



Content for Essay Writing Competition for Class 6th to 10th students

The Prophet ﷺ's Kind Treatment with Disbelievers and Polytheists

There are many incidents of the Prophet ﷺ showing kindness and peace of character even with disbelievers. European historians allege that such behavior was only when Islam was weak, and that the Prophet ﷺ had no choice but to adopt gentleness and reconciliation. Therefore, under this heading, we will mention only those events that took place at a time when the enemies' power had already been subdued and the Prophet ﷺ held full authority.

(Abu Basrah Ghifari narrates that when he was still a disbeliever, he came to the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah and stayed as a guest. That night he drank the milk of all the goats in the house. The Prophet ﷺ said nothing, although the entire household of the Prophet ﷺ had to sleep hungry that night.)

Similarly, Abu Hurairah relates another incident: One night a disbeliever stayed as a guest with the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ presented him with the milk of one goat, which he drank. Then another goat was milked and he drank that too, without hesitation. Then a third, then a fourth, until several goats were milked, and he drank all of their milk. The Prophet ﷺ showed no annoyance. Perhaps it was this noble conduct that moved him so much that by the next morning he had embraced Islam—and now he was satisfied with just the milk of one goat.

Hazrat Asma relates that during the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, her mother, who was still a polytheist, came to Madinah seeking help from her. Unsure about how to treat her polytheist mother, Asma consulted the Prophet ﷺ, who instructed: "Do good to her."

Abu Hurairah's mother was also a disbeliever and lived with him in Madinah. Out of ignorance, she would abuse the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Hurairah complained of this in the Prophet's presence. Instead of anger, the Prophet ﷺ raised his hands in prayer for her guidance.

All of the household finances of the Prophet ﷺ were entrusted to Bilal. Whatever money came would be kept with him. During times of need, he would purchase items from the market on credit, repaying when funds arrived. Once, as Bilal was in the market, a polytheist told him: "If you ever need to borrow, borrow from me." Bilal accepted. On one occasion, when Bilal was preparing to give the call to prayer, that polytheist arrived with a few traders and said: "O Abyssinian! Do you know? Only four days remain until the deadline. If you don't repay, I will make you graze goats!" Distressed, Bilal went to the Prophet ﷺ after the night prayer and explained the matter, adding that since there was nothing in the treasury, he wished to leave Madinah secretly until repayment was possible. The Prophet ﷺ permitted him. That night Bilal slept with his travel supplies ready. In the morning, just as he was preparing to leave, someone came running and said: "The Prophet ﷺ is calling you." Bilal went and saw four camels loaded with grain at the Prophet's

door. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Congratulations! These camels have been sent by the chief of Fadak.” Bilal sold the goods in the market, repaid the polytheist in full, then went to the mosque and informed the Prophet ﷺ that the entire debt had been cleared.

This incident occurred after the conquest of Fadak in the seventh year of Hijrah. Even though Bilal was close to the Prophet ﷺ and the treasurer of his household, a polytheist would insult him, calling him “Abyssinian” and threatening to make him herd goats. Bilal, fearing disgrace, even thought of fleeing. The Prophet ﷺ knew of these matters, yet never uttered a single word against the polytheist, nor did he seek revenge or rebuke. Coincidentally, provisions arrived, the debt was cleared, and the matter passed without confrontation. This knowledge, forgiveness, and forbearance—who could embody it but the Prophet ﷺ, the Mercy to the Worlds?

The most difficult dealings were with the hypocrites. This was a group of disbelievers led by Abdullah ibn Ubayy. Before the Prophet ﷺ’s arrival in Madinah, the city had almost unanimously agreed to crown him as their leader. But after the Battle of Badr, he outwardly declared Islam, though inwardly he remained a disbeliever. His followers too adopted such hypocritical Islam, forming a distinct faction of hypocrites. They secretly plotted against Islam, colluded with the Quraysh and other enemy tribes, and leaked confidential information of the Muslims. Yet outwardly, they practiced Islam: attending Friday prayers and joining in battles. The Prophet ﷺ knew well their conditions, even their names and details. But since the rulings of Shari‘ah are based not on inner secrets but on outward actions, he never applied the rulings of disbelief upon them.

