

## **Discerning The True Nature of Servant Hood in The Seal of Prophets: Lesson for Muslims**

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### **Abstract**

The paper acknowledges the supremacy of the Creator over the creation and emphasises the need to understand the true nature of servant hood as exemplified by the Seal of Prophets, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Furthermore, it presents the Noble Prophet as the ultimate model of servant hood in the sight of Allah and a perfect example for mankind. Drawing on relevant examples, the paper discusses his self-declaration of servant hood, his devotion to the creator despite divine reassurance, his pardon for people on personal grievances and his embrace of an ascetic lifestyle despite his capability to attain material wealth for himself and his family. The paper highlights his commitment to Noble conduct and his rejection of undesirable attitude. It concludes that the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), has embodies the ideal servant of Allah. The paper recommends Muslims to study his life deeply in order to understand the principles of servant hood and apply them in their daily activities.

**Keywords:** Nature, Servant Hood, The Seal of Prophets, Lesson, Muslims



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## INTRODUCTION

An in-depth contemplation on the nature of creation and reflection on the Creator Himself, leads to the conclusion that everything is under the control of the Creator and as such subject to His power. This truth is affirmed in the following verse of the Glorious Qur'an:

*Whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth do prostrate themselves to Allah [Acknowledging subjection], - with good-will or in spite of themselves: so do their shadows in the morning and evenings (Surah (Rad:15).*

Accordingly, all creations are servants of Allah as stated in the Qur'an: *Not one of the beings in the heavens and the earth but must come to [Allah] Most Gracious as a servant (Surah (Maryam:23).* Among the creations, the Creator raised some above others (Surah (An'am:165;) and made humanity the best of His creations (Surah (Isra:70). Among human, he chose the Prophets to be the most distinguished, and among the Prophets, He raised some above others Surah (Isra:55) honoring them with the responsibility of delivering His message to their people. Among these messengers, He selected five as the most exalted and honored one as the best of all messengers and servants of Allah; (Surah Ahqaf:35) Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the seal of the Prophets and Messengers (Surah Ahzab:40).

As the best of all servants of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) serves as the perfect mirror through which other servants can view and emulate the true essence of servant hood. This is because the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was endowed with the most exalted standard of character as confirmed in the Qur'an: *And thou [standest] on an exalted standard of character (Surah al-Qolam:4).* To

attain the real nature of servanthood, man is therefore enjoined to follow him. The Qur'an says:

*Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern [of conduct] for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah Surah (Ahzab:21)*

This paper seeks to examine the foundation of true servanthood as part of the legacy which Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) left for Muslims to follow. The word servant means somebody who serves another. A servant of Allah is he who engages in the service of Allah. He sees all he has as resources kept under his custody which must be utilized according to the dictates of the giver. The entire life of a servant of Allah is in line with the dictates of his Creator. The Glorious Qur'an sheds more light on the features of a servant of Allah as one who exhibits the spirit of humbleness and humility, promotes peaceful coexistence, and dedicates his night to glorification, and prostration for his Lord. In addition, the true servant of the Most Gracious, seeks refuge with Allah against the wrath of Hell, maintains balance in spending by avoiding being extravagant and penny pincher, associates no one with Allah, upholds the sanctity of life, abstains from illicit sexual relations, turns to Allah for repentance, and gives no false testimony. Abhorring sins, aspiring for a righteous life for himself and his family and trembling whenever God is mentioned are other features of a servant of Allah Qur'an (Surah Furqan: 75-76).

As a leader of the people and a true servant of Allah, the Noble Prophet exhibited the real features of a Servant-Leader. A Servant-Leader possesses the natural instinct to serve his people, prioritised the well-being of his followers, feels happy when they progress, and disturbed when they are in

distress. The ultimate goal of a Servant-Leader is nothing but to serve his people to the best of his ability (Greenleaf, 1972).

