

Practical Guide, how to love our Beloved Prophet (SAW)

This article is an invitation to examine our love for the Prophet (May the peace and Allah's blessings be upon him), not emotionally, but through the direction of our lives and the choices we make.)

You all must have a story that should made us pause and left us unsettled. It was about Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) who stood face to face with Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and Allah's blessings be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, you are dearer to me than everything except my own self." The Prophet, with clear truth and divine weight, replied, "No, by Him in Whose Hand is my soul, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self."

Umar then paused. Reflected. Then came back with conviction, "Now, by Allah, you are more beloved to me than my own self." And the Prophet responded, "Now, O Umar." [Reported in Sahih al-Bukhari in 'Book of Oaths and Vows', 6632]

That one word – *now* – should keep echoing inside us. Now, meaning *only now* has your faith become whole. Now, meaning your heart has finally reached where it must. And what should struck us most is this: Umar already loved him. We know that. We see it in the stories of his loyalty, his courage, his sacrifices. **But the Prophet made it clear - his love hadn't yet reached the level that Allah expects.**

And this made me wonder, what about me? What about us?

We all claim to love him. We say it. We believe it. We teach it. But when the prophet said “not until I am more beloved to you than your own self,” he was drawing a line. Not to shame us, but to show us the path.

And in our time, when *self-love* is everywhere, when entire philosophies are built on “putting yourself first”, it’s a hard question to even sit with. But necessary.

Because if we are honest with ourselves, We have to ask: what does our life really say?

Sure, we say we love the Prophet (may the peace and Allah’s blessings be upon him). We write about him. We say salawat. We admire him. But when it comes to the private corners of our lives - Our choices, our habits, our reactions, our desires – Are we choosing him over ourselves?

Would we actually change ourselves, deeply and truly, if it meant aligning with his way?

What My Life Says

This is where the reflection becomes uncomfortable. Because loving the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is not something we measure by what we feel in a moment, but by what we choose consistently. And when we slow down and look at our own lives, we are forced to listen to what it is quietly saying.

Do we follow his Sunnah when it’s inconvenient?

Do we get annoyed when someone reminds me of it?

Do we defend our culture, our identity, or even our temper over his example?

Do we read about his life just to admire, or to imitate?

If we are honest, the answers don't always feel like love. Sometimes they look like admiration. Sometimes like longing. But love - real love - is not proven by emotion alone. It shows in our actions. It shows itself in restraint. Love is when I want to snap, but I remember his silence. When I want revenge, but I remember his mercy. When I want ease, but I remember his feet swollen from standing long in prayer, not out of fear, but gratitude.

And more than anything, real love is obedience.

Not simply because he is lovable, but because Allah Himself tied obedience to the Prophet to obedience to Him. The Quran tells us:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا

“Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah...” (Surah An-Nisa, 4:80)

That is not metaphor. **That is the structure of faith.** So when we neglect his guidance, postpone his Sunnah, or treat his way as a side option instead of the center of our lives, we have to ask ourselves gently but honestly: **what does that say about our love for him?**

How the Companions Loved Him

When we think of love that is real, we must remember the companions. They didn't write articles about love. They lived it.

There was the woman of Banu Dinar. After the battle of Uhud, she was told that her father, brother, and husband had all been killed. One by one. Any of us would be flattened by that news. But all she said was, “How is the Messenger of Allah?” And when she saw him safe, she said, “**Every calamity is small as long as you are safe.**”

Who thinks like that? Who feels like that? But that’s what happens when your heart lives for someone. Love like that comes from devotion. From living a life centered around him. From seeing him not as a figure of history, but as the one who changed your entire future.

And think of Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him). When he was in the cave with the Prophet during the Hijrah to Madinah, he used his own feet to cover the holes in the cave wall so nothing would harm the prophet. And on another occasion, when the Prophet called for donations for the cause of Islam, Abu Bakr brought everything he owned. Everything. When asked what he had left behind for his family, Abu Bakr said, “Allah and His Messenger.”

That wasn’t theatrics. That was trust. That was love that knew where salvation lay.

Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him), the muezzin of Islam, couldn’t bring himself to call the adhan after the Prophet passed. His voice broke every time he reached the name *Muhammad*. That’s love that grips the chest.

And then there was Thawban. He cried in front of the Prophet. Not from fear of Hell, but because he realized that in the afterlife, the Prophet would be in the highest level of Paradise, and he might not see him again. That was his grief and heartbreak.

So I ask myself, what heartbreak would I feel if I were told I couldn't see him again?

The answer, at least today, feels hollow. I haven't cultivated that connection. Maybe many of us haven't. **And the reason is simple: we don't yet realize what he did for us.**

Cultivating That Love

So how does that love actually grow?

Love begins when his message stops being a mere history lesson for us, and instead starts feeling like rescue.

We didn't walk with him in Madinah. We didn't witness his smile, or see his wounds, or hear the tenderness in his voice.

But we can't deny that without him, we would be lost.

It was through him that Allah pulled many of us out of the fog.

Because without his teachings, we wouldn't know how to worship. We wouldn't know how to carry grief. We wouldn't know how to treat people. We wouldn't know how to pray. How to surrender. How to love our Creator. How to speak to Him. How to seek His Mercy.

Let's think about this. He didn't just teach religion. He mapped out the architecture of a meaningful life.

And the more we think, we realize that every prayer we pray. Every dua we make. Every ayah we recite. Every moment of peace that comes from remembering Allah - it all passed through

him. Through his effort. Through his sacrifice. Through his sleepless nights and bloodied feet and broken heart.

So the first step in cultivating love is to simply see that. To feel that. And to say: I owe him more than a slogan.

How Allah Honors Those Who Love the Prophet

And what deepens that awe is how Allah honors those who love him.

Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her), the first to believe and his noble wife, was given salam by Angel Jibreel on behalf of Allah. She was promised a palace in Jannah, without noise or fatigue. Why? Because she supported the Prophet when no one else did. That's how Allah responds to sincere love.

The Prophet (May the peace and Allah's blessings be upon him) said, "None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his child, and all of mankind." [Sahih al-Bukhari, 15; Sahih Muslim, 44]

That is not a high ideal. **And here is an important point to understand. That is a requirement. Not because the Prophet demands love. But rather because Allah placed him in that role. Obedience to the Prophet is obedience to Allah. So our love for him is not just emotional. It is foundational.**

This is why the common attitude of saying, "*It's only Sunnah, it's not fard,*" should make us pause. When Allah says, "*Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah,*" He does not separate obedience into emotional versus optional categories. Sunnah is not merely extra practice. Rather, it is the lived expression of loyalty and obedience. What we casually set aside as "not

required” often reveals how much of ourselves we are actually willing to give.

So if I say I love him, but constantly negotiate his Sunnah to fit my lifestyle, what am I really saying?

If I prioritize my comfort, my ego, or my image over his guidance, what does that say about my claim?

No one is asking for perfection. But love has a direction. If we are facing him, walking toward him, yearning to embody what he taught, then our love is alive.

When We Will Need That Love

And one day, when this world fades and we stand alone before Allah on the Day of Judgement, we will be desperately looking for him. We will want his intercession. We will want to drink from his blessed hand at the pond of Al-Kawthar. We will want to be seen by him, recognized by him. Not as strangers, but as followers who carried his message in our lives.

And what a tragedy it would be if we stood there saying his name, yet lived in a way that made us unknown to him.

So if you are like me - if you respect him, admire him, long for him, but you are not sure if your love is real yet - don't be ashamed. Just be honest. And start from there.

Let's revisit the prophet's life, not as a history book, but as a guide. Start with one Sunnah. Just one. Practice it out of loyalty. Send blessings upon him whenever you get the time. Not out of ritual, but out of devotion.

And watch what happens. Slowly, you will find that love isn't something you force. It's something Allah places in the heart of those who are sincere.

My Prayer

I want to be among those who love him more than myself. Not just in words. But in choices. In sacrifices. In loyalty.

Because on that Day, when souls scatter and voices fall silent, I want our Prophet to recognize me - not by my speech, but by my sincerity.

And I pray that same love reaches all of us. Not as an idea we quote, but as a light that purifies us, transforms us, and brings us close to the one who brought us closest to Allah.

Practical Steps needed to Improve our Love to our Beloved Prophet (SAW)

- 1) We should love our Prophet more than our parents, family and even ourselves.

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ

The Prophet has a stronger affinity to the believers than they do themselves.

Surah Al-Ahzab, Aya #6

- 2) We should invoke Allah's blessings (Darud) upon him abundantly, as Allah and His Angeles do.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Indeed, Allah showers His blessings upon the Prophet, and His Angels pray for him, O believers! Invoke Allah's blessings upon him, and salute him with worthy greetings of peace. Surah Al-Ahzab, Aya #56.

- 3) We should implement his message of Quran and Sunnah in our lives.
- 4) We should spread his message of Quran and Sunnah to others to the best of our abilities.
- 5) We should not be divided into different sects, groups, involve in innovation (Bid'ah), Just follow the life of his and his companions.
- 6) We should love and respect his family (Ahle Bait) and his companions.
- 7) Try not to leave any Sunnah on any occasion, be it is
 - a) All Nafl prayers he performed i.e 12 Regular prayers after Fard Salah, Tahujjad Salah, Salat ul Doha, Salat ul Masjid, Salat ul Hajat, Satul Shukrana, Prayer whenever any hardship occurs, Salat ul Istikhara, Salat ul Tauba etc.
- 8) Recite all his duas for every occasion like, Entering/leaving Masjid, entering/leaving bathrooms, duas before/after eating, drinking etc
- 9) Spreading Salams especially to unknown Muslims brothers
- 10) Feeding people, especially poor
- 11) We must learn/know his life history (Seerah), why? I will list 5 important reasons:

a) Allah has commanded us to learn about this great Prophet:

Allah said in Quran:

You have an excellent example in the Messenger of God; for anyone who seeks God and the Last Day, and remembers Allah frequently. Surah AL-Ahzab, Aya 21

And you are of a great moral character.. Surah Al Qalam, Aya 4.

Therefore the study of the life and times of the Prophet is the study of somebody we need to follow, how we will follow someone, if we do not know him?

b) Number one way to increase our love for the Prophet is to know more about that person we want to love more than our own selves. Allah says in Surah Al-Ahzab Aya #6 “The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves and his wives are as their mothers.

c) Knowing Prophet’s life and times helps us to understand the Quran. Quran is a complex book that cannot be understood without context. Learning Prophet’s life gives that context. Without context you never fully appreciate Quran.

d) Learning Seerah, raises our hopes, lifts our spirits and blesses us with optimism. We are living in the age of Islam phobia, by studying Seerah we understand that Prophet himself and his companions before us has suffered much more than us for the cause of Islam.

e) Seerah (Life of Prophet) itself is a miracle; his whole life is an indication that he was the Messenger of Allah. He was born in barbaric nation, Pagan civilization, he was unlettered Prophet (Cannot read or write), but he got Allah's book eloquence of Quran, his patience, perseverance, successes, where it all came from? Within 50 years Islam began to spread and within 100 years it ruled the world. How he achieved this miraculous and phenomenal success? We will only know that by learning his life history (Seerah).