



THE MAN WHO
CHANGED
THE WORLD

Peace be upon him

MUHAMMAD

The background of the entire page is a golden-yellow gradient with faint, repeating geometric patterns. In the foreground, there are black silhouettes of mosque architecture, including several domes and two tall minarets with crescent moons at their tops. The minarets are positioned on the left and right sides, framing the central text.

Who is the

PROPHET

Peace be upon him

MUHAMMAD

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in Makkah in the year 570. Since his father died before his birth and his mother died shortly thereafter, he was raised by his uncle who was from the respected tribe of Quraysh. He was raised unlettered, unable to read or write, and remained so till his death. His people, before his mission as a prophet, were ignorant of science and most of them were unlettered. As

he grew up, he became known to be truthful, honest, trustworthy, generous, and sincere. He was so trustworthy that they called him the Trustworthy. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was very religious, and he had long detested the decadence and idolatry of his society.

At the age of forty, Muhammad (peace be upon him) received his first revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel. The revelations continued for twenty-three years, and they are collectively known as the Quran.

As soon as he began to recite the Quran and to preach the truth which God had revealed to him, he and his small group of followers suffered persecution from unbelievers. The persecution grew so fierce that in the year 622 God gave them the command to emigrate.

This emigration from Makkah to the city of Madinah, some 260 miles to the north,

marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar.

After several years, Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers were able to return to Makkah, where they forgave their enemies. Before Muhammad (peace be upon him) died, at the age of sixty-three, the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula had become Muslim, and within a century of his death, Islam had spread to Spain in the West and as far East as China. Among the reasons for the rapid and peaceful spread of Islam was the truth and clarity of its doctrine. Islam calls for faith in only one God, Who is the only one worthy of worship.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a perfect example of an honest, just, merciful, compassionate, truthful, and brave human being. Though he was a man, he was far removed from all evil characteristics and strove solely for the sake of God and His reward in the Hereafter. Moreover, in all his actions and dealings, he was ever mindful and fearful of God.

Source: "a Brief Illustrated Guide to understanding Islam"

"...Muhammad (peace be upon him) received his first revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel. This revelation continued for 23 years and is known as the Quran..."

His Sayings

“The best of you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best among you to my family.”

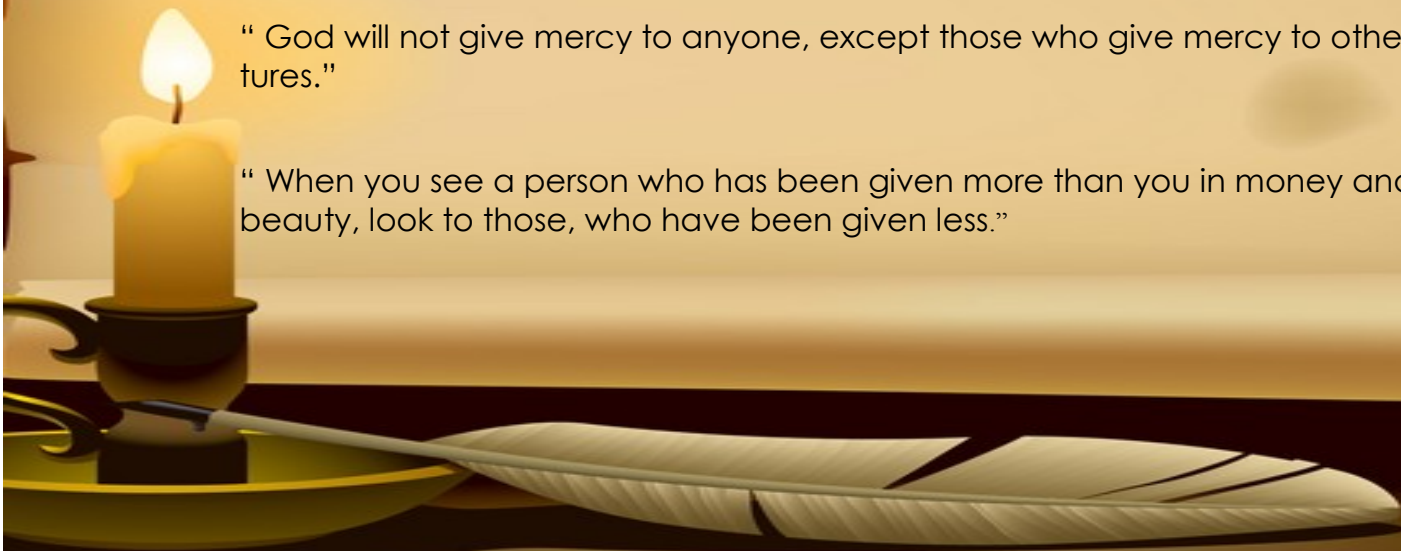
“The best of people are those with the most excellent character.”