Every human being seeks to emulate a particular personality in life. In addition, the Qur'an presents the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a model for mankind. The exemplary virtues, such as his mercy to humanity, love for justice, respect for every soul and regard for people of other religions, are qualities highly relevant in this contemporary world. In view of the challenges of the world today, the Noble Prophet is seen as the solution to these problems (Kolkata, 2021).

A study examined the significance of the Prophetic character in shaping students towards inculcation of virtuous traits (*Akhlakul Karimah*) during their study. It highlights several aspects of the Prophet's noble conduct, including kindness, honesty, justice, patience, humility, and compassion. It emphasises the necessity of integrating these ideals into educational curricula as a means of developing well-rounded individuals, capable of contributing to the society (Eli Susilawati et al, 2024).

Another study explored how Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) serves as a role model through his charismatic, transformational leadership by inspiring moral conduct, which elevated individual's consciousness and guided them from pre-Islamic practices to an Islamic way of life (Kamaluddin & Citaningati, 2023). As a servant leader, the Prophet embraced the spirit of justice, accountability, humbleness and humility, and a sense of togetherness in delivering his message and guiding his followers, thereby laying down a timeless model for effective leadership. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is an exemplary leader who laid down the foundation of noble values, and principles of ethics and morality of Islam (Tabroni, Putra, & Adawiah, 2022).

## **METHOD**

The research adopts a literature review approach. This method gives room for the consultation of relevant data from various literary works. These materials include the Glorious Qur'an, the notable authentic collections on prophetic traditions, published text books and scientific journals (Adlini et al., 2022). Utilising a qualitative approach, the collected materials were thoroughly analysed, and their ideas were logically and systematically presented. This paved way for realization of the objective of the paper which is affirmation of the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the true servant of Allah and as such, the best model for Muslims.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Self-Affirmation of his Servant hood**

In addition to the second part of testification which declares that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is a servant of Allah, the Noble Prophet repeatedly affirm his status as a servant of Allah in various instances. In an occasion, he cautioned against venerating him to the level of God as done by the Christians to the son of Maryam. He instructed to be addressed as a slave of Allah (Bukhari: 1997, vol. 4 no. 3445, p410)

In all his correspondence, he introduced himself as “a servant of Allah. An example is contained in his letter to Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantines which reads:

*In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. (This letter is) from Muhammad, the slave of Allah, and His Messenger, to Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantines. Peace be upon him, who follows the (true) guidance... (Bukhari: 1997, vol. 4 no. 2941, pp 120-124).*

The Prophet also demonstrated humility in his daily actions, exemplifying servanthood. Abdullah bin Bus narrated:

*I gave the Prophet a gift of a sheep, and the Messenger of Allah sat on his knees to eat. A Bedouin said. 'What is this sitting?' He said: 'Allah has made me a humble and generous slave (of Allah) ... (Ibn. Majah: 2007, vol. 4. no 3263, p325).*

The highest status a servant can attain in the sight of Allah is that of a true servant of Allah. The Noble Prophet emphasized by saying: The most beloved of names to Allah are Abdullah and Abdur-Rahman (Abu Dawud: 2008 vol 5, no 4950, p333).

### **Servitude to the Creator Despite Reassurance from his Lord**

Although, the Prophet is considered as sinless creation, a feature attributed to all Prophets of Allah, he was assured of Allah's pardon for any perceived shortcomings, both past and future. Furthermore, he was given glad tidings of a distinguished status reserved for him in the Hereafter. The following hadith affirms:

*I will be the Prophet with the greatest number of followers on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first one to knock at the gate of Paradise (Muslim :2007, vol no. 484, p329).*

*I will come to the gate of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection and will ask for it to be opened. The keeper will say: 'Who are you?' I will say: 'Muhammad.' He will say: 'I was commanded not to open it for anyone before you (Muslim: 2007, no. 486, 330).*

Despite these assurances, the Prophet consistently sought Allah's forgiveness, reportedly doing so seventy times or more times daily (Ibn. Majah: 2007, vol. 5. no 3816, p89 & Bukhari: 1997, vol. 8 no. 6307, p180). Even with the unparalleled rewards and guarantees of being the first to enter

Paradise, the Prophet was known to habitually seek Allah's protection from the trial and affliction of the Hellfire and punishment of grave (Bukhari: 1997, vol. 8 no. 6376, p213).

