445; *Dā'im al-Islām*, vol. 1, p. 211; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 334.

² It was asked from the holy prophet that which are the best among of the tasks. He said: “the hardest one” (*al-Mabsūṭ lis-Sarkhasī*, vol. 30, p. 252).

eventually a reduction in hardships would be felt. In this way, an increase in following the soul by the physical body is seen. As we have seen that the men of God ones perform it without any hardships and sufferings. We show signs of laziness and it is harder and more difficult for us because we do not take some steps forward in this regard. If we were supposed to get it done for sometimes then gradually the hardships would had turned to an easier task. The men of God take pleasure more from worship of God than what we take pleasure by satisfying our worldly carnal desires.”¹

The worship of the honorable prophet was not performed by an addiction or negligence, and it was beyond the worship of the bondmen and traders, but it was performed by devotion and mystic zeal and zest. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) has recorded some of *ḥadīths* and interesting points in this regard:

“Imām Bāqir (*a*) said: The holy prophet was with ‘Āyeshah (one of the wives of the holy prophet) on one night. She asked: Why do you exert efforts to such an extent and put yourself in trouble while you have been blessed and forgiven. At this the holy prophet said: O, ‘Āyeshah! Should I not become a thankful servant to my God?”²

You might know that ‘Āyeshah had imagined that the secret of worships was a subject to having the fear of chastisement, or omit of some sins, and she had also thought the worship of the holy prophet like other common people. Therefore, she made an objection that why the prophet had put himself in trouble. This thinking was

¹ *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An Exposition on Forty *Ḥadīth*), p. 126.

² *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An Exposition on Forty *Ḥadīth*), p. 237.

outcome of her ignorance to worship and adoration. She did not know very well the status of prophethood due to her ignorance on the status of the holy prophet which was beyond of certain types of worship such as the worship of bondmen and tradesmen.¹ Praising to the

Glory of God, the Almighty, and expressing his gratitude for endless bounties had snatched rest from the holy prophet. The worships performed by sincere and devoted friends of God are a plan toward endless manifestations of adored one and it has also been pointed in the prayer of *mi'rāj* (occasion of prophet's ascending to the heavens)².

¹ Imām 'Alī ('a), the commander of faithful said: "Some men worshipped God, the Almighty, as they intended their sins to be forgiven. This is called a worship of the trade men. A group of people performed their worships for God due to having of his fear and this is defined as the worship of the bondmen. Yet, another group of people worshipped him to express their gratitude and this is the real worship of liberated men. (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, wisdom no. 237).

He was trained in prophet's school and devoted to librated type of worship for God, the Almighty, he said in this regard: O, God! I neither performed your worship due to fear of hell fire, nor for having desires for your heaven, but I found you entitled to my worship (*Arba'īn al-Bahā'ī*, p. 225, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, pp. 186, 197, 234).

² It has been narrated by Imām Ṣādiq ('a): God addressed his prophet and he was asked to put his hand on his legs, and then to look at the throne. The holy prophet said: I looked and experienced God's dignity, and I became unconsciousness for a moment. Then, I felt in my heart to recite '*Subhān Rabī*' My Lord is glorified and great, and all praises are pledged to him—as I recited this favorable remembrance and praising of God I turned to my consciousness. Then, I repeated this remembrance for seven times. (*Ilal ash-Sharā'ī*, vol. 2, p. 315).

“The friends and devotees of God, the Almighty, are totally engaged in experiencing his beauty and glory, and absolutely busy in observing his attributes and essence, yet they never ignore even a single aspect or stage of the worship. Their physical gestures and actions are also inspired by their devotional and spiritual enthusiasm, and these are also inspired by a manifestation of the beauty of the adored one. The kind of reply given to ‘Āyeshah, was just to win the satisfaction of addressee. The holy prophet explained one of the lower spheres for her so she could know that the worships are not only designed for some lower matters.”¹

The holy prophet used to see the worship with a devotional and a mystical look, as all forms of his worships were inspired by such an approach, and this concept was manifested through all of his adorations.

¹ *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An Exposition on Forty Ḥadīth), pp. 349-50.

Principle of Modesty and Humbleness

The holy prophet used to contribute in working with his family members. He used to take the milk of sheep with his own hand. He patched his dress and repaired his shoes. He used to help his servant in grinding the wheat for turning it in into flour. He used to shake hand with a great devotion and he used to sit with poor and deprived ones to take food.¹

The Significance of Modesty and Humbleness in Holy Prophet's Character

The modesty and humbleness has a great importance in worshipping, and becoming purified from disobedience and violation brings glory to the man. If a man had a correct and accurate perceiving from cosmos then he would admit that the man is nothing by itself, and it is the only God, the Almighty, who has supremacy over all. There exist no beauty, glory and perfection except for Divine, and ultimately it remains no space for disobedience and violation. Imām Khomeinī (r) explains as following:

“The most significance is that we have neither recognized ourselves, nor our God, the Almighty. We neither trust ourselves, nor believe in God. We have not a belief in our own

¹ *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An Exposition on *Forty Ḥadīths*), pp. 349-50.

selves; nay we have ascertained that we are nothing by itself. (We stand in the need of Allah). We have not yet believed that he is the all.”¹

If a man becomes aware that the glory and greatness are pledged only for God, the Almighty, and the man is privileged to his worship. If he had accepted this then he would pay homage to glory of God, and all the men would not behave except in a polite and modest way. Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) said in this regard:

“Praise is due to Allah who put on dress of esteem and glory and pledged these two for himself and it was made forbidden for other creatures. He made it pledged for himself and it was banned to others. He had chosen such a dress for himself as it matches to his glory, and cursed that person who thinks of his esteem and glory.
(Real Glory and Esteem are pledged for God, the Almighty)”²

If a man ponders over Divine dignity and observe the power of God, the Almighty throughout all phenomenon and elements of the cosmos, he will discover his weakness and real status of being nothing. As a result he will put off his dress of dignity and crown of dignity.

Imām Khomeinī (*r*) has guided us, and we see necessary to present a summary in this regard:

“O, the man! If you compare your position with other creatures such as the cosmos and solar system, you will find the physical world as one of the object and worlds having the lowest status.

¹ A Commentary on Qur’anic Chapter of *Hamd*, p. 108.

² *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 192.

O, dear! You have thought only about yourselves and you have not compared it with other phenomenon. You might compare your possessions with others. If you have reputations then compare it with kingdom, and many other things which you still not heard about it. You might compare earth with solar system, stars and galaxies. Scientist have still discovered a very little of it. We, our physical world and even all of the other systems including solar one and undiscovered worlds and other systems all are bounded to their physical nature, but metaphysical world is much more valued than these ones. There exist worlds of metaphysical nature which are much beyond these physical ones. We belong to these material worlds and we even cannot imagine of the spiritual and metaphysical worlds which are more precious and incomparable.

We, all of our worldly and material affairs and powers decline when we become a subject to the destiny designed by truthful God. At the certain time, all of our parts of body and power decline, when we became a subject to certain state then what would be done with our powers and possessions. It is too clear and no need for explanation.