This was the legal position, but out of his generosity and forbearance, the Prophet ﷺ also dealt with them with great kindness.

On one occasion, during an expedition, a Muhajir struck an Ansari. The Ansari cried out: “O people of Ansar!” The Muhajir too cried: “O people of Muhajirun!” The situation nearly escalated to sword fighting. The Prophet ﷺ said: “What are these calls of ignorance?” They stopped immediately.

When Abdullah ibn Ubayy heard of this, he said: “When we return to Madinah, the honored ones will drive out the dishonored ones.” He told his people: “An easy way to get rid of them is to stop supporting the Muhajirun, then they will perish on their own.” The Qur’an refers to this incident:

“They are the ones who say: ‘Do not spend on those who are with the Messenger of Allah until they desert him.’” (Al-Munafiqun: 7)

“They say: ‘If we return to Madinah, surely the mightier will expel the weaker from it.’” (Al-Munafiqun: 8)

The Prophet ﷺ summoned Abdullah ibn Ubayy and asked: “Did you say these words?” He flatly denied. Umar, present there, said: “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, give me permission to strike off this hypocrite’s head.” The Prophet ﷺ replied: “No. People will say that Muhammad ﷺ kills his own companions.”

At the Battle of Uhud, Abdullah ibn Ubayy, at the very onset of battle, withdrew with three hundred men, causing a severe setback to the Muslims. Yet the Prophet ﷺ forgave him. And when Abdullah died, despite the disapproval of the Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ, in recompense for a favor he had once done to Abbas, draped his own blessed shirt upon Abdullah’s body for burial.

The Prophet ﷺ’s Treatment Towards Jews and Christians

In his universal character, the Prophet ﷺ made no distinction between believer and disbeliever, friend and foe, relative or stranger. Just as rain falls equally upon the desert and the garden, so too did his mercy embrace all. (The severity of the Jews' enmity towards the Prophet ﷺ is attested to by many incidents, right up to the Battle of Khaybar.) Yet the Prophet's conduct remained such that, until a specific ruling was revealed, he often followed their practices in matters of detail.

Once, a Jew proclaimed in the marketplace: "By Him who gave Moses superiority over all the Prophets!" A Companion overheard and could not restrain himself, asking: "Even over Muhammad ﷺ?" The Jew replied: "Yes." In anger, the Companion struck him. The Jew, however, trusted so much in the Prophet's ﷺ justice and character that he went straight to him to lodge his complaint. The Prophet ﷺ expressed displeasure at the Companion's action.

When a Jewish boy fell ill, the Prophet ﷺ went to visit him and invited him to Islam. The boy looked to his father, as if seeking his permission. The father said: "Obey whatever he says." The boy then recited the testimony of faith.

Once, while walking, the funeral of a Jew passed by. The Prophet ﷺ stood up in respect.

On another occasion, a group of Jews came to him and mischievously said "As-sām 'alaykum" (death be upon you) instead of "As-salām 'alaykum." Hazrat Aisha, angered, responded sharply. But the Prophet ﷺ stopped her, saying: "Aisha, do not use harsh words. Be gentle. Allah loves gentleness in all matters."

He was kind even with the Jews, bearing their harsh demands and bitter words with patience. In disputes between Jews and Muslims, he never showed undue favoritism to the Muslims. There are numerous such examples recorded elsewhere. Once a Jew came complaining: "Muhammad, look, a Muslim struck me!" The Prophet ﷺ immediately summoned the Muslim and rebuked him.