Moreover, his devotion to Allah was profound. During night prayers, he would pray for such long hours that his feet became swollen. On one occasion, his wife, Aisha, expressed astonishment, asking why he exerted himself so greatly despite having been granted total pardon by his Lord. The Noble Prophet responded: "should I not be a thankful slave" (Bukhari: 1997, vol. 7 no. 7126, p220-221). These examples underscore the Prophet's unwavering servitude to Allah and his status as a model of devotion for mankind.

#### **Exculpation of people on infringement of his personal right**

The Glorious Qur'an prescribes the law of retaliation (Surah Maida: 45) while simultaneously emphasizing forgiveness (Surah Anfal: 199 & Nur: 22). Forgiveness is equally presented as the most resolute and noble course of action (Surah: 40 & 43). In alignment with this divine guidance, the Noble Prophet never sought revenge for personal grievances, reserving retribution only for cases involving the violation of Allah's legislation (Bukhari :1997, vol.4, no. 3560, pp462-463).

One instance of this remarkable forgiveness involved a Bedouin who forcibly tugged at the Prophet's garment, leaving marks on his shoulder, while demanding his share of charity. Instead of being infuriated, the Noble Prophet smiled and instructed that the man be given what he asked (Bukhari:1997, vol 8, no. 6088, pp71-72).

Another example is the case of Thumamah Ibn. Uthal, a powerful Chief of Al-Yamamah. Who had been hostile to the Prophet and had even made attempt to kill him. When Thumamah was captured and tied to one of

the pillars of the mosque, the Noble Prophet ordered his release without seeking retribution. This act of mercy astonished Thumamah, prompting his conversion to Islam. He declared:

*By Allah, O Muhammad! There was no face on the surface of the earth most disliked by me than yours, but now your face has become the most beloved face to me. By Allah, there was no religion most disliked by me than yours, but now it is the most beloved religion to me. By Allah, there was no town most disliked by me than your town, but now it is the most beloved town to me (Bukhari: 1997, vol. 5 no. 4372, pp401-402).*

During his preaching at Taif, the Prophet was met with severe opposition and physical harm. Despite his injuries, he opted for Allah's guidance for them; saying they acted out of ignorance (Bukhari:1997, vol. 4, no. 3477, p428). Another notable case was when a Jewish woman poisoned a cooked sheep and presented it to the Prophet. After consuming a small amount, he forgave her and forbade his companions from harming her (Bukhari:1997, vol. 3 no. 2617, pp453-454). For over twenty years, he endured various forms of persecution, molestation, and assassination attempts culminating into his migration to Madinah. Yet, when he conquered Makkah, he forgave its people, despite their previous hostilities (Bashiruddin, 2014).

### **Custodian of the of the treasuries of the world but gratified with his ascetic life**

The Noble Prophet was granted the keys of the treasuries of the world (Bukhari:1997, vol. 9, no. 7013, pp101-102) and could have lived in abundance. In spite of this exceptional and unique favour, he chose an ascetic lifestyle. Till his demise, his household never lived at their fill for three successive days (Bukhari:1997, vol. 7, no. 5374, p187). In some occasions, month would pass by without fire (for cooking) being raised in the house of

the Noble Prophet, except dates and water which they feed on, unless they were given a present of some meat (Bukhari:1997, vol. 8, no. 6458, p256).

On one occasion, a companion observed the marks of coarse mat on the Prophet's skin and was worried as to how he didn't inform them to make a provision that could save him from this. Prophet declined, explaining that this worldly life was akin to a temporary shade beneath a tree, under which one rest briefly before moving on (Ibn. Majah:2007, vol.5, no 4109, p291).

