

# A GLIMPSE *of* PROPHETIC BEAUTY

TAKEN FROM *Şūrat al-Ḥabīb* ﷺ

*by*

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# بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



he Companions described the Prophet's ﷺ beautiful form that dazzled all who saw him. They said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had the most beautiful face, and the best form. He was neither excessively tall nor short. His face was like the moon when it is full. No one before or after him has been seen like him, and if you were to see him you would say, 'The sun has risen.' And when he would speak, a radiant light would be seen emitting from between his teeth."

[And from the other reports:] "The Prophet ﷺ had a black beard and a beautiful mouth. He had long hair and a thick beard." "The Prophet ﷺ had broad shoulders. He was the greatest of people and the best of them. His hair reached his ears. Never have I seen anything more beautiful than him!" "It was as if the Prophet ﷺ was fashioned of silver and his sweat was pearl drops."

"The Prophet ﷺ was of medium height compared to others; he was neither tall nor short. He had the most beautiful face of all people and was the best of them in character. He was neither excessively tall nor short, but was closer to being tall. Never did a tall person walk with him save that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ appeared taller. Sometimes the Prophet ﷺ would walk in between two tall men yet he would seem taller than them, and when they would part ways he would appear once again of medium height."

Anas رضي الله عنه said, “I have never smelled ambergris or musk or anything sweeter than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.” Once, the Prophet ﷺ was brought a bucket of water. He drank from it and dipped it back into the well, which caused the well to emit the fragrance of musk. The Prophet’s ﷺ sweat was more fragrant than the finest scent. Anas رضي الله عنه said, “The Prophet ﷺ came to take a nap at our house and had perspired, so my mother came with a bottle and began to soak up the sweat. The Prophet ﷺ woke up and said, ‘What are you doing, Umm Sulaym?’ She replied, ‘We mix this sweat in our perfumes, and it is the finest scent.’” Anas also said, “He was the most beautiful of Allah’s creation I had seen, and his scent was the most fragrant, and his hands the softest.”

Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه said, “The Prophet ﷺ was the best and most beautiful of people in his qualities. He was of medium height, with broad shoulders. His cheeks were smooth and his hair was black. His eyes were large, as if lined with antimony (kohl), with arched eyebrows. When he would place his over garment over his shoulders it would look like an ingot of silver. When he would laugh his teeth shone like pearls. I saw neither before him nor after him anyone like him ﷺ.”

“When the Prophet ﷺ would open his beautiful mouth it was mostly smiles, revealing something like hailstones. Of Allah’s servants, he had the most beautiful lips and the corners of his mouth were the softest.”

His complexion was fair (*azhar*). This means that the Prophet’s complexion was fair without an admixture of redness, yellowness, or any other color. Inside the Prophet’s Mosque, Ibn ‘Umar would frequently recite the verses of his uncle Abū Ṭālib in description of the Prophet’s ﷺ complexion:

*A fair one, by virtue of whose face the rain is sought  
A caretaker of the orphans, a guardian of the widows*

Those who would hear him would say, “That is how the Prophet ﷺ was.”

Some have described him a fair complexioned with a bit of redness. They spoke the truth; however, this slight redness would appear when the sun would shine and when the wind would blow during the forenoon. The fairness of his complexion would take on a reddish tint during that time; all the while the skin color under his garments retained a fair white complexion. No one has any doubts about this. Those who described the Prophet ﷺ as fair complexioned meant his skin color under his garments, and they were correct; and those who described him as fair with a bit of redness meant his appearance in the sun during the forenoon, and they were also correct. The Prophet’s ﷺ complexion was undoubtedly fair, and the rosiness or redness associated with it was on account of the sun and wind.

The beads of the Prophet’s sweat ﷺ were like pearls, and his scent was more fragrant than the finest perfumes. His hair was natural without a part [in the middle]; it was beautiful, and was neither curly nor straight. . . .

The Prophet’s ﷺ hair was above his ears. Some say that it would fall upon his shoulders, and most say that it reached his ear lobes. The Prophet ﷺ would occasionally plait his hair into four braids; his right ear would come out between the two braids surrounding it, and the left ear would come out between the two braids surrounding it, and the two ears would appear with their whiteness between these braids as if they were two resplendent stars lit up in the midst of the blackness of his hair. The Prophet’s ﷺ gray hair appeared around his temples. . .and most of his gray hairs were in his beard above his chin. The Prophet’s ﷺ gray hairs appeared as if they were strands of silver that shone in the midst of the blackness of his hair. And when he would rub the yellowish gray hairs—which he did frequently—they would appear as if they were strands of gold that shone in the midst of the blackness of his hair.

The Prophet ﷺ was the handsomest of men, the most resplendent of them in light. Nobody would describe him without comparing his face to the full moon. Those among them would say, “Perhaps we would look upon the moon when it is full and say, ‘Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ is more beautiful in our eyes than the moon!’ He was of fair complexion, with a bright face that would shine like the full moon.”

“The Prophet’s ﷺ pleasure and displeasure and happiness could be seen from his face: when he was pleased with something or something made him happy, his face was like a mirror and its brilliant light would shine upon the walls, and when he was angry his face would change color and his eyes would redden.”

The Companions used to say he is as his companion Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه described him:

*Honest, the Chosen One, calling unto good  
Like the light of the full moon that cleaves darkness*

They would say, “He was like that رضي الله عنه.” ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb would frequently recite the verses of Zuhayr b. Abī Salmā:

*Were you to be anything other than human  
You would have been the brilliance of the full moon*

The Prophet ﷺ had a broad forehead and perfectly arched eyebrows. His eyebrows were of medium thickness and no hair in them was out of place. There was a space between them that appeared as if it were pure silver, as well as a vein that would expand when he would become angry. When not angry, this vein would not be seen.

“The Prophet’s eyes were large with dark pupils, showing a slight reddishness, and he had long, lush eyelashes. His nose was aquiline. Between his teeth there was a slight space,” a separation like the teeth of a comb, except that his blessed teeth were straight all around. . . . “When he would smile it would appear as some-

thing like hailstones in clouds, and when he would laugh it would shine like the radiance of lightning. . . .” “His face was neither elongated nor completely circular. His beard was thick, his chest broad. . . .” His limbs were well proportioned, as if his fingers were rods of silver. The palms of his hands were softer than silk and were fragrant, as if they were the hands of a perfumist, whether he applied scent to them or not. “When someone would shake his blessed hand it would leave a fragrance that stayed with him for the remainder of his day. And when he would pat the head of a child that child would stand out among the other children due to the fragrance on his head. . . .”



And yet, despite all of this, Imam al-Qurṭubī says:

The Prophet’s complete beauty has not been fully manifested, for if it was disclosed to us in full, our eyes would be unable to behold him ﷺ. The similes, therefore, that are used to describe him ﷺ are only for the sake of approximating and drawing similitudes, for the Prophet’s essence ﷺ is far too exquisite and his honor is far loftier.

