

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

How do I compose a letter to Al-Mustafa صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ?

It's not that it's 2015 and no one really writes letters anymore. I still do sometimes—to my nieces. But it's different writing to him ﷺ. Granted, composing a poem about him ﷺ is difficult enough. A letter though? The one about whom Allah himself said "Verily you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent model for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often" (33: 21)? So how do you write a letter to the paragon of humanity?

Tears fall from my eyes as I write this letter to the Beloved of Allah.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الجمعة 2 Rabbi ul'Thani 1436 / Friday, 23 January 2015

السلامُ عليكم ورحمةُ الله وبركاته

Dear RasulAllah ﷺ,

I pray this letter finds you well. I am, by the grace of Allah, also well, alhumdulillah. I apologize beforehand if my writing does not convey the level of respect and adab that you deserve, ya Muhammad ﷺ. I do not think I can hope to even come close to the level of respect that your companions رضي الله عنهم had for you. I know how they treated you through your seerah and your ahadith...and through that knowledge, I think I know you. But today...today, I realized I only know *of* you; *I do not actually know you*. I thought I should write to you so that I could introduce myself, talk to you, and continue a correspondence so that, insha'Allah, my salaams to you actually mean something.

When I say I only know of you, it does not mean that I do not think of you. As I grow older, I often find myself reflecting on life and also your seerah. One event that I repeatedly think about is the sole occasion that Ali رضي الله عنه disobeyed you. You were dictating a letter to him and you had him sign it "Muhammad RasulAllah [ﷺ]" but upon second thought, you told Ali رضي الله عنه to rewrite it so that Allah's name was above yours. Out of his immense love for you, Ali رضي الله عنه could not bring himself to even blot your name and, in the end, you asked him to show you where your name was written and you blotted it. That story always makes me cry -- for two reasons: first, because you really were the Unlettered Prophet, Subhan'Allah! I find it an endearing story that increases my love for you and yet it saddens me at the same time because with all of my knowledge as someone who has studied English Literature and is a writer, how am I using my words to praise you and remember Allah? The second reason that this story of Ali رضي الله عنه makes me cry is because that was his *only* occasion of disobedience to you and it makes me wonder how many countless times I have disobeyed you. I

apologize, ya Sayyidi. I truly am very sorry. I pray that Allah forgives and guides us to follow in your prophetic example, ameen.

Another connection that I find between us is that, like you, I am a teacher, alhumdulillah. I find myself thinking how ironic it is that as a teacher, I enjoy joking with the student who always completes his work well and I worry so much about the student who does not care to even complete her work or who does not work to the potential I see in her. Yes, I label that as ironic because in every other relationship, a leader is always drawn to the person who cares and does what needs to be done and that follower is rewarded with a job or a promotion. A person who is neglectful of his work is simply let go. So a teacher's relationship with his/her students is one of irony. Now I understand why you cried for your Ummah (all of us, Muslims and non-Muslims) alike, not just Mu'minoon. Ya Mu'alim, I am a student who does not complete her work. I need your guidance, ya Hadi. I want to be of those of this era whom, over 1400 years ago, you called your siblings – the ones that even the sahabah were envious of.

There are things I know about you and can relate to but as I write to you now, I am beginning to understand you as a person as well and, ya Muhammad ﷺ, I want to be your friend too. No, I want to be your daughter! Please pray for me to be like your beloved daughter, Fatima-tuz-Zahra. I am just starting my journey to know you and through you, the Lord of the Worlds. Ya Khatam Al-Anbiya, I want to be someone you are proud of on the Day of Judgment – someone that uses the gifts and mercies bestowed by Ar-Rahman, to pass on the message of Al-Quran that you brought to us over 1400 years ago.

You are the one who will intercede for us on the Last Day but, ya RasulAllah ﷺ, intercede for us on this day too. Please pray to Allah to guide and facilitate us in opening the door of His Mercy with the Key of Muhammad RasulAllah ﷺ.

Please, ya Allah, let this letter be accepted as a dua for me and make all those who read it become connected to you, ya Khaliq, through your Prophetic Seal ﷺ.

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

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ
كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ
كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

Love,

رُحَمَاءُ بِنْتِ عَبْدِ الْبَاسِطِ

Rohama bint Abdul Basit