By the Prophet's blessing, even the smallest provision sufficed to feed large groups. He once fed over eighty companions with a small quantity of milk which could hardly reached one kilogramme (Bukhari:1997, vol. 8, no. 6452, pp252-254). On another occasion, one Sa' of wheat flour (or so) which was turned into dough and a cooked sheep served in two big trays, fed one hundred and thirty men to their fill (Bukhari:1997, vol. 7, no. 5381, p192). Similarly, by virtue of his blessing, he fed eighty men to satisfaction with some few loaves of barley bread (Bukhari:1997, vol. 7, no. 5381, pp90-91). The Prophet's choice of asceticism, despite having access to the treasures of the world, reflects his profound servitude to Allah and his detachment from worldly pleasures.

### **Penchant for noble conduct and aversion for abysmal attitude**

The Noble Prophet no doubt is a mercy to all creatures as mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an (Surah Anbiya:107). He attended to the demands of everyone by listening to their complains, and exhibiting acts of mercy in addressing their plights (Tariq, 2007). Various Qur'anic verses testify to how the Noble Prophet exhibited the true nature of servant hood to his Lord through sincere service to his followers (Surah Al-Imran: 159 & Surah Taubah: 128).

Furthermore, his concern for humanity explained the reason why he protected the right of every category of individual creations of Allah such as the Muslim, non-Muslim, the orphans Bukhari:1997, vol.8, no. 6005, pp33-34) the poor and the widows Bukhari:1997, vol. 7, no. 5353, pp173-174) animals, plants and the rest. The Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) consistently emphasized kindness and compassion towards humanity, as ordained by Allah. He condemned all forms of despicable behaviour and frequently preached that showing mercy to Allah's creation was a prerequisite for receiving Allah's mercy (Abu Dawud:2008, vol. 5, no. 4941, pp329-330). This informs the acknowledgment of his sympathetic and compassionate leadership in the Glorious Qur'an. (Surah Taubah:128).

During 4th Year after the Hijrah, an incident happened at Dhat al-Riqa. One of the unbelievers approached the Prophet with his sword, intending to kill him. After declaring his intention to the Prophet, the sword fell from his hand, making him helpless. He thought he would be killed but was forgiven. He converted to Islam, and rushed back to his people, narrating to them, the exemplary character of the Prophet (Ibn. Kathir, 2000). Among the prisoners of war at Badr was Suhayl ibn. 'Amr. He was known for speaking strongly against the Prophet and inciting people against his mission. 'Umar bn. al-Khattab suggested pulling out two of his lower teeth to douse his oratorical power. The Prophet was astonished as to how human being will be treated so unjust (Wahiduddeen, 2021). Furthermore, in one of his traditions, the Prophets specifically encouraged kindness to the widows and the poor (Bukhari:2007, no 131, p22).

As to the non-Muslims, the Creator guarantees each individual, the right to freedom of religion (Surah Baqorah: 256). In addition, He accords the

non-Muslims living peacefully under the care of Muslims in an Islamic state, the right to good treatment. The following Qur'anic verse says:

*Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for [your] Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just (Surah Mumtahanah:8).*

In promoting the above directive of the Creator on His servants, the Noble Prophet says:

*"Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of travelling) (Bukhari:1997, vol.9, no 6914, p40).*

In compliance with this precedence laid down by the Noble Prophet, after his demise, the following prophetic tradition, explains what transpired at the point of death of the second Caliph.

Narrated 'Amr bin Maimun: 'Umar (after he was stabbed), instructed (his would-be-successor) saying, "I urge him (i.e., the new Caliph) to take care of those non-Muslims who are under the protection of Allah and His Messenger in that he should observe the convention agreed upon with them, and fight on their behalf (to secure their safety) and he should not overtax them beyond their capability (Bukhari:1997, vol.4, no. 3052, p179).