“The best of you are those who feed others and return greetings.”

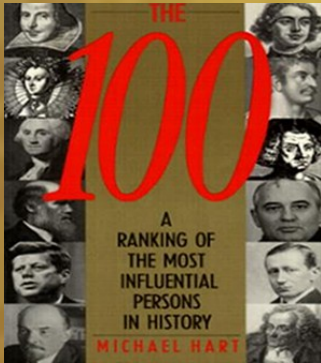
“ A Muslim who plants a tree or sows a field, from which man, birds and animals can eat, is committing an act of charity.”

“ God will not give mercy to anyone, except those who give mercy to other creatures.”

“ When you see a person who has been given more than you in money and beauty, look to those, who have been given less.”

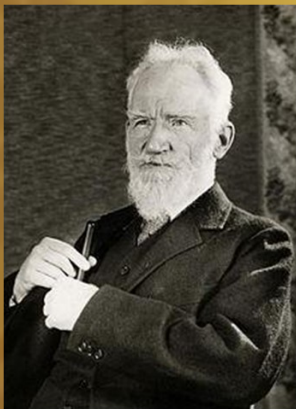
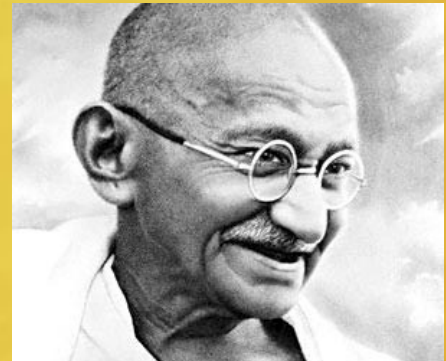


What They said about him



MICHAEL H. HART in his recently published book on ratings of men who contributed towards the benefit and uplifting of mankind writes: "My choice of Muhammad (peace be upon him) to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels." (M.H. Hart, *THE 100: A RANKING OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSONS IN HISTORY*, New York, 1978, p. 33)

MAHATMA GANDHI, speaking on the character of Muhammad, (peace be upon him) says in *YOUNG INDIA*: "I wanted to know the best of one who holds today's undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind.... I became more than convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the scrupulous regard for his pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the 2nd volume (of the Prophet's biography), I was sorry there was not more for me to read of his great life."



George Bernard Shaw in 1936

(winner of Nobel Prize 1925 & Oscar 1938)

I have always held the religion of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion he must be called the Savior of Humanity."

"I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad (peace be upon him) that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."



Karen Armstrong

I think he's an example of huge courage and commitment, an example of what one person can do with the help of the sacred, with the help of the divine, but with your own human inspiration too. Above all that he remained kind, human, warm, loving. He did not allow himself to become a daunting human being of daunting achievements. He must be one of the greatest geniuses the world has ever known, both spiritually and politically, yet he was also a genius at humanity. I think of his kindness to his wives, his kindness to children, his loving care of animals, his devotion to his companions, and the fact that he was constantly moved to tears when he saw suffering. Never in any

moment of his life did he cease to be less than a human being.

Muhammad had never heard about the experiences of the great Hebrew prophets of the 8th, 7th, and 6th centuries B.C.E. So it is very remarkable how his experiences almost replicated theirs, though in a particularly Arabian way. When Isaiah had his experience of God in the temple, he, like Muhammad, felt near to death. He cried out I'm lost. It was like a lethal shock, as if he were saying, I've looked upon the Lord God and nobody can do that and live.

Yusuf Islam (Cats Stevens)

I did not come into contact with any Muslim before I embraced Islam. I read the Qur'an first and realized no person is perfect, Islam is perfect, and if we imitate the conduct of the Holy Prophet... we will be successful.

The fact that the Prophet cared for every human being and tried his best to ensure their security in the hereafter must be the most telling of his compassionate and merciful characteristics.



