

## **In Search of the Prophet**

O Prophet of Allah, where shall I find the source of my adoration for you? I have memorized hundreds of your sayings since my youth, taught your *seerah* (*example*) to numerous students, grown a beard, used the *miswaaq*, sang and proudly taught others odes (*qasidahs*) in praise of you.

But I did not find you in these rituals nor did any of these make me any more like you; rather they merely flung me into the fray of insignificant debates in the arena of so many of the *sunnahless Muslims* who see your *sunnah* only as an endless array of harsh laws and practices or as some justification for their cultural tendencies.

O Allah, save me from being of those who consider the *sunnah* of Thy beloved as being expressed only through aimless imitations and who know Thy Prophet only as a conveyor of commands and warnings.

O Prophet of Allah, I did not truly find you in the books of *fatawa* (*religious edicts*), nor in grand seminars and conferences throughout the world, and certainly not in the harsh arguments between groups proclaiming mutually exclusive rights over you.

I found my source of adoration for you in the love and respect that the Almighty has proclaimed for you; in the honor that He bestowed upon you; in His confirmation of you as "[the ultimate exemplar](#)"; "seal of Prophets" and "[mercy unto all existence](#)". Allah has elevated the very memory of you and has made His boundless love accessible through obedience to you.

I catch but a dimension of you through the instances of compassion you extended to others; how you played with the poor orphaned boy when other children refused to play with him, how you prolonged your prostration out of consideration that your change in posture may inconvenience or hurt your [beloved grandson](#) who had climbed on your back;

how you commanded your army away from the anthill in order not to disrupt the ants' activities; how you blessed with Paradise the sinful woman for saving the life of a cat by making the water of the well accessible with her shoes; how you intervened and prevented a man from abusing his wife by teaching him that "the best of men are those who treat their wives the best";

how you patched your clothes, mended your shoes and did your daily household chores; how you wrestled with your nephew and raced with your wife; how you joked with the kids and carried the baggage of the elderly; how you hosted the Christians of *Najran* in your mosque and stood up to honor the bier of a Jew.

***O Prophet of Allah, why is it that so many of us who claim to be of you refuse to be like you.***

We sing for you and dress like you, but do not come near fulfilling the expression of love, care and beauty that generated from yourself. Why is it that we see in you that which suits our cultural, organizational and chauvinistic interests, yet

ignore the essence of what is essential to your being. Others who are not of you proclaim the multi-dimensional and multi-faceted nature of your personality.

"The personality of Muhammad is most difficult to get the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of him I can catch. What dramatic succession of picturesque scenes?

There is Muhammad the Prophet; there is Muhammad the General; Muhammad the King; Muhammad the Warrior; Muhammad the Businessman; Muhammad the Preacher; Muhammad the Philosopher; Muhammad the Statesman; Muhammad the Orator; Muhammad the Reformer; Muhammad the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad the Emancipator of [Women](#); Muhammad the Judge; Muhammad the Saint..

In all these magnificent roles and in all these departments of human activities he is equally a hero." (Professor Ramakrishna Rao).

O Prophet! Your life-example is an integrated biography, history and law; it is above all a model of excellence.

O Prophet of Allah, you have certainly been adored by many much more worthy than I.

Yet, neither the inability to capture my appreciation of you with the eloquence of *poets* nor my weakness as a believer debars me from qualifying as one who adores you; for in the commemoration of your being do I find the dignity and honor of my existence.