Goodness to neighbor is one of the divine instructions which the Noble Prophet held at high esteem (Surah Nisai:36). In some of his traditions, he considered it as a sign of true belief, (Bukhari:1997, vol. 8, no. 136, p92). and affirmed that a person whose neighbour is not safe from his evil will not enter paradise (Bukhari:2007, no. 121, p21). The Prophetic explanation of neighbourhood clearly shows that, the Noble Prophet intends to establish peaceful coexistence among people in a society. This is because

neighbourhood in the light of a Prophetic tradition covers a wide range of area and a vast number of people. It entails forty houses in front a person, the forty houses behind him, the forty houses on his right and the forty houses on his left (Bukhari:2007, no. 109, p19). This act of goodness is not restricted to a Muslim but cuts across everyone irrespective of the creed of a person. The following hadith sheds light on the above:

*Mujahid said, "I was with 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr while his slave was skinning a sheep. He said, 'Boy! When you finish, start with the Jewish neighbour. A man there exclaimed, 'Jewish? May Allah correct you!' He replied, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, recommend that we treat our neighbours well until we feared (or we thought) that he would order us to make them our heirs.'"(Bukhari:2007, no.128, p22.)*

Every creation of Allah deserves kind treatment. This is another divine instruction of the Creator on the creations. While embracing this instruction and demonstrating true servanthood, the following Prophetic tradition with regards to treatment of animals says:

*Narrated Abu Hurairah Allah's Messenger said, "A prostitute passed by a panting dog near a well and saw that the dog was about to die of thirst, she took off her Khuff (leather sock or shoe) and tied it with her head-cover and drew out some water for it. So, Allah forgave her because of that (Bukhari:1997, vol.4, no. 3321, p322).*

*Narrated Anas bin Malik Allah's Messenger said, "There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable (gift for him) (Bukhari:1997, vol 3, no 2320, 293) .*

He also emphasized unity among Muslims, describing them as the bricks in a wall that strengthen and reinforce one another (Bukhari:1997, vol. 1, no. 481, p301). The Noble Prophet equally condemns all forms of arrogance (Ibn. Majah:2007, vol. 4, no.3263, p325). Among the injunctions of Allah on His servants, is that of abstinence from self-annihilation (Surah Baqorah:195). While advancing the course of the above Qur'anic teaching, the Noble Prophet says:

*"Whoever purposely throws himself from a mountain and kills himself, will be in the (Hell) Fire falling down into it and abiding therein perpetually forever; and whoever drinks poison and kills himself with it, he will be carrying his poison :in his hand and drinking it in the Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever; and Jib whoever kills himself with an iron weapon, will be carrying that weapon in his hand and stabbing his abdomen with it in he (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternal! forever"* (Bukhari:1997, vol 7, no.5778, 370).

The teaching contained in the above prophetic tradition is an illustration on condemnation of all forms of self-obliteration. The tradition also testifies to the true nature of servanthood inherent in the Noble Prophet as he listened to the injunctions of Allah, followed the directives and corroborated the instructions in his traditions.

While demonstrating the true nature of servanthood, the Noble Prophet, counsel on the need for judicious acquisition and utilization of wealth. He further urged the need for effective use of the opportunity of life, and the acquired knowledge (Tirmidhi:2007, vol. 4, no. 2417, p429). As an illustration of his disapproval for the act of extravagance, he frowns at the act of waste of water even when one is on the bank of a flowing river (Ibn. Majah:2007, vol. 1 no. 425, p 324).

Throughout his life, the Noble Prophet exhibited the highest level of humbleness and humility. Despite his unparalleled status amongst Prophets, the Noble Prophet refused to be elevated above other Prophets such as Musa and Yunus (Bukhari:1997, vol. 4, no. 3416, p391 & Ibn. Majah:2007, vol.5, no. 4179, p328). Even though the unbelievers of Makkah openly opposed him, they still recognised his trustworthiness, entrusting him with their valuables. During his migration to Madinah, the Noble Prophet arranged for Ali to remain behind for three days in order to return these entrusted properties to their rightful owners (Ibn Hisham, 2000).