Washington Irving in 'Mahomet and His Successors'

He was sober and abstemious in his diet and a rigorous observer of fasts. He indulged in no magnificence of apparel, the ostentation of a petty mind; neither was his simplicity in dress affected but a result of real disregard for distinction from so trivial a source.

In his private dealings he was just. He treated friends and strangers, the rich and poor, the powerful and weak, with equity, and was beloved by the common people for the affability with which he received them, and listened to their complaints.

His military triumphs awakened no pride nor vain glory, as they would have done had they been effected for selfish purposes. In the time of his greatest power he maintained the same simplicity of manners and appearance as in the days of his adversity. So far from affecting a regal state, he was displeased if, on entering a room, any unusual testimonials of respect were shown to him. If he aimed at a universal dominion, it was the dominion of faith; as to the temporal rule which grew up in his hands, as he used it without ostentation, so he took no step to per-

petuate it in his family.

His Legacy

Prophet Muhammad's Message *of Peace*

A major part of the Prophet's mission was to bring peace to the world. One of the ways in which he strove towards this end was to attempt to convince people that all men and women, albeit inhabiting very different regions of the world, and different from one another in color, culture and language, were in fact blood brothers and sisters. His message was crucial, for a proper relationship of love and respect can be established only if that is how human beings regard one another. To inculcate such feelings, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would preach to his followers, "You are all Adam's offspring and Adam was made of clay." And in his prayers to his Creator, he said, "O Lord, all Your servants are brothers."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would exhort his followers to live in peace with their fellow men, saying, "A true believer is one with whom others feel secure," one who returns love for hatred. He used to teach the believers that anyone who would return love only when love was given belonged on a lower ethical plane. The true believer never reasons that only if people treat him well that he will treat them well in return. He is accustomed

rather to doing good to those who mistreat him, and to refrain from harming those who do him injury. The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself set the example. All his recorded words and actions reveal him as a man of great gentleness, kindness, humility, good humour and excellent common sense, with a great love for all people and even for animals.


Despite his position as leader, the Prophet (peace be upon him) never believed himself to be greater or better than other people. He never made others feel small, unwanted or embarrassed. He urged his followers to behave kindly and humbly, releasing slaves whenever possible, and giving in charity — especially to very poor people, orphans and prisoners — without any thought of reward.

He told the people that "every religion has some special characteristic, that of Islam being modesty." In the absence of such a virtue, no community can have lasting peace. The Prophet's own modesty, coupled with

great strength of character, is depicted in a well-known story of an old Makkan woman who hated the Prophet. Every morning when the Prophet (peace be upon him) passed by her house, she would empty a basket of rubbish on his head from the upper story of her house. He never once remonstrated with her about this. One day, when the Prophet (peace be upon him) passed through this area, no rubbish fell on his head. Thinking that the old woman must be ill, he went upstairs to inquire how she was, and found her ill in bed. When she discovered that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had come to see her, she began to weep, "I ill-treated you, and now you come to inquire after my health!" Ultimately, she became one of his followers. What strength of character, what patience and tolerance the Prophet (peace be upon him) evinced in refusing to be provoked, preferring rather to show kindness and magnanimity to one who had wished him ill.

His was a high moral character, so that even if badly treated by others, he went on returning good for evil. People harmed him, yet he would pray for

"...Despite his position as leader, the Prophet (peace be upon him) never believed himself to be greater or better than other people. He never made others feel small, unwanted or embarrassed..."



them. He would remain patient in the face of oppression and, regardless of the provocation, he would refrain from becoming incensed. In setting this example, his aim was to fashion souls that were God-oriented, that found Allah so great that everything else paled into insignificance. He wanted everyone to have such boundless peace of mind that nothing could disturb him. Such balanced individuals would never then become prey to worldliness. Totally free from negative reaction, they would then be able to turn everything in this world, whether material or spiritual, into food for more profound thought, rather than into pretexts for rash and vengeful action.

The essence of this philosophy is

expressed in one of the Prophet's sayings: "Nine things the Lord has commanded me: Fear of Allah in private and in public; justness, whether in anger or in calmness; moderation in both poverty and affluence; that I should join hands with those who break away from me; and give to those who deprive me; and forgive those who wrong me; and that my silence should be meditation; and my words be remembrance of Allah; and my vision be keen observation."