Then we will have to face an interval period of Barzakh, where according to some of the Islamic tradition, even the pious mediators might not have an access to us.¹ The darkness and fears of the interval period are so dreadful and only our deeds and actions will remain with us. We have to face the day of resurrection next to the interval period of Barzakh. It is the day when the secrets are discovered and we would have to face the consequences of our deeds. Our deeds are supposed to be embodied and shown in their real nature and physical forms. Each of these stages is worse than each other. The hell is a place if one of its doors were opened to this world; all of

¹ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 242.

its inhabitants would face fatality. O, the man kind! How do you feel pride and arrogance?"¹

Imām 'Alī in this regard said:

“O, man kind! How he can feel pride while he has been created by a sperm and its water, and one day he will be a perished one. He is neither self sufficient in its earning, nor it can defend itself against death.”²

Imām 'Alī (‘a) has recommended for Mālik Ashtar as following:

“If the powers you have been blessed with it, make you feel esteem and bring for you a pride. Here you should think of the esteem and glory for the rule of God. He has such a control over you that you even do not have over own self. Such thinking controls your aggression and it will bring back wisdom to you”³

Imām Khomeinī (r) says in this regard:

“It became evident that the arrogance was outcome of ignorance. Each one who bears ignorance and enjoys a less of intellect, he will feel more ignorance. Each one who is blessed with more knowledge and greater soul, such a person will feel modesty. The holy prophet gained knowledge from source of revelation and he was blessed with the greatest soul. He left his impact on the soul of the millions of the people. He brought an end to all superstitious customs of the ignorance era. He became the seal of prophets. He had dominance over

¹ *Chehel Ḥadīth*, (An exposition on forty Ḥadīth), pp. 94-95.

² *Nahj al-Balāghah*, wisdom 454.

³ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Letter 53.

all the worlds with the permission of God, the Almighty, yet he was the modest and humble one of all the people.”¹

Manifestations of the Modesty and Humbleness of the holy prophet (SAWA)

The honorable prophet implemented the most beautiful manifestations of the modesty and humbleness in all aspects of life. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) has mentioned some of the examples of the modesty and humbleness of the holy prophet as following:

“He disliked companions to stand up for his respect. Whenever he used to enter a gathering he used to sit on the nearest point where he could find a seat. He used to eat by sitting on the ground. He used to say that I am a servant of God, and I like to sit and eat like other servants and men of God. It has been narrated by Imām Ṣādiq (*‘a*) that the holy prophet used to sit on saddle less ass... it has been reported that the holy prophet used to contribute in working with his family members. He used to take the milk of sheep with his own hand. He patched his dress and repaired his shoes. He used to help his servant in grinding the wheat for turning it in into flour. He used to shake hand with a great devotion and he used to sit with poor and deprived ones to take food.”²

The holy prophet used to dislike becoming similar to the kings; it has been reported as we read:

¹ *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An exposition on Forty *Ḥadīths*), p. 95.

² *Chehel Ḥadīth* (An Exposition on Forty *Ḥadīths*), pp. 349-50,

For more details see: *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 5, p. 84; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 16, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 206, *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il*, vol. 8, p. 403.

“The holy prophet was disliked for becoming similar to the kings”¹

The holy prophet was much liked by the people. He was worried that people might place him upper and tend to his worshipping. He used to fight such thinking and he said in this regard as following:

“You must not place me upper and you must not have such beliefs about me as the Christians say on Jesus. The God, the Almighty has adopted me as his servant rather than his messenger. (God adopted me his servant before assigning me as a messenger)”²

“You must not become extreme in my praising; as the Christians became about Jesus and Mary instead you utter these expressions that he is the servant and messenger of God”³

Imām Khomeinī (*r*) mentions the stages of modesty and humbleness as he believes that the modesty and humbleness has many stages but what has been placed at the top is the modesty of the prophets, the friends and devotees of God, the Almighty. They have become modest because of the manifestations of the names, attributes and Divine actions. They are modest before the glory and esteem of a God, the Almighty. As they become perfect

¹ *Al-Mahāsīn*, p. 485, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 272, *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 16, p. 412, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 262.

² *Al-Kāmil fil-Lughah wal-Adab*, vol. 1, p. 203, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, p. 128.

³ *Musnad Ahmad bin Ḥanbal*, vol. 1, p. 24, *ash-Shamā'il an-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 158.

from this aspect, their modesty becomes more as the seal of the prophets is the most modest before God, the Almighty.

Addition to this, they are also blessed with love, their love to Divine objects, this kind of love is inspired by the absolute truth and it is the most perfect and real stage of the modesty.¹

¹ An exposition on the *Hadith* “the armies of intellect and ignorance, p. 335.

Principle of Mercy and Blessings-Love and Affection

The holy prophet (SAWA) was just like a kind father to the people and even show his affections toward them more than a kind father¹

The mercy and Blessing as a Custom of the Honorable Prophet

The holy prophet has reached to such a stage that he was all the human beings. He used to see all the creatures with mercy and affection and behave with them on the base of this valuable principle. Therefore, God, the almighty, has introduced the blessings of honorable prophet as comprehensive and inclusive of all.

“And we have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.”

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 9, p. 329.

The messenger of God was perfect manifestation of Divine' mercies and blessings, and he himself also used to mention this point.

His existence was a great mercy to the worlds, and all of his attributes were mercy for the people.¹ The mercy and affections were essential elements of his character and conduct. It has been reported by Imām 'Alī ('a), as he was asked about the traditions and conduct of the holy prophet, at this he said:

“The love and affection are the essential elements of his character”²

The love and affection were manifested in the conduct and character of the holy prophet as he was of Divine in all of his aspects. He was filled of the friendship of God, the Almighty, and he used to look with a mercy to the entire world as it is a creation and signs of his adored one. Imām Khomeinī has recorded in this regard as following:

The greatest stage is that the intelligence become blessed with Divine's color, and sense of love reach to absolute Divine's perfection that he performs each of his actions for his devotion to God, the Almighty, and he sees at each of object as creation and sign of his adored one.

Of course, this stage is not made accessible to none except of the honorable prophet, the mercy to the world; even he used to have a mercy look to the stones as it were the sign of his devoted and much-loved one. He had the same look even at Abūjahī and it could be said that the murder of Abūjahī had

¹ *As-Shifa fi-Ta'rif Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, vol. 1, p. 18.

² *Ibid.* p. 187.

also taken place due to mercy as if he had remained alive, there could nothing be exceeded except of the spiritual losses. In addition to this, he used to observe the affairs and rights. If there exist notorious member among them, it is the holy prophet who acts there in implementing the penalties according to the law... he is mercy to the worlds.¹

It has been narrated:

“The honorable prophet used to show the greatest love toward people”²

The messenger of mercy and justice used to observe the same principle in behaving the believer and disbeliever, the Muslim and the pagan, and he intended the guidance and salvation for all. Imām Khomeinī said in this regard:

“The holy prophet of Islam was not only merciful and well-wisher to the believers, but also for the disbelievers. He would become worried if the disbelievers had remained in their disbelief. This disbelief could cause to remain them in hell fire. He used to show his mercifulness even to them. He used to invite them so they can get rid of and find the disbelievers and sinful people a way to the salvation.”³

The honorable prophet was well wisher to all. If he was forced to a battle or defense, he just came to battlefield due to his mercies, love and affections. Even in such circumstances, he aimed at nothing except to guide and show the way to guidance for the people.

¹ *Nabuwwah from the Viewpoint of Imām Khomeinī (r)*, p. 397-398.

² *Dalā'il an-Nubwvah*, Abī Na'im Esbahānī, vol. 1, p. 182.

³ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 8, p. 379.