In governance, the Prophet emphasized accountability and condemned misappropriation of public funds (Muslim:2007, vol. 3, no. 4514, p1020). He upheld justice to all, cautioning against shielding the elite from legal penalties while punishing the poor. He had declared that in matter of justice, even if his daughter (Fatimah), were to steal, he would not hesitate to apply the appropriate punishment on her (Bukhari:1997, vol. 8, no. 6788, p410).

As a true servant of Allah, the Noble Prophet exhibited an unshakeable trust in Allah, making him fearless in the face of challenges. During his migration from Makkah to Madinah, he walked out of his bed room with an unshaken confidence, even as armed unbelievers lay in wait. Similarly, in the course of their stay in the cave of Hira, Abubakar was frightened when he noticed that if any of the unbelievers should look under his feet, he would see them. In spite of their critical situation, Prophet remained resolute assuring him that God Almighty was with them (Bukhari:1997, vol. 5, no. 3653, pp14). His bravery and trust in Allah were further evident during the battle of Hunain. When almost all the companions had fled from the war, he was able to re-gather them to face the battle (Bukhari:1997, vol. 4, no. 3042, pp55-56).

These examples reflect the Prophet's exemplary servanthood to Allah, embodying his virtues extolled in various verses of the Glorious Qur'an.

**Derivable lessons from Servant hood of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).**

Every Muslim claim to believe and love the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). However, true love and followership lie in adhering to his teachings and emulating his actions. The foremost legacy of the Noble Prophet is his servitude to Allah, making him the best among Allah's servant. His self-affirmation of servanthood serves as a profound lesson for every Muslim to recognize their role as servants of Allah, committed to embodying the true essence of servitude.

In terms of dedication to the service of the Creator, the Noble Prophet (peace be upon him) has no match. This could be one of the reasons for his being the closest servant to Allah. In one of his traditions, it was mentioned that a servant moves gradually closer to Allah, by doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory on him. As time goes on, this closeness accords him a great position in the sight of Allah such that his desires are easily manifested and his aspirations are swiftly responded to by Allah (Bukhari:1997, vol. 8, no. 6502, pp275-276) This implies that the more a servant increase in extra devotional acts, the more he moves closer to Allah. In spite of the reassurance from his Creator regarding his faith in the hereafter, the Noble Prophet remained steadfast in the worship of his Creator. This depicts the nature of a true servant of Allah.

Learning from how the Prophet demonstrated the spirit of a true servant of God, a Muslim must not be carried away by the degree of his closeness to Allah to the extent of relenting his effort or transgressing the limit of Allah. No matter the level of closeness of a servant to Allah, the

obligations of Allah such as prayer, fasting, Zakat, performance of Hajj and others remain sacred and non-negotiable. In addition, there is no exemption to obedience of Allah for anyone regarding the limitations set by Allah for man. To this effect, alcohol, illicit sexual relation, betrayal of trust, the act of lie and other prohibitions of Allah are not condoned for anyone especially one who claim to be a true servant of Allah. Moreover, the more a servant remember Allah, the more he is remembered by Allah. In addition, embracing more devotional acts in the course of manifestation of the love of Allah in ones' life, also depicts an appreciation of the blessings of Allah upon one (Surah, (Baqorah :152). A true believer is therefore expected to be steadfast in the service of his Creator till he meets his Lord (Surah Hijri:99).

The Noble Prophet's forgiving nature teaches Muslims to embrace the spirit of tolerance and forgiveness. These virtues help Muslims towards realization of true servitude to Allah. Tolerance and forgiveness are among the noble virtues so well commended on by Allah (Surah, (Nur:22, Shura:40 & Mumin:43). The Prophet's interactions with others, marked by patience, understanding, and forgiveness, even in the face of hostility serves as a model for Muslims to follow.

Although the Noble, Prophet had access to the wealth of the world, he chose an ascetic lifestyle, focusing on gaining Allah's pleasure. This teaches Muslims the importance of contentment over materialism, accountability, and the responsible use of power and resources. Leaders, in particular, are urged to avoid using their positions for personal gain, instead of prioritizing the welfare of society. The spirit of humanity demonstrated by the Prophet provides inspiration for true servant of Allah towards being merciful to the less privileged such as the poor, the orphans, the widow, and all other creations.