Throughout the first thirteen years of his Mission, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) preached in Makkah, but it was in the face of bitter opposition from the Makkans. When it became impossible for him to stay there, he left for Madinah. Wars were waged against him, but he showed his antagonists that the

power of peace was far greater than that of war. The peace treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah is a clear example of this, when the Prophet (peace be upon him) agreed to every demand his antagonists made on the sole assurance that peace would subsequently prevail.

His life's experience ranged from penury to prosperity, from defeat to success, yet whatever the degree of well-being or hardship, he steadfastly trod the path of moderation. At all times and right till the end, he remained a patient and grateful servant of the Almighty, bringing his message of peace and tolerance to mankind.

Article source: oneislam.net

one of the Prophet's sayings: "Nine things the Lord has commanded me: Fear of Allah in private and in public; justness, whether in anger or in calmness; moderation in both poverty and affluence; that I should join hands with those who break away from me; and give to those who deprive me; and forgive those who wrong me; and that my silence should be meditation; and my words be remembrance of Allah; and my vision be keen observation."

His Character

Prophet Muhammad's Mercy, Justice & Love

By Dr. Muhammad Ratib An-Nabulsi

Source: oneislam.net

While to many Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) may seem to be a powerful super hero not of this world, when he walked on this earth he was merely a human being who shared the same qualities you and I share today.

While his mission was extraordinary and he was chosen by God to spread His word and help us understand God's ways, at the same time he shared our humanness. It is in understanding this reality that perhaps we can better appreciate his true power and strength.

When we consider the Prophet (peace be upon him) as an ordinary man with an extraordinary mission we can better appreciate the gifts he shared and his teachings. We can more easily identify with the Prophet when we see him as a mere mortal, who experienced defeat and harm just as we do, and had the same needs and desires we have, as humans. When we consider him in this context his extraordinary talents, wisdom and humble ways enable us to see the value in modeling ourselves after him as we go about our daily activities in the here

and now. We see in Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) a merciful and compassionate person who, whether witnessing pain or hope in others, responded with love and tenderness.

He was an intelligent individual who responded positively to those around him while encouraging them to respect God and follow His ways. He exchanged correspondence with kings and emperors of the world, and with God's guidance and direction, urged them to leave their arrogance behind and rule their people with justice. Yet, despite mingling with the mighty leaders of his time, he was also a modest man, who, it is said, responded graciously to the request of a barefoot bedouin who once spoke to him with disrespect, "Muhammad be just and give me money. It's not your money, nor your father's." In response, the prophet smiled at the bedouin's face and ordered to be given the amount of money he requested.

He was a devout and religious man, whose happiest moments were experienced while praying and communicating with God. It is said that

once, while praying at length with his companions, he heard a baby crying. The baby's mother was praying behind the Prophet (peace be upon him) . In response to the baby's cry, the Prophet (peace be upon him) mercifully ended the prayer instantly, enabling the mother to respond to the child's needs.

We see a man who recognized the power of forgiveness. We see this when he entered the town of Makkah with his huge army without a fight. The Quraysh people had previously tortured him and his companions, exiled him and brutally killed his dearest relatives. As he entered, the Quraysh people stood before him expecting him to take his revenge, instead, he told them they were all forgiven and free from any grudge or revenge. We see in him a caring and humble individual. He once gathered wood to light a fire and prepared food for his companions.

He refused to watch others work while he did nothing and he told them God does not favor those who try to look distinguished among their companions. We see in him a kind and tender man with a merciful heart, who trembled with sorrow when witnessing a horse or a camel struggling with a heavy load on

its back. It is said that he encouraged his followers to show mercy to all of God's creatures and he told them that God says those who are merciful to God's creatures shall receive God's mercy:

"Have mercy on those who are on the planet earth and you shall have the mercy of He who is in heaven." (At-Tirmidhi)

As for his mercy, to support those in need, who borrowed money, he told the lenders that if they extended the settlement time, or cancelled the dues of the debtor, he would ask that they be pardoned by God on Judgment Day.

Once, to help his companions understand the depth of God's mercy, he pointed to a mother tenderly kissing and holding her baby tightly. He asked his companions whether they thought the mother could ever throw her baby into the fire. They confirmed, she could never do such a thing and the Prophet (peace be upon him) told them that God is more merciful with people than this mother with her baby

The Prophet's superiority qualified him to be above those around him, but he preferred to live among them, adopting a simple life among ordinary people, sharing everything with them. He was also a just man. He was a humble man, who admitted that he was not infallible, and was subject to some faults of humanity all men share. He explained that he was human and though he was asked to judge among his people, he could make errors.