The holy prophet used to run and manage the society with his love and affections. This factor leads the people toward perfection. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) says in this regard:

“Qur’anic chapter of at-Tuba which is *sūrah* of wrath, God, the Almighty, here at the end of *sūrah*, addresses his prophet with mercy in following way:

“Certainly, a messenger has come to you among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling in to distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) a compassionate”¹

The honorable prophet has been assigned to the people and he is among of themselves. He shows a great love and affection to the people. He become grievous if he sees them falling in to distress.

The Mercies and Affections of the Honorable Prophet for All

The ignorance and oppression of people made the holy prophet much worried. He used to become sad if the people were not lead to the guidance. He wanted to show the way of salvation and guidance to all the people.

The holy prophet said:

“None of the prophets had been given as much torture as I was given.”²

“The prophet used to become sad and grievous as they believed that why the people should think themselves independent, and do work only for themselves for their carnal

¹ *Sūrah Barā’ah (Tawbah)* 9:128.

² *Manāqib Ibn Shahr Āshūb*, vol. 3, p. 42.

desires and spread corruption. The prophets used to show their love toward the people and this saying by the holy prophet of Islam that none of the prophets had been given as much torture as I was given; it may define the great epistemology of the honorable prophet because others did not have such a great status as of the holy prophet. He used to become more grievous if he heard that the sins and disobedience of God has taken place. This grievousness was not for the reason that those people were his relatives, or it was his city but he was supposed to become grievous if oppression had happened everywhere in the world.”¹

God, the Almighty, addresses his holy prophet as following:

*“It seems as if you would kill yourself with grief, sorrowing for them, if they do not believe in this announcement”.*²

On the occasion of conquer of Mecca, the holy prophet forgave all of his enemies and said:

“Today, it is the day of mercy and blessing-love and affection”

The holy prophet said:

“I swear by God, mercy and blessing of God, the Almighty, includes only those ones who are compassionate”³

¹ *Ṣaḥīfah-ye Imām*, vol. 19, p. 205.

² *Al-Kahf* 18:6.

³ *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 9, p. 54.

Principle of Equality

In Islam, everyone, even the Exalted Prophet (SAWA), are equal in the eye of law.¹

Equality in the Doctrine of the Noble Prophet (SAWA)

The equality decreed by Islam and practically implemented by Prophet Muḥammad (SAWA) is unique in the history of mankind. In the logic of the Holy Qur'an, human beings are all from one source and are the offspring of one single pair of parents without any difference among them.

“The bondman and the master are but one in the eyes of the Qur'an, So is the spread of straw or a silken seat”

In the logic of the Holy Qur'an and in the light of the holy Prophet's behavior and practice, neither a white-skinned person has any privilege over a black-skinned person or an Arab over a non Arab, and neither the rulers over the citizens. All people are equal in the society with no special privileges and are entitled to all basic and social

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 14, p. 221.

rights. Islam has negated all notions of supremacy, ethnic privileges and discriminations. It clearly states:

“O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware.”¹

Thus no person has priority over the other, unless in terms of piety. The holy Prophet emphasized equality in social and basic rights at even the most important and sensitive junctures. When Mecca surrendered and Islamic rule was fully established, the Messenger of God delivered a sermon and declared Islamic equality for all:

“O’ mankind! Beware that your God is One and your father (Adam) is one. So know that no Arab has priority over a non Arab, or a black over a white, or a white over a black, unless in piety. Have I proclaimed (this truth)? They said: Yes. He said: Those present convey the message to the absentees.”²

The Seal of Prophets has said that the criterion for the worth and value of a tribe or a clan is neither color and ethnicity nor possessions and wealth. The Prophet negated all that was considered as worth and value during the era of ignorance, and announced the equality of mankind in its true sense—the value of human beings lies in their piety, knowledge, cognizance of God, character and virtue.

Imām Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq (‘a) has quoted the Prophet as saying:

¹ *Al-Hujurat* 49:13.

² *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Aḥkām al-Qur’an*, vol. 16, p. 342.

“The most worthy of the people are the most learned and the most worthless of them are those who have the least knowledge.”¹

Thus the worth of mankind is not based on superficial elements and social status. It is the inner and true criteria that have a positive and useful onset, and piety is the yardstick. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“According to the prophets and the saints of God, and above all the Holy Qur’an and the Noble Prophet it is piety on which true worth is based. The yardstick is piety and wisdom blended together. Wisdom alone is no good, neither is piety all by itself. If not useless its value is not significant.”²

Equality in Islam has hence been formed and has resulted in suitable social and political interaction which has eliminated discrimination in all general areas with people enjoying their civil rights in all walks of life based on equality. As Imām Khomeinī puts it:

“According to Islam the first man of the country is no different from a peasant, or even lower in terms of benefiting from material goods. Freedom of thought has always existed in Islam – since the days of our Imāms (peace upon them) – and right from the days of the Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) himself it has been free.”³

The most important step in achieving equality is that the rulers should have no priority over things that are for the public and should not tarnish themselves with oppression

¹ *Amali aṣ-Ṣadūq*, p. 27; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 77, p. 112.

² *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 17, p. 185.

³ *Ibid.* vol. 6, p. 277.

and discrimination due to the power they wield. In his famous set of instructions to Mālīk Ahstar—the Governor of Egypt—Imām ‘Alī (‘*a*) says:

“Beware of the thing you want to have for yourself since all people are to benefit from it equally.”¹

Imām ‘Alī (‘*a*) has also said:

“People’s deeds, in righteous matters have to be equal in your eyes.”²

Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*) took a fundamental step in promoting equality. Imām Khomeinī (*R*) says in this regard:

“The government ruling over the society was no different from the public; they even had a less normal life. Governments didn’t want to rule over people, they wanted to serve them.”³

*So go and observe behavior and practice of the Noble Prophet (SAWA) who was the most prominent person and Founder of Islam and guidance for the people. Did he ever crave for power? When he was among friends, color of skin and ethnicity made no difference to him.*⁴

Manifestation of Equality in the Prophet’s (SAWA) Practice

Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*) gave a practical demonstration of equality in all social spheres, emphasizing

¹ *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Letter 53.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 8, p. 86.

⁴ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 12, p. 50.

on basic rights and the laws that benefit mankind and entitle them to enjoy public services.

He has said in this regard:

“Men are equal like the teeth of the comb.”¹

As a ruler of the Islamic society, the holy Prophet was the picture of equality; he even carried this out in his look of affection at his followers. It has been quoted from Imām Ja’far Sadeq (‘a):

“The Messenger of God (SAWA) would distribute his looks among his followers and looked at each equally.”²

He was above any air of superiority and shunned any type of discrimination. It has been quoted:

*“He wouldn’t even sport air of superiority over his servants in terms of food or clothing.”*³

In his 23-year mission his efforts were concentrated on familiarizing people with his conduct, including equality and to negate all baseless attributes that are alien to the human nature.

He burnt all the affinities

*His fire burnt all the impurities*⁴

In his position as ruler as well he was like all other ordinary people without any air of superiority, and

¹ *Tārīkh Yaqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 100; *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 7, p. 57; *Kanz al-Ummāl*, vol. 9, p. 38.

² *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 268; *Wasā’il ash-Shī’ah*, vol. 8, p. 499.

³ *Manāqib Ibn Shahr Āshūb*, vol. 1, p. 127.