As for the Christians: when a delegation from Najran came to Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ hosted them generously. He allowed them to stay in the Prophet's Mosque itself, and even permitted them to perform their prayers there according to their own tradition. When some Muslims tried to stop them, the Prophet ﷺ forbade it.

He permitted eating, drinking, marriage, and social interaction with both Jews and Christians, but at the same time, the Shari'ah laid down specific rulings distinguishing them.

The Noble Character of the Prophet ﷺ

“Indeed, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are upon a magnificent standard of character.” (Qur’an, Al-Qalam: 4)

This aspect of his sacred life is where the Prophet ﷺ stands out clearly above all other Prophets and reformers. A true historical figure can be measured not merely by words but by living examples. If asked: *What practical example did these moral teachers themselves provide?*—the world has no answer. Among the reformers of morals, perhaps Buddha and Jesus عليهما السلام are considered greatest. But can anyone present concrete details of Buddha’s personal life as an example? Jesus عليه السلام preached sublime words of mercy and compassion—but is there even a single incident from his life to support those golden sayings?

But the unlettered teacher of Makkah ﷺ openly declared:

“Why do you say what you do not do?” (Qur’an, Al-Saff: 2)

He himself was the living embodiment of his teaching. In public he would say one thing, and in the privacy of his home he would be exactly the same. Whatever moral point he taught others, he himself became its living example. Who could know a person’s morals better than his wife? A few Companions once asked Hazrat Aisha (RA) about the Prophet’s ﷺ character. She asked: “Do you not recite the Qur’an?” Then she said:

“The character of the Messenger of Allah was the Qur’an.”

The Qur’an was revealed in the midst of countless opponents and enemies, yet it declared about its own Messenger:

“Indeed, you are upon a magnificent character.” (Qur’an, Al-Qalam: 4)

Even the enemies themselves were compelled to admit it.

Centuries later, critics call him harsh. But at that time, when everything was unfolding, the Qur’an itself testified:

“It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you had been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.” (Qur’an, Aal-e-‘Imran: 159)

And elsewhere:

“There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is your suffering; eager is he for your welfare; to the believers he is kind and merciful.” (Qur’an, At-Tawbah: 128)

A common mistake about the Prophet’s ﷺ morals is to limit them only to mercy, compassion, humility, and modesty. In truth, morals encompass every layer of life and every circumstance: with friends and foes, relatives and strangers, rich and poor, in peace and war, in private and in public. Viewed in this comprehensive way, the Prophet’s ﷺ character stands as the perfect standard for all humanity.

Consistency in Action (Mudāwamat al-‘Amal)

The most important and essential aspect of character is that once a person adopts a practice, he should adhere to it with such steadfastness that it becomes like his second nature. All other creatures in the world, except man, can only perform one type of action to which they are compelled by nature. The sun only gives light; it cannot produce darkness. The night only spreads darkness; it cannot be the cause of light. Trees bear fruit only in their season, and flowers bloom only in spring. Every animal is bound by the instincts of its species and cannot go beyond them by even a hair’s breadth.

But man has been created free by God. He can be like the sun that gives light, or like the night that spreads darkness. The tree of his essence can bear fruit in every season, and the flowers of his morals are not bound to springtime. Unlike animals, he is not compelled to only one type of action or moral. He has been given choice, and this very freedom is the secret of his responsibility and accountability.

However, there is a subtle point about morality: when a person chooses a good moral quality, he should adhere to it so strictly and practice it so consistently that, despite having the power of choice, it seems as if he is compelled to act in that way. People observing him should eventually believe that no other behavior could possibly come from him. His actions should flow from him as naturally as light from the sun, fruit from a tree, or fragrance from a flower—inseparable and constant. This is called **steadfastness of state and consistency in action**.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ followed this principle in all matters. Whenever he began a practice, at whatever time or in whatever manner, he adhered to it with full commitment. The term **Sunnah** in our religion was born from this very principle.