He knew that it was possible some were more clever in presenting their case than others and he could make a mistake by giving one the rights of another. He urged that those who were in the wrong not take anything that was not their just right, even if he had mistakenly made judgment in their favor. He believed in the power of love. He urged people to love each other and said that love must prevail among all people. He once said:

"I swear by God that you shall not enter paradise until you believe. And you shall not believe until you love each other." (Al-Bukhari)

He said that one way to demonstrate love for one another is to exchange greetings and gifts. He also encouraged people to respect one another. He cautioned that if three were sitting together, two of them were not to whisper words to each other, as this would cause sadness and curiosity to the third person. He spoke of the value of friendship and told that if a person abandoned his friend for more than a year it would be as if he had shed his blood.

He promoted the virtue of forgiveness and said that the worst people were those who did not accept the apologies of their friends and did not forgive them when they made mistakes. The Prophet believed one could not underestimate the value and importance of friendship and he claimed that supporting a friend in difficult times was better than dedicating an entire month for God's wor-

shipping inside the Prophet's Mosque.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was a wise man who offered words to live by and through his actions demonstrated how to live. When asked who were God's most beloved people, the Prophet said God's most beloved people are those who are most useful to God's creatures. We are all God's creatures and we must serve one another. The positive effects of love on a human's health have been scientifically proven. The human body's immune system is weakened by depression, grief, anxiety and nervousness while sentiments of love, hope, calmness and optimism support its health.

It seems only natural that the body's spirit is strengthened and unified by love and when we live in love and friendship we are following the Prophet's way, which is good. In the Quran God said that to avoid suffering and pain is to believe that there is only one God and that God is Allah: **{Save those who believe and perform righteous deeds and remember God frequently and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged}** (Ash-Shuara' 26: 227) Belief in God strengthens you, while disbelief weakens you.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) believed in God, his belief was so strong that he devoted his life to God - yet he was also an ordinary man. While his extraordinary commitment to God may seem to set him apart from us, it also offers us a route to follow, a life to model that can bring us closer to God and ensure the entire mankind happiness.

We see in Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) a merciful and compassionate person who, whether witnessing pain or hope in others, responded with love and tenderness.

Simple Life of Prophet Muhammad

Peace be upon him

Before his mission as a prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him) had no financial worries. As a successful and reputed merchant, Muhammad (peace be upon him) drew a satisfactory and comfortable income. After his mission as a prophet and because of it, he became worse off materially. To clarify this more, let us browse the following sayings on his life:

Aa'isha, Muhammad's wife, said, "O my nephew, we would sight three new moons in two months without lighting a fire (to cook a meal) in the Prophet's houses." Her nephew asked, "O Aunt, what sustained you?" She said, "The two black things, dates and water, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) had some Ansar neighbors who had milk-giving she-camels and they used to send the Prophet (peace be upon him) some of its milk."

Sahl Ibn Sa'ad, one of Muhammad's companions, said, "The Prophet (peace be upon him) of God did not see bread made from fine flour from the time God sent him (as a prophet) until he died."

Aa'isha, Muhammad's wife, said, "The mattress of the Prophet (peace be upon him), on which he slept, was made of leather stuffed with the fiber of the date-palm tree."

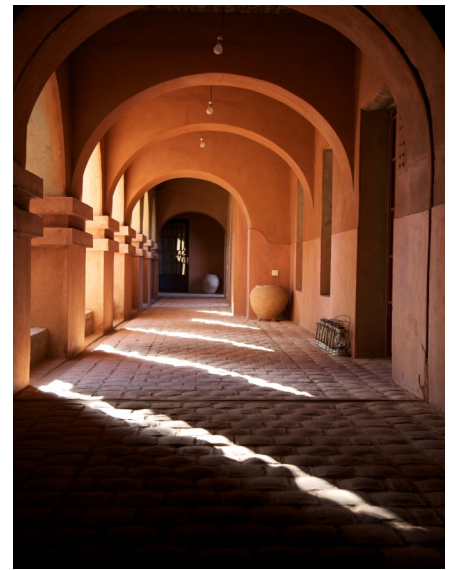
Muhammad (peace be upon him) lived this hard life till he died although the Muslim treasury was at his disposal, the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula was Muslim before he died, and the Muslims were victorious after eighteen years of his mission. His life was an amazing model of simplicity and humbleness.