⁴ *Iqbāl Lāhūrī*.

administered the society without any special privilege. According to Imām Khomeinī (r):

“The Islamic government is not like the preceding governments of the kings or presidents. The Islamic ruler is one who would sit in the same small mosque of Medina and those who governed other parts of the country would assemble in that small mosque, like normal people in a way that anyone entering would not realize who is the governor, who is the ruler and who is a poor man. Their attire was the same as that of the poor; their life similar to the poor. Their government was such that if one from the lowest level of the society would have claims against the ruler of the country or the one in authority, or another citizen, they would go to the judge and he would summon the ruler and the ordinary citizen.”¹

The Prophet lived like other people in the society. He neither owned a king's mansion nor would attend ceremonies were he was given privileges. In gatherings he would sit in a way there was no ranking. In Medina, the centre of his government, Prophet Muḥammad (SAWA) would sit in meetings in a way that when a visitor arrived, he could not say who was heading the meeting.

He believed himself to be a member of the society, in the true sense of the term, and held no privileges for himself and abhorred discrimination. It is said during one of his trips, they wanted to slaughter a sheep. Each of the followers took to a chore. One said: “I will cut the sheep's throat” The other said: “I will skin it” The third one said: “I will cook it.” The Noble Prophet said: “I will gather wood for the fire” His followers said: “Don't trouble yourself!” He replied: I know you would do my work for me, but I

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 4, p. 417, 418.

don't like to have any privilege over you, as God doesn't like to see his man discriminated over his fellows. So he got up and started gathering wood.

The Prophet thus considered himself equal in all affairs, and behaved without any privilege over others. Among the criterion of equality in the behaviour and practice of the holy Prophet is equality in the face of law. According to Imām Khomeinī (*r*):

“The Noble Prophet and the Infallible Imāms had respect for law and were law-abiding.”¹

This is of more importance to those who hold power, as power can give one the tendency towards discrimination and power seeking and not being willing to abide rules and regulations. But in the conduct of the Prophet this attribute is so prominent that it is unique in the history of mankind and governments. This attribute has been quoted in Imām Khomeinī's (*r*) statements in many forms and has been emphasized upon. As we read:

“Islamic government is what we had in the beginning of Islam, when all tribes were equal in the face of law.”²

“The government of Islam is based on law, which is the divine law, the law of Qur'an and of the holy Prophet's conduct. The Prophet himself abided by this law, so did Imām 'Alī (*a*) and they wouldn't deviate from the law and couldn't do so.”³

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 14, p. 414.

² *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol, 11, p. 3.

³ *Ibid*, p. 22.

In the last days of the Prophet, an incident happened that highlights equality in face of law. People witnessed this significant incident to realize forever how to behave in the face of law and how the dearest creature of God behaved in such an instance. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) has described the scene as follows:

“In the last days of his life, the Noble Prophet asked the people to tell him if he owed anything to anyone. No one said anything. An Arab stood up and said: You owe me something. He said: Name it. He said: In one of the wars, while passing you hit me with your lash. He asked: Where did I hit you? He said: Here. The Prophet (*SAWA*) said: Come hit me at the same place. He said: No, at that time my shoulder was bare, you have to bare your shoulder too. The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) did so and the Arab went and kissed his shoulder and said: I just wanted to kiss the body of the Messenger of God (*SAWA*). But the point is that the Absolute Authority in the Hījāz—Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*)—goes public and asks people if he owes them anything.”¹

Prominent historians have recorded this incident in detail. It is said on that day; the Prophet was gravely ill and walked with difficulty. Fadl ibn ‘Abbās and Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) supported him from each side and he went to the mosque and said his last words to the people as follows:

“O’ people! I praise the one and only God in front of you. If I owe anyone anything speak up. If I have lashed anyone, here is my back, come and lash me back. If I have said something ill to anyone, come and speak to me in like manner. Beware that enmity is not in my conduct. Know that the most beloved one of you would be the one who asks for what I owe

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 11, 326-27.

him and blesses me so I would be pure when I go to meet my God. I see this request does not suffice and I have to get up among you and repeat it several times.”¹

He then came down the pulpit, said his noon prayers and went up the pulpit and repeated the same words. Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*) was the perfect manifestation of divine mercy; he had never hurt anyone, never trampled on anyone’s right, never acted against equality and justice and never implemented the law without having consideration for others. He never became angry unless for the sake of God. But now, at the time of returning to the Divine Court, he insisted on not owing anything to anyone and to achieve equality in face of law in all its aspects. Following the repeated remarks of the Prophet a man got up and said: O’ Messenger of God! You owe me three Dirhams. The Prophet (*SAWA*) said: Fadl! Pay him up, and Fadl did so. The man sat down, and then the Prophet said:

“O’ People! If you have anyone’s money with you, you have to pay him back and shouldn’t say it is disgrace in this world. Rest assured that disgraces in this world are much easier than disgrace in afterlife.”²

The thus showed that in the face of law, God’s Prophet has no precedence over ordinary people so as to teach those who claim justice and equality, how to behave properly and practically.

¹ *Tārīkh-e Ṭabarī*, vol. 3, *al-Kāmil fi ‘t-Tārīkh*, vol. 2.

² *Ibid.*

Principle of Care for the Oppressed

“God’s praise for the Noble Prophet (SAWA) who rose single handily against idolatry and aggressors and raised the flag of monotheism to the benefit of the oppressed.”¹

Status of Care for the Oppressed

One of the major principles of the Noble Prophet (SAWA) was his effort for the oppressed. He was with them, supported them, respected them, tried to wipe away their deprivation and guide them to their real dignity. He made every effort for those who are not exploitative and those who Pharaonic tendencies, and have been deprived of their real rights. He never spared any effort for freeing the righteous from imprisonment and paving the way for their elation. He helped people who seek God and have been denied their rights. God favors the righteous and the deprived; and the Prophet (SAWA) and his followers were kind to them and did their best so they could gain their rights.

The Noble Prophet is a mercy for the entire creation; a great mercy for everyone and a special one for the oppressed. The Prophet considered himself one of them and

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, Vol. 10, p. 338.

was always next to them. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) writes in this regard:

“Islam is for everyone. Islam was emerged from the masses and works for them. Islam wasn't formed among the high class. The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) belonged to this lower class people. He rose from these strata. His followers belonged to this class of people, from the supposedly 3rd level of people. The high class of the society was against the Noble Prophet. The Noble Prophet rescued the oppressed from the injustice of the oppressors as much as he could. As God says: *And We desired to show favor unto those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them examples and to make them the inheritors.*”¹

The oppressed righteous persons are loved by God and are means of God mercy. Those who are not captive to the world and are true believers are means of God's blessings to all. As the Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) said to Sa'd ibn Abī Waqāṣ following the Battle of Badr: Would you have won without the blessings of the oppressed?

To highlight the importance of respect for the oppressed and making an effort to improve their situation, the Noble Prophet would tell the people: God will help this nation because of the oppressed and their prayers and piety.

These are the most cherished by God and the first to have joined the Noble Prophet and this has always been the case. Shamsuddīn Zahbī, the prominent historian who passed away in 748 AH wrote: The first who followed the Noble Prophet were the poor and this is why prophets were sent. They have less attachment to superficial attributes of

¹ *Al-Qaṣaṣ* 28:5, *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 17, p. 528.

the world and more prone to guidance and accepting the right.

As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

His followers were from these lower strata of society, the so-called 3rd class. The upper echelons—the self-styled high class—were against the Noble Prophet.

