

Manhood in Light of Prophethood

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Since antiquity, many men have proven and solidified their manhood. Some through their intellect or bravery whilst others through their piety and patience. In modern times, various ideologies have cropped up, attempting to disclose what being a man is. One side, entitled “Red Pill,” enforces that the superior way of man is for him to be chauvinistic and a misogynist; an alpha male who never cries or shows his emotions. The other side, entitled the “Blue Pill,” encourages men to be foolish and docile. Easily torn apart as if they are wet toilet paper. Neither group has firmly grasped the concept of true masculinity. The pinnacle of chivalry and manhood can only be found in the character of the Noble Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His mannerisms are quintessential, as Allah ﷻ says,

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

And you are truly (a man) of tremendous character.

(Surah al-Qalam, 4)

The red and blue pills preach of chivalry being dead, alternating between it being a weakness and a means of being exploited. It is, in fact, neither. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a man of chivalry and courtliness, and his diction was free from vulgarity and his power free from abuse. Those embraced by his kindness knew it did not rise from a realm of weakness or exploitation but rather from the pinnacle of manliness.

قَالَ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، فَرَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ، يُحَوِّي لَهَا وَرَاءَهُ بِعَبَاءَةٍ، ثُمَّ يَجْلِسُ عِنْدَ بَعِيرِهِ فَيَضَعُ رُكْبَتَهُ، فَتَضَعُ صَفِيَّةُ رِجْلَهَا عَلَى رُكْبَتِهِ حَتَّى تَرْكَبَ

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated: “I saw Allah's Apostle folding a cloak round the hump of the camel in order to make a wide space for Safiyyah. Then whilst sitting beside his camel, bending his knee, Safiyyah placed her foot on his knee until she mounted (the camel).” (Sahih al-Bukhari 2893)

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ، لِأَصْحَابِهِ قُومُوا فَانْحَرُوا، ثُمَّ احْلِقُوا . قَالَ فَوَاللَّهِ مَا قَامَ مِنْهُمْ رَجُلٌ حَتَّى قَالَ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ، فَلَمَّا لَمْ يَقُمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدٌ دَخَلَ عَلَى أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ، فَذَكَرَ لَهَا مَا لَقِيَ مِنَ النَّاسِ. فَقَالَتْ أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، أَتُحِبُّ ذَلِكَ اخْرُجْ ثُمَّ لَا تُكَلِّمُ أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ كَلِمَةً حَتَّى تَنْحَرَ بُذْنَكَ، وَتَذْغُو خَالِقَكَ فَيَخْلُقَكَ. فَخَرَجَ فَلَمْ يُكَلِّمْ أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ، حَتَّى فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ نَحَرَ بُذْنَهُ، وَدَعَا خَالِقَهُ فَحَلَقَهُ. فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا ذَلِكَ، قَامُوا فَانْحَرُوا، وَجَعَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ يَحْلِقُ بَعْضًا

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to his companions, "Get up and slaughter (your animals), thereafter shave!" By Allah, no man from amongst them rose, even though the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeated his order thrice. When none of them got up, he went to Umm Salamah and told her of the people's condition. Umm Salamah said, "O Prophet of Allah! Do you love that? Go out, speak no word to anybody until you have slaughtered your animal and called your barber to

shave your head." So, the Prophet ﷺ left and did not talk to anyone until he did just that. He called his barber who shaved him. When the companions noticed this, they got up, slaughtered, and started shaving the heads of one another. (Sahih al-Bukhari 2731)

Not only had the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taken advice from his wife, Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها, but he also bent his knee to allow his wife, Safiyyah, رضي الله عنها to mount the camel. He did not concur with Umm Salamah's advice in order to make her happy, rather, he agreed after pondering over it, before following suit. This refutes the red pill claim that men should be aggressive and offer no support to women. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ knelt down he was not simpering, nor did it make him a simpleton. Simply put, it was a good gesture, the same way one would carry groceries for the elderly or give their seat to a pregnant lady. There is no degradation of manhood in stepping down and assisting those around. It is an upliftment and honour.

In regards to men never crying and showing emotions,

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، مَا كَانَ فِينَا فَارِسٌ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ غَيْرَ الْمِقْدَادِ وَلَقَدْ رَأَيْنَا وَمَا فِينَا إِلَّا نَائِمٌ إِلَّا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ تَحْتَ شَجَرَةٍ يُصَلِّي وَيَبْكِي، حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ □

It has been narrated by Ali رضي الله عنه, "None of us had a horse during the Battle of Badr except Miqdad. Every single one of us was sleeping except the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who was praying and crying until dawn." (Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah 899)

Shedding tears of grief, distress, and pain is not a sign of weakness. Instead, it is a sign of emotional maturity and health. Passing along our needs to Allah ﷻ is a sign of true submission and strength. Men take upon a heavy load, not only as humans but by carrying the worlds of their kin on their shoulders as well. So seeking help and guidance from Allah ﷻ, or even advice from fellow men, is a sign of righteousness and nobility.