Muhammad's followers loved him, respected him, and trusted him to an amaz-

ing extent. Yet he continued to emphasize that deification should be directed to God and not to him personally. Anas, one of Muhammad's companions, said that there was no person whom they loved more than the Prophet Muhammad, (peace be upon him) yet when he came to them, they did not stand up for him because he hated their standing up for him, as other people do with their great people.

Long before there was any prospect of success for Islam and at the outset of a long and painful era of torture, suffering, and persecution of Muhammad and his followers, he received an interesting offer. An envoy of the pagan leaders, Otba, came to him saying, "...If you want money, we will collect enough money for you so that you will be the richest one of us. If you want leadership, we will take you as our leader and never decide on any matter without your approval. If you want a kingdom, we will crown you king over us..." Only one concession was required from Muhammad (peace be upon him) in return for that, to give up calling people to Islam and worshipping God alone without any partner. Wouldn't this offer be tempting to one pursuing worldly benefit? Was Muhammad (peace be upon him) hesitant when the offer was made? Did he turn it down as a bargaining strategy leaving the door open for a better offer? The following was his answer: **{In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful}** And he recited to Otba the verses of the Quran 41:1-38. The Following are some of these verses:

A revelation from (God), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; a Book whereof the verses are explained in detail; a Quran in Arabic, for people who know,



giving good news and warning, yet most of them turn away, so they do not listen. (Quran, 41:2-4)

On another occasion and in response to his uncle's plea to stop calling people to Islam, Muhammad's answer was as decisive and sincere: *{I swear by the name of God, O Uncle!, that if they place the sun in my right-hand and the moon in my left-hand in return for giving up this matter (calling people to Islam), I will never desist until either God makes it triumph or I perish defending it.}*

Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his few followers did not only suffer from persecution for thirteen years but the unbelievers even tried to kill Muhammad (peace be upon him) several times. On one occasion they attempted to kill him by dropping a large boulder, which could barely be lifted, on his head. Another time they tried to kill him by poisoning his food. What could justify such a life of suffering and sacrifice even after he was fully triumphant over his adversaries? What could explain the humbleness and nobility which he demonstrated in his most glorious moments when he insisted that success is due only to God's help and not to his own genius? Are these the characteristics of a power-hungry or a self-centered man?

Did Muhammad Write the QURAN?

Peace be upon him

The Glorious Qur'an is the very Word of God revealed to His Messenger, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The authenticity and divinity of the Qur'an are unquestioned, and there is no difference among Muslims on this fact. The Glorious Qur'an has reached us through the process of tawatur (historical continuity and perpetuation achieved through transfer from generation to generation). When we say that the Qur'an has reached us through tawatur, we imply that so many people in every generation conveyed it to the next and so on that there can be no doubt about its authenticity.

In many places in the Qur'an this meaning is stressed. In Surat An-Naml, we read: "Lo! as for thee (Muhammad), thou verily receivest the Qur'an from the presence of One Wise, Aware." (An-Naml: 6) In another Surah, the Qur'an makes it clear that those doubters and disbelievers will find it difficult to claim that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) wrote the Qur'an due to the fact Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was unlettered. In Surat Al-Ankabut, we read: "And thou (O Muhammad) wast not a reader of any scripture before it, nor didst thou write it with thy right hand, for then might those have doubted, who follow falsehood." (Al-Ankabut: 48) Also, in the very beginning of Surat Fussilat,