“Anyone going through the early history of Islam will realize that a group of poor people always surrounded the Noble Prophet (*SAWA*). They were known as the “People of the *Ṣuffah*” which is a place in the courtyard. They were homeless and slept in the yard or the place known as “*Ṣuffah*”. They were so poor, they had nothing.”¹

The Social Source of the Noble Prophet (*SAWA*)

The Prophets have a divine, popular origin. They would rise from the oppressed and never during their life and calling were they slave to superficial powers. They were not like the so-called reformers who would attach themselves to the sources of power and governments to implement their supposed reforms. They were chosen from the very life of the oppressed, among people who lived in poverty and under pressure. They had experienced the hardships of the life of the oppressed and after being formally appointed as a Prophet by God they would never head to the palaces of kings to carry out their mission under their support. The righteous Prophets were chosen by God from among the people and the first group who would say yes to their invitation were the oppressed, the same group who were considered the lower class and called ignorant due to the stupidity of the self-styled aristocracy and the rich ones. It has always been like this.

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. pp. 319-20.

Thus, Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*) as the Last and Greatest of Divine Messengers had the same popular roots. He was from the people and had come to rescue them. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) writes in this regard:

“Anyone pondering on the history of the Prophets will realize that they rose from among the people, they belonged to the heart of the people. All divine religions came from the masses. The Noble Prophet came from these people, from the same people. When he was chosen by God, the Quraysh opposed him, as those days they were the strong ones, the capitalists. The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) belonged to this lower class of the society. In Islam the Noble Prophet rose from the oppressed. The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) belonged to the Quraysh tribe, but this tribe had a rich class and a lower class. The holy Prophet himself says: “I have been a shepherd.” He belonged to the poor society, his uncles were poor too. There was a time when The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) said: Abūṭālib can't take care of his children, let's each of us take some of them. This is because they were not rich. This lower class people were always like this. It was always like this, God chose His prophets from this poor level of the society, from among those people who didn't have anything and the oppressors always humiliated them. It was because of their innate competence and He would make them face the oppressors. The oppressors would criticize the Prophet because of his family background:

“And they say: What aileth this messenger (of Allah) that he eateth food and walketh in the markets? Why is not an angel sent down unto him, to be a warner with him? Or (why is not) treasure thrown down unto him, or why hath he not a paradise from whence to eat? And the evil-doers say: Ye are but following a man bewitched.”¹

¹ *Al-Furqān* 25:7-8.

The aristocrats of the tribe said that high class people should not be like ordinary people and shouldn't walk in the markets and do their own chores, they should own servants and appear dignified. They would say, now that this is not the case, at least an angel must be sent to him to be a proof of his prophecy to the people. If the Prophet of God is a human (not an angel), why is he an ordinary person? Why a poor man without any riches? Why no treasure has been sent to him from heavens? Why doesn't he own an orchard from which he can earn his living? It was not acceptable for them that a man with no means could be God's messenger and asked why this Qur'an has not been sent to a rich man. *"And they said: Why hasn't the Qur'an been sent to a great man from those two cities?"*¹

From their point of view, the yardstick of humanistic values was riches and superficial position and fame. Those simpletons believed that the rich and the oppressing rulers of their tribes were the most cherished men in the divine court. Hence they were surprised why the bounty of God's prophecy has not been bestowed to one of their kind and on the contrary it was given to a poor, orphan boy called Muḥammad (*SAWA*). This was not acceptable to them. This was not the case in God's logic and as Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it, God would choose the Prophets based on their innate qualities, so the carrier of that great message should have been a man whose soul was filled with piety, and a scholar, with a strong will power, brave, just and familiar with the problems of the oppressed. These characteristics were necessary for conveying the message of God, there was no need for riches of this world and fashionable clothes and regal palaces and being adorned with all kinds of jewelry. Especially none of God's messengers were like

¹ *Az-Zukhruf* 43:31.

this and were not chosen like this for guidance of mankind lest noble values and humanistic perfection are not mistaken with false values. Contrary to the logic of the oppressors, the Noble Prophet (SAWA) had a popular position and was with the people and for them. According to Imām Khomeinī (r):

“When we look at the history of Islam and the years following that until today and those who have followed Islam, we see that in the beginning of Islam the Noble Prophet (SAWA) was from this class. And God chose a Prophet from them to be a Messenger to them. Someone from the lower class, someone like them, they could sit with him, eat with him and they could talk with the Noble Prophet (SAWA) in the mosque and from the same mosque he would gather forces for defeating the enemy. The Noble Prophet (SAWA) would choose his people from these people.¹

The Prophet's (SAWA) Stance in Defense of the Oppressed

The Noble Prophet spared no efforts to awaken the conscience of the oppressed to free themselves from the chains of slavery and put an end to oppression. According to Imām Khomeinī (r):

“The Noble Prophet freed the oppressed from the yoke of the oppressors in the best possible way in those days. The blessings of God on the Noble Prophet and his progeny; he rose all by himself against idolatry and the oppressors to unfurl the flag of monotheism for the oppressed. The holy Prophet believed that those who abstain from oppression are

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 9, p. 171.

the best of God's creatures, and he served them as best as he could. He said:

Shouldn't I make you aware of the worst creatures of God? The rude oppressors! Shouldn't I make you aware of God's righteous creatures? The humble and the oppressed!

"This is the stance of Islam: The oppressed should rise and regain their right, as God said to his Chosen Messenger:

*"Restrain thyself along with those who cry unto their Lord at morning and evening, seeking His Countenance; and let not thine eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who followeth his own lust and whose case hath been abandoned."*¹

It is said that this verse was revealed to the Noble Prophet about the oppressed such as Salmān (the Persian), Abūdhār, Shu'ayb (the Roman) and Khabbāb and poor people like them who were among the staunch Muslims. The reason was the illogical condition set by the ignorant and haughty Arabs who despite claiming to be Muslims prided on the ways of the days of *Jāhiliyyah* such as love of wealth and disdain of the deprived. They came to the Noble Prophet and said: If you sit at the head of the meeting and make these poor men with their foul smell leave us, along with those in rags, we will sit next to you and listen to your words. Nothing but this group prevents us from joining you.

The oppressors who couldn't stand the oppressed, asked the Noble Prophet to join them and turn his back to the deprived members of the society. They would tell him: If you shun t them, we'll join you. We have money and are strong. What should the Noble Prophet tell them? Should

¹ *Al-Kahf* 18:28.

he tell them Islam doesn't want you, although Islam is for everyone? If he tells them I accept you and have you next to me, shall I reject the oppressed? They were always the best creatures of God and his followers. This verse was sent to him and cleared the issue for him. It meant to say: O' Prophet! Stay with the righteous oppressed and true believers. Stay with those who don't call for anyone but God and only thrive for his satisfaction. Don't turn your back to them. Don't go after the ornaments of the world and centers of power and don't try to pave your way with the help of them. Don't follow the oppressors as they only love this world, and for this reason the love of God has no place in their heart. They are only after materialistic goods and their whims and they are only after oppression, aggression and extravagance.