Sunnah is that action which the Prophet ﷺ practiced consistently and never abandoned unless prevented by a strong reason. Thus, all the Sunnahs are undeniable examples of his steadfastness and consistency in action. His daily routines already mentioned earlier show how firmly established and unchanging his habits and morals were throughout his life.

Once someone asked ‘Ā’ishah (RA) about the Prophet’s acts of worship, whether they were tied to specific days. She replied:

“Lā, kāna ‘amaluhu daimah” – *No, his practice was continuous.*

Just as rain once it begins falls continuously, the Prophet ﷺ maintained whatever he adopted with constancy. Then she added: **“And which of you can manage what the Prophet ﷺ could manage?”**

In another narration:

“Wa kāna idhā ‘amila ‘amalan athbatuhu” – *Whenever the Prophet ﷺ performed an action, he established it permanently.*

He used to rise at night for worship. ‘Ā’ishah (RA) said the Prophet ﷺ never abandoned night prayer. If sometimes he was unwell or weak, he would perform it sitting.

Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh (RA), a companion whom the Prophet ﷺ always greeted with a smile, said: *Never did I come into his presence without him smiling at me.*

The Prophet ﷺ never neglected the times he fixed for his deeds. The hours for prayer, dhikr, and glorification, the number of voluntary prayers, the set times of sleep and waking, his manner of meeting people—all were constant without change. This became the guiding principle for Muslim life.

Hospitality

From all regions of Arabia, groups of people would come to the Prophet's court. Ramlah (RA), a woman companion, used to host many guests in her home, known as **Dār al-Ḍuyūf (House of Guests)**. Umm Sharīk, a wealthy and generous Ansāriyyah, also made her house into a kind of guesthouse. Some groups were lodged in the Prophet's Mosque. For example, the delegation of Thaḳīf stayed there.

The Prophet ﷺ himself personally honored and served guests. Whoever came to him would not leave without food or drink.

He made no distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim in generosity. Both idolaters and disbelievers were treated equally as guests. When a delegation from Abyssinia came, he lodged them in his own house and personally served them.

Once, a disbelieving guest came. The Prophet ﷺ offered him milk from a goat, which he drank entirely. The Prophet ﷺ then had a second goat brought, then a third, until seven goats in total were milked before the man was satisfied.

At times, guests arrived and whatever was in the house was given to them, leaving the household in hunger. The Prophet ﷺ would even rise in the night to check on the welfare of his guests.

The poorest group of companions was the **Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah**, who lived as the guests of the Muslim community, but most often they were the Prophet's own guests.

Once the Prophet ﷺ said: *"Whoever has food for two should take a third with him, and whoever has food for four should take a fifth."* Abū Bakr (RA) took three with him, while the Prophet ﷺ himself took ten.

Abū Hurayrah (RA), one of the Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah, often described his experiences of extreme hunger. He said: *One day I sat on the roadside out of sheer hunger. Abū Bakr passed by and I asked him about a verse of the Qur'an, hoping he would notice my state, but he did not. Then 'Umar passed by, and the same happened. Finally, the Prophet ﷺ passed by, smiled at me, and said: "Come with me."*

The Prophet ﷺ took him home. A bowl of milk had been sent as a gift. The Prophet ﷺ told Abū Hurayrah to call the Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah. Abū Hurayrah (RA) brought them, and the Prophet ﷺ gave him the bowl, saying: *"Distribute it among them."*

The Prophet's household had a large bowl so heavy it required four men to lift it. At noon, this bowl would be brought out and the Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah would gather around it. Sometimes the gathering was so large that the Prophet ﷺ himself had to sit squatting to make space for others.

Miqdād (RA) said: *I and my two companions were so poor that our eyesight grew dim from hunger. We sought sponsorship from others but no one helped us. Finally, we went to the Prophet ﷺ. He took us to his home and showed us three goats, saying: "Milk them and drink from them." Each of us would milk and drink our share daily.*

One day the Prophet ﷺ took the Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah to 'Ā'ishah's (RA) house and asked: *"Bring whatever food is available."* Some cooked food was brought, then a dish of dates boiled in milk, then a large bowl of milk, and that was the conclusion of the hospitality.

