

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

SHAMA'IL: THE PROPHETIC MANIFESTATION



Mufti Abdul Wahab Waheed

SESSION 1

The great legendary scholar Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali once said: "There are three main elements that show what makes us fall in love with people." He identifies them in his book *Ihya Uloom Uldeen*:

1. **Physical attraction**
2. **Characteristics/internal qualities**, manifested by their tongue.
3. **How much the other person loves you back** – the reciprocalness.

He concludes his discussion by saying that if we were to take these three qualities and place them on our beloved Prophet (ﷺ), we would find that he is at the height of the epitome of all of these three qualities.

- There is no one more beautiful in regard to their physical form.
- There is no one who possesses better internal characteristics than the Prophet (ﷺ).
- There is no one who puts themselves in line for another person more than the Prophet (ﷺ).

If we love for these three reasons, there should not be a person in the world that we love more than the Prophet (ﷺ). This love doesn't have to be emotional; it can be rational. When the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

- "لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ" "None of you will truly believe until I am more beloved to him than his father, his child, and all of mankind."

This is a rational love. If someone mocks the Prophet's Sunnah and I don't feel a sense of reverence, that means that rational love is lacking. The level we are expected to be at is such that:

- No one can mention anything negative about our Habib (ﷺ), and we remain unaffected.
- No one can speak ill about the Sahabah, and we remain unaffected.
- No one can mock anything about the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) – whether it be his marriages or how he dealt with people – and we remain unaffected.

Nonetheless, Al-Ghazali mentions that if we take these three qualities and place them in the Prophet's life, we would love the Prophet (ﷺ) more than anyone else – rationally for sure, and hopefully one day emotionally.

Seerah vs. Shamail

- **Seerah:** The timeline of the Prophet (ﷺ) from the beginning of his life to the end.
- **Shamail:** The characteristics, qualities, and habits of the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - There is no way a person can read the Shamail of the Prophet (ﷺ) and not fall in love with him, because it covers every single aspect of his life – from how he ate, how he walked, how he sat with his children and grandchildren, to how he spent time with his wives and even his enemies.
 - Shamail is a complete depiction and imagery of the Prophet's daily life. It is not a timeline in a time-lapse, but his daily life and the characteristics he made habitual within himself.
 - One-time events are found in the Seerah.
 - Habits, or 'adat, are qualities he made an effort to cultivate. While these qualities may not have become Sunnah per se because they were specific to him, they help us understand

- why we should love the Prophet ﷺ.

The Work of Imam Tirmidhi

Imam Tirmidhi (RA) was the first scholar to write about the Shamail.

The Physical Beauty of the Prophet ﷺ

A hadith mentions that Hassan (RA) came to his uncle Hind ibn Abi Hala and asked:

- “Oh my uncle, can you describe my grandfather to me?
 - Hassan (RA) explained that the Prophet (ﷺ) had passed away when he was seven years old, so he did not remember much about his physical description or how he was. Hind ibn Abi Hala was known for his meticulous descriptions of people, as if you could see them.

The Prophetic Qualities: A Reflection

- **Starting with the Greatest Qualities** When describing someone, we begin with their greatest quality. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) epitomized every positive quality and was free from any negative traits. His noble character and natural presence inspired respect and love without coercion. Hind ibn Abi Hala began describing the Prophet by saying:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَخْمًا مُفَخَّمًا

“The Messenger of Allah was a man who was naturally noble.”

- This nobility manifested in his presence, which evoked respect and love without him ever asking for it. He discouraged his companions from standing for him, yet his mere presence commanded reverence. The Prophet’s humility and respect for others naturally inspired reciprocal honor and admiration.

A Simple Formula for Respect and Generosity

- **Give respect; receive respect.**
- **Be generous; others will be generous to you.**
- **Honor others; you will be honored.**
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) honored others, including those society overlooked. Bilal (RA), humiliated in Makkah, was elevated by the Prophet to stand atop the Kaaba and call the Adhan. The Prophet's gatherings made every companion feel as though they were the most beloved. Even a single conversation with him left people feeling valued.

True Generosity and Control of the Tongue

- Generosity is not limited to wealth; it includes time, kindness, and good words.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Control your tongue, feel content with what Allah has given you, and cry over your sins."

- Gratitude stems from perspective:
 1. Look to those above you in Deen to inspire progress.
 2. Look to those below you in Dunya to foster gratitude.
- Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari (RA) remarked:

"A lazy person is like a dead person, except that they have a soul."

The Wisdom of Ibn Al-Qayyim

- Small minds discuss people.
- Average minds discuss things.
- Great minds discuss ideas and inspire change.

Ibn Al-Qayyim also noted that true impact requires being impressed by someone's Akhirah, not their worldly possessions.