After this verse was revealed to the Noble Prophet (SAWA), he got up and rushed looking for the poor and the deprived. He saw them at the end of the mosque, praying. He turned to them and said: *Praise God who didn't end my life before ordering me to be next to my people. I am with you in life and death.*¹

Thus the Noble Prophet was with them and next to them. Imām Khomeinī (r) says in this regard:

“In the days of the Prophet (SAWA) there were many powerful men in the Ḥijāz. Some of them were in Mecca like Abū Sufyān and his like, who were rich and reputable merchants, while others were in Ṭā'if, also very rich. They were the ruling oligarchy and had everything. Nonetheless the Noble Prophet decided to confront these oppressors. When he migrated to Medina, he was with the poor and not with the

¹ *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān.*

rich who put the masses into sleep. He was with the poor in order to awaken the masses.”¹

This respect towards the poor could be seen all throughout his mission. In Medina it had another aspect since the day he stepped into this city until his departure from the world. The account of his entry into Medina says it all. The Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) left the Qubā Mosque to enter the city on Friday. He was riding his camel. All the people, Muhājir (fellow migrants from Mecca) and the Anṣār (those who assisted him in Medina), Jews, Muslims, disbelievers, women, men and children, all were following his camel. The women and children were singing and looked happy. Curious looks, anxious looks, horrified looks; all stared into the face of this stranger who had come to this city from his own tribe. There were many thoughts in the heads and many hearts were beating!

The man on the camel passed the alleys, letting go of the bridle of the camel. The job ahead was so immense that the man on the camel could not make a decision by himself. The bridle of the camel was in hidden hands penning down the future destiny of the world.

As the rider passed through the dwellings of the Banī Sālīm bin Auf, the prominent men of the tribe, Otban bin Mālīk and ‘Abbās bin ‘Ubaydah, came forward and held the bridle, saying: O’ Messenger of God! Stay with us as we have a fully equipped army that is invincible. The man on the camel, deep in thought, staring at the road ahead said in a decisive tone: “Open the way! It (the camel) is on a mission!” They opened way and the camel continued its trek. The camel passed through the dwellings of the Banī

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 4, pp. 18-19.

Bayāzah. Ziyād bin Labid and Farwah bin ‘Amr, along with the men of the Bayāzah tribe stopped the camel, saying: O’ Messenger God! Alight from the camel amongst us! We have a fully equipped army that is invincible.

The Prophet repeated: “Open the way! It is on a mission!”

The man on the camel continued to go. No one knew where the camel would stop, but everyone knew that the person, who would establish the biggest government on the earth in the near future and rule over the realms of Caesar and Chosroes, won’t have servants and maids and won’t fit in the boundaries of any family or tribe. The camel passed the dwellings of the big families of the town and the man who had all the eyes on himself rejected the call of all the masters of big houses in a decisive tone: this meant this man was the guest of the homeless. He didn’t stop at the house of his next of kin and had the same response for his uncles. This meant he was relative to those with no next of kin. The people were bursting with joy. The camel kept going and the further he went from the house of the rich, the nearer he became to the people. When it passed the dwelling of Banī ‘Uday, the carpenter and didn’t stop, the people realized that the man on the camel belongs to the host. After that every step the camel took, the nearer it became to the homeless people of Yathrib. The poor women, children and men and elderly who had never felt any pride were glowing with it now. The faceless crowd headed towards the man on the camel who didn’t utter a word and deep thought oozed from his forehead. The camel was like a ship surfing on wild waves. The eyes of oppressed women, children, and youth, whose soul were on fire stared at this man and his camel who was a messenger from the spiritual world. His shadow fell on curtains of tears, shivered and disappeared. The picture and the look searched in the endless wave of the tears, wouldn’t find

each other and suddenly the picture cleared, shivered again and disappeared.

Suddenly the river following the man on the camel came to a standstill and wonder took over. What was going on? The camel was kneeling. Where? In a piece of land with a few palm trees there. Destiny had stopped the camel there.

Abū Ayyūb, whose house was next to this piece of land hurried and took the baggage of the Prophet (*SAWA*). The holy Prophet asked: Who is the owner of this land? Mu‘ādh ibn Afrā explained: It belongs to two orphans. Sahl and Suhayl, sons of Rafi‘ bin ‘Amr who live with me. I will convince them to sell it.

The mission of the camel was over and the messenger of peace and justice had landed in the land of the oppressed. He set up his home and mosque there to become a blessing for the oppressed and make them honorable. He stayed with Abū Ayyūb, who was the poorest man in Medina until the house and the mosque were completed.

All during his mission the Noble Prophet manifested different aspects of benevolence towards the oppressed. He loved them and respected them and never allowed anyone to ridicule them or belittle them.

Principle of Confronting Oppressors

“Since the very first days of history Prophets have confronted tyrannical regimes. Since the advent of the Prophets until the time of the Noble Prophet (SAWA) and after him, in the days of the Infallible Imāms, they have always fought the oppressors.”¹

Importance of Confronting Oppressors and Tyranny

Fighting oppression means confrontation with any predominance, pride and thuggish attitudes. This has a special place in the doctrine of the Noble Prophet. Oppression has many faces which have to be confronted in any shape it appears, because if human rights and respect is not defended, all human and religious boundaries would be aggressed as the oppressors don't recognize any boundaries. If their aggression is not prevented, the whole world would be filled with their tyranny and darkness.

“And if Allah had not repelled some men by others the earth would have been corrupted.”²

¹ *Ṣahīfe-ye Imām*, vol. 2, p. 370-71.

² *Al-Baqarah* 2:251.

If oppression is not confronted, tyrants will transgress all boundaries and bury all dignity and will not hesitate to desecrate and destroy all sacred places:

“Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said: Our Lord is Allah - For had it not been for Allah’s repelling some men by means of others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft mentioned, would assuredly have been pulled down. Verily Allah helpeth one who helpeth Him. Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty.”¹

The seekers of truth have always confronted the aggression of the followers of Satan. On one side there have been the Prophets and their followers and on the other different aspects of aggression—tyrannical political powers, corrupt economic powers and pervert religious powers. Along with the Prophets there have always been righteous men who have never let go of the flag of resistance.

“Muḥammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dieth or is slain, ye will turn back on your heels? He who turneth back on his heels doth no hurt to Allah, and Allah will reward the thankful.”²

The trend of the struggle of the prophets and their historic role was that they rose against injustice, against atheism and idolatry, discrimination and aggression, exploitation, slavery, autocracy and lack of freedom. In one word they confronted all emasculation, as well as disbelief

¹ *Al-Ḥajj* 22:40.

² *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:144.

in all its social, political and economic aspects. They never lined up with aggressors and never stepped in any path but the one that led to a fight against aggression and oppression. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“Anyone pondering in the history of prophets will realize that they were chosen from the masses and attacked the powerful. Moses was a shepherd with a staff who rose against the Pharaoh. Our own Prophet (SAWA), whose his mission is in the full limelight of history, is more recent. He was one from among the masses, belonged to the people and to the last day of his life he was confronting the rich and the orchard owners and capitalists. Such were the Prophets who put fear in the powerful. They didn’t belong to the powerful to fool the normal people.”

When you look at history, you see that the Noble Prophet arose with the same poor people against the orchard owners and the rich and the capitalist who were symbols of Pharaoh those days. Anyone studying the Holy Qur’an, which is the document of Islam, will see many verses that are about wars. The Noble Prophet firmly stood against those who wanted to exploit others.

This was the conduct of the prophets. The Prophets and the Imāms strove against people who oppressed others. Since the first day the Prophets were chosen by God, and they stood steadfast. Till the era of the Imāms, they kept on their struggle.