Muslims learn from the Noble Prophet that true servanthood entails being good to the non-Muslims, having regard for the Muslim and non-Muslim neighbours and protecting the right of animals to good living. Furthermore, a true servant abstains from self-annihilation thereby safeguarding the sacredness of life and safety of the society. On a general note, true servanthood connotes, relating well with everyone and ensuring peaceful atmosphere in a society.

In the light of the true nature of servanthood demonstrated by the Noble Prophet, Muslims need to be mindful about the manner of acquisition and utilization of wealth, and promoting unity among Muslims. The degree of material enrichment, the high position of authority, the vast degree of knowledge, and many other distinctive favour which a servant is endowed with, must not prevent him from being pompous, arrogance and heartless. A true Muslim as exhibited by the Noble Prophet, is expected to be humble and exhibit the spirit of humility in all his daily activities.

Among the deduced lesson from the servanthood of the Noble Prophet is that of being truthful, trustworthy and accountable. A true Muslim embraces fairness in his dealings as against inclination to the act of favouritism. This is the foundation laid by the Prophet who never shielded anyone in the course of application of law and dispensation of justice.

True servanthood as enunciated in the lifestyle of the Noble Prophet, entails having sincere trust in Allah. When faced with challenges, a true servant is expected to be able to face it squarely, believing in the promise of Allah. Muslims are taught to be optimistic, face challenges with courage, and trust in Allah's promise. By turning towards the Creator for accomplishment of desire, a Muslim proves to be a true servant of Allah. The Qur'an says:

*When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]: I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way (Surah: Baqorah:186).*

Responding to Allah's call entails, upholding His commands and abstaining from His prohibitions. The instructions of Allah and His prohibitions are well spelt in the Qur'an. The character of the Noble Prophet is regarded as an example of the teachings of the Qur'an. Qatadah once asked Aisha the mother of the faithful in the following hadith a question in which she replied:

*"O Mother of the believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah She said: "Do you not read the Qur'an?" I said: "Of course." She said: "The character of the Prophet of Allah was the Qur'an"(Muslim:2007, vol. 2. no 1739, p257-260).*

A true servant of Allah is one who follows the footsteps of the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who is regarded as a model for mankind. His life embodies the principles of servitude, devotion, humility, and justice. With all these lessons, Muslims can aspire to fulfil their roles as sincere servants of Allah.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it is crystal clear that the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is the perfect model of a true servant of Allah. His life serves as a mirror for anyone aspiring to achieve sincere servitude to Allah. His teachings, actions, and character embody the essence of devotion, humility and dedication to the service of Allah and humanity. In view of the above, the paper presents the following recommendations.

Muslims are encouraged to study the life and teachings of the Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to gain a deeper understanding of the true nature of servanthood. Muslims should strive to align their lives in line with the exemplary model of the Prophet, adopting his qualities of devotion, humility, compassion, and justice to become true servants of Allah. Parents are advised to nurture the love for Noble Prophet in the hearts of their children through storytelling, role modelling, and encouraging practices inspired by the Prophet's teaching. The distinguished character of the Prophet posits him to be the best example for mankind (Surah Qolam:4) and accorded him the topmost rank among the most influential person in human history (Michael, 1992).

This research has provided an incite as to the nature of servant hood in areas needed for more enlightenment and as well paves way for each individual to know their areas of weakness in the light of the examples laid down by the Noble Prophet. In addition, it has expressed areas where and how Muslims are expected to exhibit true nature of servant hood. This no doubt is a theoretical approach and a template for assessment of the extent of servant hood so far exhibited by each individual. In view of the above, it is recommended that Muslims in various areas can use this template in carrying out empirical researches as to whether this true nature of servant hood is being translated into action by people. This would enable scholars to know areas needed for more enlightenment and as well provide opportunity for each individual to know their areas of weakness.

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