In regards to the blue pill preaching that men should be fragile:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْقَوِيُّ خَيْرٌ وَأَحَبُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ الضَّعِيفِ وَفِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ

It has been narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said " The strong believer is greater and more beloved to Allah than a weak believer, whilst in both is goodness." (Sahih Muslim 2664)

Hitting the gym and being physically well-built is a necessity not only as a Muslim but also as a man. Men are the first line of defense against villains and foes. Men are shields that shroud communities. Wooden and steel shields both have their usages, albeit the latter is far superior. The

hadith here does not signify that being lazy, weak, and submissive to others is good; instead, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is implying that each human is built however Allah ﷻ chooses. Some are built like brick houses, and others are not. Nevertheless, it is imperative one works on becoming stronger and improving one's physical strength no matter their body type.

قَالَ عُقْبَةُ بْنُ عَامِرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَهُوَ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ يَقُولُ وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ أَلَا إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْيُ
أَلَا إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْيُ أَلَا إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ الرَّمْيُ □

Uqbah ibn Aamir رضي الله عنه said he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ whilst on the pulpit say, "Prepare for them to the best of your ability; behold, strength is in archery, behold, strength is in archery, behold, strength is in archery." (Sahih Muslim 1917)

Wrestling, swimming, horseback riding, and archery are also emphasized sunnahs that help train one's strength and ability. In our times, archery has morphed into firearms, but due to their widespread criminal usage and seemingly low civilian handling, they are condemned and shunned. However, trained experts formally teach their safety, practice, and usage. They are not inherently illegal to use, own, or train with by Islamic or Western law. They are tools for hunting, protection, or hobbies. The trained experts further assimilate them to be like a car or a kitchen knife. The one driving and cutting is capable of either good or evil.

To continue, Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

Men are providers/caretakers of women because of what Allah ﷻ has bestowed for some upon others and because they spend from their wealth. (Surah an-Nisa 34)

Men are protectors, which infers they provide. They supply their wealth, lives and wisdom, amongst other things. Additionally, men are the guardians of the household, meaning they uplift, guide and regulate their families. This is not to say one should be abusive like the red pill, or spineless like the blue pill. Rather, one should find a medium between rigidity and tenderness. A splendid middle path is promoted and taught by the Qur'an and Sunnah. One should heed spousal advice and listen to his children's words. Anecdotes and history have shown that children, too, are wise. A good man is firm and capable of combating evil and wickedness physically, emotionally, spiritually and by other means, whether they approach him from inside or outside of his house. Every man, from saint to sinner, is weak in one way or another, so seeking refuge in Allah ﷻ from our vices and establishing our virtues will help to illuminate the radiance of pure masculinity. The upright Muslim man is one who is disciplined, noble in his character, and dignified in his attitude. He is a man who, when disrespected, swiftly forgives, yet he is not bit by the same snake twice.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ أَنَّهُ قَالَ لَا يُلْدَغُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ جُحْرٍ وَاحِدٍ مَرَّتَيْنِ □

It has been narrated by Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "A believer is not stung from one hole twice." (Sahih al-Bukhari 6133)

In conclusion, among all the different types of men, the most outstanding is the one whose life is filled with *noor* (divine light) and *barakah* (blessings). This divine light and blessing comes from living in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. When one's actions stray from these principles, they block the flow of *noor* and *barakah*, making it clear that following these teachings is essential for a truly enriched and blessed life.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: مَا رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُنْتَصِرًا مِنْ مَظْلَمَةٍ ظَلَمَهَا قَطُّ، مَا لَمْ يُنْتَهَكْ مِنْ مَحَارِمِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى شَيْءٌ، فَإِذَا انْتَهَكَ مِنْ مَحَارِمِ اللَّهِ شَيْءٌ كَانَ مِنْ أَشَدِّهِمْ فِي ذَلِكَ غَضَبًا، وَمَا خَيْرَ بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ، إِلَّا اخْتَارَ أَيْسَرَهُمَا، مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مَأْتِمًا

'A'isha said: "I never saw Allah's Messenger ﷺ take revenge for an outrage committed against him as long as none of the sacred prohibitions of Allah were violated, but if there was any violation of the sacred prohibitions of Allah, he would be enraged. Whenever he was given a choice between two matters, he would choose the easier of the two, provided it was not conducive to sin." (Al-Shamaail al-Tirmidhi, 349)