The Prophet (SAWA) and the Oligarchs

All through his 23-year divine mission, Prophet Muḥammad (*SAWA*) insisted on his mission, which was confronting aggression, tyranny, crime and oppression. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“How many battles occurred in the time of the Noble Prophet! It was for reforming the society, to cut short the

hand of the oppressors, the hand of pillaging capitalists, those criminal despots. All his life he was busy fighting in Mecca. He couldn't do as he wanted to. In Mecca he could preach, until all was set for him to go to Medina. There it was all fighting and confrontations and political issues.

“During his time in Mecca he had to tolerate a lot, all through the 10 years he was there. When he arrived in Medina and the pains of Mecca was over, the distress of armed encounters started. All those armed encounters in the 10 years he was in Medina!

The days in Mecca passed in resistance against oppressions, threats, tortures and all kinds of pressures and the Noble Prophet was insistent on his invitation to monotheism. The days in Medina passed with conclusive defense of the boundaries of monotheism and after the verse was revealed to him, the Noble Prophet (*SAWA*) allowed military defense to the Muslims. About 100 battles and expeditions were carried out against the aggressors. Usually at least armed encounter would happen each month. There are some discrepancies on the number of these encounters. Ibn Ishrāq, quoting Omrat al-Qaza, believes that the Prophet personally took part in 27 battles and expeditions along with the army of Islam. Ṭabarī and Mas'ūdī believe the number to be 26 and remind that some believe it to be 27. The reason behind this discrepancy is that the first group considers the Noble Prophet's (*SAWA*) return from Khaybar and the expedition to Wādi al-Qurā to be as one. Ibn Hazm, has documented the number of these fights as 25. Ibn Sa'd believes there were 38 battles in which the Prophet (*SAWA*) did not accompany the army of Islam.

Mas‘ūdī quotes a group and says the number is 35 and according to Ṭabarī it is 48 and some other believe it to be 66. Ibn Hazm says the number was 47.

So, the Noble Prophet had no choice but to defend the sanctity of Islam and the Muslims and for this he was ready for all types of defensive acts. He didn’t spend one single day at ease, defending his people and achieving his goals. As Imām Khomeinī (r) puts it:

“The Noble Prophet spent all his life working hard. In all his life history you can’t find a single day when he sat at ease. Now his religion is in your hands. During the 13 years of his mission in Mecca he spent hard days and after that it was always war and confronting aggression.

“All the battles of the Noble Prophet were defensive and in fact they were confrontation with oppressors who couldn’t witness freedom of mankind from captivity of idolatry. The political Quraysh and masters of tribes were after their own vested interests under the pretence of worshipping idols. They fought till idolatry was rooted out. All the aggressions had deep root in this. After the advent of Islam, the rulers of the lands that Islam where Islam had become dominant and chiefs of tribes who were followers of idolatry, felt endangered, so they became determined to annihilate Islam and the Muslims. The verses that were revealed to the Noble Prophet (SAWA) on Jihad and the prophetic conduct in those battles are all good witnesses to this case:

“And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits. Surely, Allah does not love the transgressors.”¹

¹ *Al-Baqarah* 2:190.

The Holy Qur'an called all the Muslims to legitimate defense and fighting against despotism and aggression and emphasized on it. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) says in this regard:

Anyone who is a little familiar with the logic of the Holy Qur'an will realize that it made the Noble Prophet constantly fight with capitalists, with those that were in Hijāz and Tā'if and Mecca. They were capitalists and powerful and tyrants. It was the Qur'an that decreed the Noble Prophet to fight those who were against the nationality of the people and their interests to reach realignment.

The people of Mecca were all rich and powerful and saw the growth of the teachings of the Prophet (*SAWA*) as a danger to themselves. This is why they were against him. The idols were just instruments. They did not believe in the idols, they just feared for their interests in face of the Noble Prophet.

Defending ones humanistic and religious dignity is necessary, that is why God has introduced the concept of Jihad and war and said if the boundaries are not defended, declination will rule over. War and Jihad in Islam is for the purpose of removing aggression and tyranny. As God says:

“And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits. Surely, Allah does not love the transgressors.”¹

The armed defensive encounters of the Noble Prophet against the aggressors were carried out based on this viewpoint. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“The Noble Prophet had no intention of removing all the disbelievers from Mecca or the Arabian Peninsula; he wanted

¹ *Al-Baqarah* 2:190.

Islam to grow and the government to become a government of the Qur'an and Islam. As they prevented this goal his efforts ended up in war and they fought with the Islamic government. All the battles or expeditions in which the Noble Prophet took part were only for removing the obstacles on the road to reaching the divine goal which was establishment of an Islamic government, the government of Allah, the government of Qur'an for all. All the battles in Islam were for building the society and stopping those who wanted to prevent this trend. The battle in Islam is not an issue or a plan.

“None of the armed encounters in Islam were based on expansionism, aggression or despotism. So in the conduct of Prophet Muḥammad and Imām ‘Alī (‘a) and the other 11 Infallible Imāms we never see power seeking and the wars all happened for acting upon their duty which was establishing the Islamic government.”¹

Islam is thus the religion of peace and tranquility and never allows power seeking and tyranny and aggression to his followers. At the same time, it calls for resistance against aggression and introduces it as the noblest religious and humane act.

¹ *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 12, p. 425.

The Principle of Patience and Endurance

“Patience” means strength and perseverance and is equal to “growth” as “growth” is perseverance for God and having strength for him. “Patience” in this context means a constant Jihad which can have different versions but in essence it is a set form of strength and perseverance. At times it is self-restraint against sins and at times steadiness in gaining the truth and at times resistance in the war or invincibility at the time of peace, patience at the time of hardships and consistency at comfort and fun.

One can't reach his goals without such consistency. What helped the Prophet in reaching his goals and paved his way to achieve his divine ambitions was his patience and endurance. He carried out such a wonderful job single-handedly. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“When the Noble Prophet was chosen, he was a single man with so much opposition but he succeeded due to his perseverance and endurance. The secret to the success of the Noble Prophet, in spite of all those excruciating problems was his wonderful endurance.

The problems the Prophet encountered no one has encountered, but he stood till the very last day and acted upon his duty. Success in life and achieving eternal reward cannot be attained unless one has patience and endurance. Many verses in the Holy Qur'an are evidence to this fact:

*"Peace be on you because you were constant, how excellent, is then, the issue of the abode."*¹

And:

*"What is with you passes away and what is with Allah is enduring; and We will most certainly give to those who are patient their reward for the best of what they did."*²

*"Surely Allah is with the patient."*³

God has advised patience and perseverance in 50 verses of the Holy Qur'an and encouraged people to it and praised it and introduced patient men as the most beloved by Him. He has also named many wonderful consequences for patience. Patience and endurance has such a special standing that God has dedicated 20 verses of the Holy Qur'an to it. It is because patience and endurance is the special characteristic of the prophets and the goals of their calling won't be met without having them.

*"Therefore bear up patiently as did the messengers endowed with constancy bear up with patience and do not seek to hasten for them (their doom)."*⁴

Prophet Muḥammad (SAWA) carried out this decree whole-heartedly and demonstrated patience and endurance in all aspects of his mission until he reached the manifest victory.

¹ *Ar-Ra'd* 13:24.

² *An-Nahl* 16:96.

³ *Āl 'Imrān* 46.

⁴ *Al-Aḥqāf* 46:35.