Equality

In the Prophet's ﷺ eyes, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the master and the slave—all were equal. Salman (RA), Suhayb (RA), and Bilāl (RA), all of whom had once been slaves, were not considered of lesser rank in his gathering than the chiefs of Quraysh.

Once, Salman and Bilāl (RA) were together when Abū Sufyān happened to arrive. They said: *“The sword has not yet fully struck the neck of this enemy of God.”* Abū Bakr (RA) said to them: *“Do you say such words about the chief of Quraysh?”* Later he reported this to the Prophet ﷺ, who asked: *“Perhaps you have offended them? If you have offended them, then indeed you have offended God.”* Hearing this, Abū Bakr (RA) immediately went to them and said: *“My brothers, are you displeased with me?”* They replied: *“No, may Allah forgive you.”*

A woman from the Makhzūm tribe was caught for theft. People sent Usāmah ibn Zayd (RA), whom the Prophet ﷺ loved dearly, to intercede on her behalf. The Prophet ﷺ said: *“Usāmah! Do you intercede in matters concerning the limits set by Allah?”* He then gathered the people and addressed them: *“Nations before you were destroyed because if a noble person committed a crime, they let him go, but if a common person committed a crime, they punished him. By Allah! If Muhammad's own daughter Fāṭimah were to steal, I would cut off her hand.”*

During the Battle of Badr, among the prisoners was the Prophet's uncle al-‘Abbās (RA). Prisoners were freed upon payment of ransom. Some Ansār, out of compassion for the Prophet's close kinship with al-‘Abbās, asked: *“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, shall we waive the ransom for our nephew?”* The Prophet ﷺ replied: *“No, not even a single dirham will be waived.”*

In gatherings, whatever was brought for distribution, the Prophet ﷺ always began from the right-hand side, maintaining absolute equality between rich and poor, young and old.

Once in an assembly, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (RA), who was still very young, was seated on the Prophet's right side, while many elder Companions sat on the left. A drink was brought; the Prophet ﷺ drank and then asked Ibn ‘Abbās: *“Do you permit me to give it to these elders?”* Ibn ‘Abbās replied: *“O Messenger of Allah, I cannot give up my right in this matter.”* Since he was indeed entitled by his position, the Prophet ﷺ honored his right and gave it to him.

Anas (RA) narrated: Once the Prophet ﷺ came to my house and asked for water. I presented goat's milk. In the gathering, Abū Bakr (RA) was on the left, ‘Umar (RA) in front, and a Bedouin on the right. The Prophet ﷺ said: *“The one on the right has the first right.”* He then handed the remaining milk to the Bedouin.

The Quraysh, out of pride, used to camp separately at Muzdalifah, considering it a mark of distinction. But the Prophet ﷺ never approved of such division. Before and after Prophethood, he always stayed with the general people. He did not allow any special place to be reserved for him or a shelter to be built specifically for him. When the Companions once proposed this, he replied: *“Whoever arrives first, that is his place.”*

Whenever the Companions worked together on something, the Prophet ﷺ would always join them, working like an ordinary laborer. When the first task in Madinah was the construction of the Prophet's Mosque, he himself carried bricks with his blessed hands alongside the Companions. They pleaded: *“May our lives be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, why trouble yourself?”* But he would not desist from his duty.

During the Battle of the Trench, when the Companions were digging trenches around Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ worked with them like a simple laborer, until dust and soil covered his blessed stomach.