Characteristics of the Beauty of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Radiance of the Prophet's Face

- **يَتَلَأَلُ وَجْهَهُ تَلَأُلُ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ**: His face was as radiant as the full moon on the 14th night, shimmering with a glittering beauty.
- **Story of Jafar (RA) and Jaleel ibn Abdullah (RA):**
 - They saw the moon on the 14th night and debated whether the moon or the Prophet's face was more beautiful.
 - To settle the matter, they went to see the Prophet while he was praying in the Haram with a red shawl around his shoulders.
 - Upon seeing him, they realized there was no comparison—the Prophet's beauty far surpassed that of the moon.

Testimonies About His Beauty

- **Hassan ibn Thabit (RA) said:**
 - **لو لم تكن له أية مبينة لكان منظره يأتيك بالخبر:**
"If the Prophet had never spoken a single word, his appearance alone would have testified that he was a Prophet."
- **Ibn Ishaq (RA):**
 - More than 33 people embraced Islam just by looking at the Prophet's face.
- **Tufail ibn Amr al-Dowsi (RA):**
 - Saw the Prophet from a distance in Makkah and accepted Islam.
- **Abdullah ibn Salam (RA):**
 - A Jewish rabbi in Madinah who embraced Islam after observing the Prophet from afar, saying, "This cannot be the face of a liar."

Detailed Description of the Prophet's Features

Narration of Umm Ma'bad:

Eyes

- رأيت رجلا ظاهر الوضاعة، حسن الخلق، مليح الوجه، لم تعبهُ ثجلة، ولم تزر به صعلة، قسيم وسيم، في عينيه دعج
 - His eyes had a strong contrast: the black was intensely black, and the white was immensely white.
 - The shape was olive-like—large but not overly so.
 - The white of his eyes occasionally had a redness, possibly from his nights spent in prayer and tears.
 - It appeared as though his eyes naturally had kohl, though he did not wear any.

Nose

- From afar, his nose appeared long, but upon closer view, it was of normal size.
- نور (light) emanated from his nose, giving the impression that it was longer than it actually was.

Cheekbones

- His cheekbones were high and prominent.

Mouth and Teeth

- His mouth was large, which was a sign of eloquence.
- His teeth were spaced slightly apart—not clustered—allowing clarity of speech.

Face Shape

- His face was not round but more olive-shaped, a balance between narrow and wide.
- His cheeks were naturally rosy.

Eyebrows

- His eyebrows were naturally arched and separated—not bushy.
- From afar, they appeared as if they were perfectly shaped, but upon closer view, they were natural.

Forehead

- His forehead was broad, indicating intelligence and wisdom.
- It was proportionate—not excessively large.

Hair

- His hair varied in length:
 - To his earlobes.
 - To the back of his neck.
 - Occasionally to his shoulders (usually while traveling).
- He never had uneven hair except during Hajj or Umrah when his hair was shaved.
- His hair was thick and never balding.

Hands

- His hands were large yet soft.
- Umm Salamah (RA) said: **“I have never touched any cloth softer than the hands of the Prophet.”**

Feet and Gait

- His feet were proportionate and well-formed.
- When walking, his gaze was always downward—a sign of humility and focus.
- Despite looking down, he was always aware of his surroundings and would initiate greetings of salam.
- His walk exuded humility and determination.

Beard

- His beard was thick and full.

Reverence and Awe for the Prophet

- **Anas ibn Malik (RA):**
 - Whenever the Prophet addressed his companions, they had conflicting feelings:
 1. A desire to look at his beautiful face.
 2. A sense of reverence that made them feel they couldn't stare directly at him for too long.

- They would glance at him when he looked away and lower their gaze when he turned back.
- When he entered a masjid, no one dared to look up except Abu Bakr (RA) and Umar (RA), who would smile at him, and he would smile back.

Incident of Hassan ibn Thabit (RA)

- The Jewish leaders in Madinah asked Hassan to compose poetry against the Prophet.
- When the Prophet descended a hill, Hassan prepared to speak of him.
- However, upon seeing the Prophet's face, he instinctively covered his eyes, fearing that continued gazing might cost him his eyesight due to the overwhelming beauty.
- He described being unable to look at or away from the Prophet.

Lessons from His Beauty

- The Prophet demanded respect through his character and beauty without ever asking for it.
- His beauty was unparalleled, and even his enemies could not deny it.
- He exemplified humility, focus, and dignity in his appearance and demeanor.

Reflection on the Sunnah

- Respect the Sunnah without judgment:
 - Do not belittle those who observe it, nor judge those who may not.
 - Uphold fairness and mutual respect in practicing and honoring the traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ)