

Abu Haamid al-Ghazaali (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in Ihya' 'Uloom al-Deen (2/430-442):

A number of the good qualities of his character which have been compiled by some of the scholars from the reports. Then he said:

He was the most forbearing of people, the most courageous of people, the most just of people, the most chaste of people.

His hand never touched the hand of any woman unless he owned her as a slave or was married to her or was closely related to her by blood (mahram).

He was the most generous of people, who never kept a dinar or a dirham with him overnight. If he had anything left over and he could not find someone to give it to before night came, he would not go home until he had donated it to someone who needed it.

He did not take anything from that which Allaah had bestowed upon him except one year's supply of the simplest provisions, dates and barley, giving all of that for the sake of Allaah.

He was never asked for anything but he gave it, then he would go back to his annual supplies and donate from them to those who needed it more, then he might run out before the year ended.

He used to repair his own sandals and mend his own clothes, and he would help his family in the home and cut meat for them.

He was the most modest of people and would not look anyone straight in the eye.

He would respond to the invitations of slave and free alike, and accept a gift even if it was a cup of milk, and he would reward a person for it.

He did not eat food that had been given in charity, and he would respond to slave women and the poor when they asked him for something.

He got angry for the sake of his Lord but he did not get angry for his own sake.

He would adhere to the truth even if that resulted in harm for himself or his companions.

He found one of the best of his companions slain in an area where Jews lived, but he did not treat them harshly or do more than that which is prescribed by sharee'ah. Rather he paid a diyah for him of one hundred camels even though some of his companions were in desperate need of just one camel.

He would tie a rock to his stomach to ward off hunger pangs, and he did not refuse halaal food or and he would not eat reclining or at a table.

He never ate his fill of bread for three days in a row until he met Allaah, may He be exalted, as he would prefer to give away what he had rather than eat his fill, not because of poverty or miserliness.

He would accept invitations to meals, visit the sick, and attend funerals.

He walked alone among his enemies without a guard.

He was the most humble and quiet of people without being arrogant, the most eloquent without being long-winded, the most cheerful of countenance.

He did not worry about worldly matters.

He wore whatever he found, and let his slave or others ride behind him on his mount. He rode whatever was available, sometimes a horse, sometimes a camel, sometimes a mule and sometimes a donkey. Sometimes he walked barefoot, with no cloak, turban or cap, visiting the sick in the furthest parts of Madeenah.

He loved perfume and hated foul smells.

He would sit with the poor and offer food to and eat with the needy, honouring the virtuous and softening the hearts of people of status by treating them kindly.

He upheld ties of kinship without favouring his relatives over those who were better than them, and he did not treat anyone harshly.

He accepted the excuses of those who apologized to him; he would joke but he only spoke the truth, and he would smile without laughing out loud. If he saw permissible play he did not denounce it, and he raced with his wife.

When voices were raised against him, he bore that with patience.

He had slaves, male and female, but he did not eat or dress any better than they did.

He did not waste time without striving for the sake of Allaah or doing that which was essential to better himself.

He did not look down on any poor person because of his poverty or chronic sickness, and he did not fear any king because of his power. He called both of them to Allaah on equal terms.

Al-Bakhtari said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not revile any of the believers but he prayed that it might become an expiation and a mercy for them. He said: "I have been sent as a blessing, not a curse."

If he was asked to pray against anyone, whether Muslim or kaafir, he would refrain from praying against him and pray for him instead.

His hand never struck anyone.

If he was given the choice between two things he would choose the easier option, unless it involved sin or the severing of family ties.

Allaah described him in the Torah before He sent him, and said: Muhammad the Messenger of Allaah, My chosen slave; he is not harsh or rough, and does not make noise in the marketplace.

He did not repay evil in kind; rather he would pardon and forgive. Part of his attitude was that he would be the first to greet whomever he met, and if someone came to him with a need, he would be patient until the person was the first one to leave.

If someone took him by the hand, he would not let go until the other person let go first.

In a gathering he could not be distinguished from his companions.

Allaah, may He be exalted, said (interpretation of the meaning): "And by the Mercy of Allaah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you" [Aal 'Imraan 3:159].

Allaah bestowed upon him the best attitude and conduct, and the best way of dealing with people and situations, even though he was illiterate and could neither read nor write.

He grew up poor in an ignorant desert land, tending sheep, an orphan with neither father nor mother. But Allaah taught him all good characteristics and good ways, and taught him the stories of earlier and later generations, and that which brings success and salvation in the Hereafter and happiness in this world, and showed him the way to focus on one's duties and keep away from inessentials.

May Allaah help us to obey his commands and follow his example.

Ameen O Lord of the Worlds.