On a journey, when food was to be prepared, the Companions divided the tasks among themselves. The Prophet ﷺ took upon himself the task of gathering firewood. They said: *“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we will do this for you.”* He replied: *“Yes, but I do not like to make myself distinct from you. Allah does not like a servant who considers himself above his companions.”*

In the Battle of Badr, transport was scarce. Three men had to share a camel, riding it in turns. The Prophet ﷺ also shared one camel with two Companions. Out of devotion, his companions offered: *“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, you ride, and we will walk in your place.”* The Prophet ﷺ replied: *“You are not stronger than me in walking, nor am I less in need of reward than you.”*

Doing Work with His Own Hands

Although all the Companions were devoted servants of the Prophet ﷺ, still he preferred to do his own work with his blessed hands.

Hazrat Aisha (RA), Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri (RA), and Hazrat Imam Hasan (RA) narrate that: **“He used to serve himself.”** Meaning, he would carry out his personal work with his own blessed hands.

Once, a person asked Hazrat Aisha (RA): *“What would he do at home?”* She replied: *“He would be occupied with household chores. He used to stitch his own clothes, sweep the house himself, milk the goats, buy things from the market, mend his own shoes, fix a rope to a bucket, tie the camel with his own hands, feed it, and even knead flour together with the servant.”*

Once, Hazrat Anas bin Malik (RA) saw the Prophet ﷺ rubbing oil with his own hands on the body of a camel. In another narration, Anas (RA) says he saw him branding the charity camels. In a third narration, he says the Prophet ﷺ himself was branding goats.

On one occasion, he entered Masjid Nabawi and saw that someone had blown his nose inside. He himself picked up a stone with his blessed hand and cleaned it, and then forbade people from such acts in the future.

When the Kaaba was rebuilt (in 605 CE, at the age of 35), even at that time, he used to lift stones and carry them to the builders. Similarly, in the construction of Masjid Quba, Masjid Nabawi, and during the digging of the trench in the Battle of Ahzab, he worked with his Companions like a simple laborer.

On one journey, the Companions slaughtered a goat and divided the cooking tasks among themselves. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“I will go to the forest to collect firewood.”

The Companions hesitated, but he replied:

“I do not like to be distinguished from you.”

On another journey, the strap of his sandal broke. He himself tried to repair it. A Companion offered: *“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, give it to me, I will stitch it.”* The Prophet ﷺ said:

“This is a kind of distinction, and I do not like it.”

Two Companions narrate: *“Once we saw the Prophet ﷺ himself repairing a house wall. We joined him in the work. When the work was finished, he prayed for our well-being.”*

Doing Work for Others

Hazrat Khabbab bin Aratt (RA) narrates that once the Prophet ﷺ sent him on some errand. There was no man at Khabbab's house, and the women did not know how to milk. So, every day the Prophet ﷺ himself would go to their house and milk their animals.

When guests from Abyssinia came, the Companions wanted to serve them, but the Prophet ﷺ stopped them, saying:

“They served my friends, so I will serve them myself.”

When the tribe of Tha'if—who had once wounded his blessed feet in Taif—came with a delegation in the 9th year of Hijrah, he personally hosted them in Masjid Nabawi and fulfilled their needs.

The young maidens of Madinah used to come to him and say: *“O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, this is my work.”* The Prophet ﷺ would immediately stand up and do their work.

There was a mentally ill slave girl in Madinah. One day she came, took hold of his blessed hand, and said: *“Come with me to the street of Madinah; I have some work.”* The Prophet ﷺ replied:

“O woman, choose whichever street you want in Madinah, I will sit there and do your work.”

Thus, he went with her and fulfilled her need.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abi Afa (RA) says:

“The Prophet ﷺ never felt ashamed to walk with a widow or a poor person and fulfill their needs.”

(Narrated by Nasa'i and Darimi)

Once, the Prophet ﷺ was about to lead prayer, when a Bedouin came and pulled his cloak saying: *“I have a small task. Please complete it first, otherwise I may forget.”* The Prophet ﷺ immediately left the mosque, fulfilled his task, and then returned to offer the prayer.