Patience and Endurance of the Noble Prophet (SAWA)

Looking at the process of the call to Islam of Prophet Muḥammad (SAWA) in Mecca and then in Medina, one can easily perceive that patience and endurance had a fundamental role in it. Imām Khomeinī's (*r*) analysis on this is eye opening:

“When the Noble Prophet (SAWA) was formally chosen, he was all alone: *Arise and warn!* Invitation started from him at first. The first day he spoke of his calling, a child (Imām ‘Alī) and a lady (Ḥadrat Khadijah) acknowledged his mission, but endurance, which is a necessary characteristic of prophets, existed completely in the Noble Prophet: “*Continue then in the right way as you are commanded*”¹

These two characteristics were fundamental in meeting the goals of the Noble Prophet (SAWA): Uprising and endurance. The endurance was a reason for him not get disappointed in spite of the fact he was empty handed and all the powers in Mecca were against him, in a way he couldn't invite people openly. His calling was done in hiding, he would attract people one by one until he went to Medina and was ordered to call people to upraise: *I exhort you only to one thing, that rise up for Allah's sake.* Here this is general calling for uprising and the important thing is that it is a rising for God. The secret to the victory of Islam's army in the beginning days of Islam, in spite of the fact they didn't have any armaments was rising for God, movement for Allah and it was belief in God which made the Noble Prophet (SAWA) win. Endurance in God's way, and not getting disappointed, granted victory to the noble Prophet.

¹ *Hūd* 11:111.

The Noble Prophet showed such endurance in his calling and for guidance of people that was unprecedented. It has been said about him: *The Noble Prophet was the most patient over the sins of the people.* No one had faced problems in the path of God as much as the holy Prophet had and no one was as patient as he was in the way of God. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“When the Noble Prophet was formally appointed by God—as the Last Divine Messenger—and started propagating Islam, an 8 year old boy—Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*)—and a 40-year old lady—Ḥadrat Khadijah (*s*)—believed in his mission. No one but this two responded to his calling and everyone knows how much he was tormented and how much obstructionism and opposition he faced, but he was never disappointed and never said that I don’t have anyone. With a strong will power he was able to conclude his calling single-handedly.”¹

In face of all the hardships during his time in Mecca, like the threats, torments, tortures against his followers, political and economic siege and the hardships during his time in Medina such as obstructionism, disturbances, consecutive wars he showed nothing but patience and endurance and stood as firm as a mountain and this way he smoothed the path of guidance and salvation of mankind and flourished Islam. He was unwavering in all these stages and never wavered. Imām Khomeinī (*r*) says in this regard:

“The Chosen of God (peace upon them) were patients in all stages of life and in all types of problems. All the hardships that the holy Prophet faced when he declared his mission in Mecca and after migration to Medina, including the socio-economic boycott in Mecca and military attacks against him in

¹ *Wilāyat-e Faqīh* (Governance of the Jurist), p. 124.

Medina, brought out the greatest patience in him. The almost three years of the socio-economic siege in Mecca when he and his followers were confined to a gorge (Shi‘b Abī Ṭālib) due to the pressures and mischief of disbelievers to the extent that the Muslims were hard pressed even for their daily food. Then he migrated to Medina and there were all those attacks against his government and all the powers launched armed battles against him.”¹

In spite of all these, the holy Prophet never showed impatience and didn’t step back from his endeavor to guide the mankind. As Imām Khomeinī (*r*) puts it:

“In Mecca in spite of all those pressures and threats and insults; in Medina in spite of all those battles and devastating aggressions by the disbelievers, the Noble Prophet stood up and never wavered and he and his loyal followers were at the service of Islam.”²

It was because of this patience and endurance that the holy Prophet was able to save mankind from the quagmires of ignorance.

It has been said that a Jew stopped the Noble Prophet and claimed that he owes him money and demanded payment right away, in the street. The Prophet said: Firstly, I don’t owe you anything, secondly (if you insist) allow me to go home and bring you money. The Jew said: I won’t let you move a step. The holy Prophet showed patience and the man grabbed his cloak and started pulling it in a way that the neck of the Prophet got scratched. As the Noble Prophet was on his way to the mosque to say the prayers and it had become late, the people had become worried

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 13, p. 468.

² *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 19, p. 150.

about him and came looking for him. They saw that he had been stopped by a Jew who was insulting him. The Muslims wanted to attack the Jew, but the Noble Prophet *said*: No, don't lay a hand on him; I know how to deal with my friend. Then he started talking to the Jew kindly and patiently. He showed so much patience that the man reverted to Islam there and then and said: An ordinary man can't have such patience and you surely must be chosen by God and a Prophet. This patience is only the characteristic of the Prophets.

*He has the patience of a glowing night
He has the patience of the fragrant flower
He has the patience of the lion in the midst of blood and
milk
Turned him into the one that gives life to the baby camel
The patience of all the prophets in face of the non
believers
Has turned them special and given the Holy Book*

It was because of the immense patience and unprecedented endurance all difficulties were overcome and Islam triumphed. But preserving it is more important than gaining victory, which will be achieved under perseverance. God has reminded this to his Prophet and said:

“Continue then in the right way as you are commanded, as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you, and (O people) be not inordinate, surely He sees what you do.”¹

It has been quoted from Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās that no verse harsher than this had been sent to the Prophet, hence

¹ *Hūd* 11:112.

when his followers asked him why his hair had turned grey so fast and he had aged, he replied: Chapters *Hūd* and *Wāqī'ah* aged me.

Why was this verse so difficult for the Messenger of God? He was the role model, firm in guiding people in Jihad and in carrying out divine commandments of the Holy Qur'an. His 23-year divine mission since his formal appointment by God shows this; 13 years endurance in Mecca and 10 years of persistence in Medina. So, the second part of the verse and the decree for persistence for those who have turned to Allah with him is the part that has aged him. The decree: "*Continue then in the right way as you are commanded*" had been told to him before, but this time it was followed with "*as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you.*" Victory called for the resistance of those who had turned to him and the Noble Prophet was concerned about this.

Imām Khomeinī (*r*) writes in this regard:

"The Perfect Sheikh, Shāh Ābādī said: This verse had been mentioned in *Sūrah ash-Shu'arā'* too, but it was not followed by words "*as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you.*" The reason the Noble Prophet has named *Sūrah Hūd* is that here God has asked for the steadfastness of the *Ummah* too and the Prophet (*SAWA*) feared the task might not be accomplished. He himself was a persistent person and even the symbol of justice."¹

When this verse was revealed to the Prophet (*SAWA*), he turned to his *Ummah* and said: Gear up! Gear Up! It means it is time for working hard and no time for laxity and slackness. From then on, no one saw him smiling.

¹ *Forty Hadīths*, p. 172.

The Prophet (SAWA) was concerned about the future of the *Ummah*, as their wellbeing was tied to their endurance and persistence. Now the Noble Prophet (SAWA) was concerned about the *Ummah*; concerned they follow his path and teachings until they attain freedom in the real meaning of the word, along with honor and salvation. Imām Khomeinī (r) says in this regard:

“The Noble Prophet said: my beard turned grey for this, I aged for this. He himself had endurance and steadfastness, but the reason was this particular wordings of the verse “*as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you.*” It means that he had the mission to make sure those who have turned to him have endurance and steadfastness too. You are those people!¹

“*Our Lord! Bestow on us endurance, make our foothold sure, and give us help against the disbelieving folk.*”²

¹ *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 18, p. 437.

² *Al-Baqarah* 2:250.