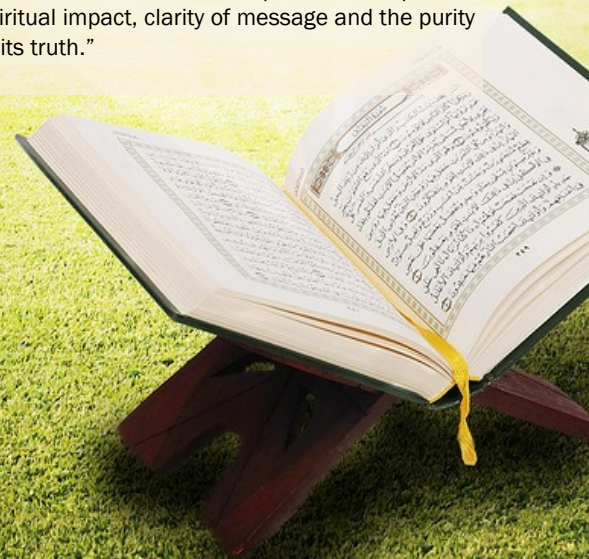
Almighty God says: "Ha. Mim. A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful." (Fussilat: 1-2) Again in Surat Yunus, we read: "And when Our clear revelations are recited unto them they who look not for the meeting with Us say: Bring a Lecture other than this, or change it. Say (O Muhammad): It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I only follow that which is inspired in me. Lo! If I disobey my Lord I fear the retribution of an awful Day." (Yunus: 15)

At the time the Qur'an was revealed, the Arabs recognized that the language of the Qur'an was unique and that it was distinctly different from the language normally used by the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The Arabs of that time, by the way, were known for their beautiful poetry and Muhammad was known to be an illiterate man!

The Qur'an clearly says that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was unable to read and write, so if this wasn't true, certainly his contemporaries would have protested and rejected him. However, there are no reports of this. Certainly there were people who rejected Muhammad's message, just like other Prophets were rejected, but none for this reason. On the contrary, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) had thousands of loyal followers and the results of their efforts made Islam spread from Spain to China in just over a century!

It is also interesting to note that even though the Qur'an is not poetry, the Arabs more or less gave up writing poetry after it was revealed. It could be said that the Qur'an is the piece of Arabic literature par excellence - and Muhammad's contemporaries realized that they couldn't out do it.

Additionally, it is easy to prove that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) did not possess a great deal of the knowledge which is expounded in the Qur'an: such as knowledge of historical events, previous prophets and natural phenomenon. The Qur'an says in several places that Muhammad and his people did not know these things- so, again, if this wasn't true, certainly his contemporaries would have rejected his claims. Suffice it to say that not only is the Qur'an the most memorized and well preserved scripture on earth, it is also unequalled in eloquence, spiritual impact, clarity of message and the purity of its truth."



Source: IOL Islamic Researchers
Oneslam.net

The Prophet in The

More than fourteen centuries have passed since the prophet of Arabia made claim to being the last and final 'messenger and slave' of Allah. Yet the intensity of discussion amongst scholars from all religions seems to have increased over the years and gained in velocity in the last few years more so than ever before.

Who was this man? What do his followers believe about him? How can others understand their undying devotion to his mission? What do the scholars tell us about this man, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and his 'message' to the world?

For more than fourteen centuries scholars from Judaism, Christianity and Islam have been discussing whether or not the prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have indeed, been a true prophet from Almighty God.

Was he the long awaited 'Messiah' the Jews have been waiting for so many centuries?

Was he the one prophesied in the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, calling in the wilderness?

Was he 'That Prophet' mentioned in the New Testament Gospel of John?

We would like to share some of the findings of these scholars from their own sources and invite the reader to consider these evidences.

The most recent claim of revelation coming from the God of Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus, peace be upon them, is the claim of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, regarding the Quran. The Quran makes the claim, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is the 'slave and messenger' of Almighty God.

But more importantly pertaining to our subject at hand, the Quran makes the claim that Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is mentioned by name in the previous revelations (meaning the Bible). Can this claim be substantiated?

Let us begin by examining the statement in the Quran contained in the 61st chapter (As-Saff [the ranks]), verse 6:

And when Jesus said; "O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of God (sent) to you, confirming the Law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of an apostle to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad."

[Holy Quran 61:6]

Please take notice of the name mentioned, 'Ahmad'. This is one of the most common of several names given to the prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, by his own people.

Now let us turn to the Old Testament (Torah of the Jews) and notice the book called Songs of Solomon, chapter 5, verse 16:

His mouth is very sweet;
he is totally desirable. 33
This is my beloved!
This is my companion, O maidens of Jerusalem!
Check the footnote (33) to discover what the word was BEFORE it was translated as "totally desirable" and in some versions of the translations we find, "altogether lovely."

(makhmaddim, "desirable") is the plural form of the noun (makhmad, "desire, desirable thing, precious object"; see below note #33)

It is asserted that this word "Makhmaddim" is in reality the word "Akhmad" or "Ahmad". The reason for the emphasis on the "kh" sound is to pronounce the very hard "H" sound of the two types of "h" in the Semetic languages.

There is a word used in a passage of the New Testament of the Bible, located in the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verse 16, that many Muslim scholars refer to as pointing to the prophet Muhammad, peace

Tora and Psalms

and blessings be upon him. Let us review it and then observe what non-Muslim scholars comment about it.

14:15 "If you love me, you will obey³⁴ my commandments. ³⁵

14:16 Then³⁶ I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate³⁷ to be with you forever—

14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept,³⁸ because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, because he resides³⁹ with you and will be⁴⁰ in you.

Old Testament Song of Solomon 5:16 note 33^{tn}

The term (makhmaddim, "desirable") is the plural form of the noun (makhmad, "desire, desirable thing, precious object"; HALOT 570 s.v. 1; BDB 326 s.v.). Like the plural ("sweetness") in the preceding parallel line, this use of the plural is probably an example of the plural of intensity: "very desirable."

34^{tn} Or "will keep."
35^{sn} Jesus' statement If you love me, you will obey my commandments provides the transition between the promises of answered prayer which Jesus makes

to his disciples in vv. 13-14 and the promise of the Holy Spirit which is introduced in v. 16. Obedience is the proof of genuine love.

36^{tn} Here kaiv (kai) has been translated as "Then" to reflect the implied sequence in the discourse.

37^{tn} Or "Helper" or "Counselor"; Grk "Paraclete," from the Greek word paravklhto" (paraklhto"). Finding an appropriate English translation for paravklhto" is a very difficult task. No single English word has exactly the same range of meaning as the Greek word. "Comforter," used by some of the older English versions, appears to be as old as Wycliffe. But today it suggests a quilt or a sympathetic mourner at a funeral. "Counselor" is adequate, but too broad, in contexts like "marriage counselor" or "camp counselor." "Helper" or "Assistant" could also be used, but could suggest a subordinate rank. "Advocate," the word chosen for this translation, has more forensic overtones than the Greek word does, although in John 16:5-11 a forensic context is certainly present. Because an "advocate" is someone who "advocates" or supports a position or viewpoint and since this is what the Paraclete will do for the preaching of the disciples, it was selected in spite of the drawbacks.

38^{tn} Or "cannot receive."

39^{tn} Or "he remains."

40^{tc} Some early and important witnesses (l66* B D* W 1 565 it) have ejstin (estin, "he is") instead of e[stai

(estai, "he will be") here, while other weighty witnesses (l66c, 75vid 1 A D1 L Q Y E13 33vid 1 as well as several versions and fathers), read the future tense. When one considers transcriptional evidence, ejstin is the more difficult reading and better explains the rise of the future tense reading, but it must be noted that both l66 and D were corrected from the present tense to the future. If ejstin were the original reading, one would expect a few manuscripts to be corrected to read the present when they originally read the future, but that is not the case.

When one considers what the author would have written, the future is on much stronger ground. The immediate context (both in 14:16 and in the chapter as a whole) points to the future, and the theology of the book regards the advent of the Spirit as a decidedly future event (see, e.g., 7:39 and 16:7).

The present tense could have arisen from an error of sight on the part of some scribes or more likely from an error of thought as scribes reflected upon the present role of the Spirit. Although a decision is difficult, the future tense is most likely authentic. For further discussion on this textual problem, see James M. Hamilton, Jr., "He Is with You and He Will Be in You" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 213-20.

Peace be upon him

The Prophet & Status of Women

By Ibrahim H. Malabari
www.onislam.net

Recently, we have witnessed instances of the horrific treatment of women around the world.

In the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) similar cruel practices were enacted by his society and he opposed all such forms of oppressing women.

Indeed, at the sight of a tragedy of any human being, Prophet Muhammad's heart would be saddened and his eyes would flow with tears.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in a society where women had been subjected to much violence, which often took the form of female infanticide. Daughters were considered a burden; and getting rid of them was sometimes considered a necessity, which they did in a most violent manner: by burying them alive. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was very kind and polite toward women. At a time when they were treated very badly, the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave women honor and

dignity equal to men.

Umar reported: "We did not have much regard for women in Makkah; however, they were better treated in Madinah. The Prophet established women's right through his sayings and commands, which strengthened their position and status". (*Mishkat ul Masabih*)

Since men were always around the Prophet, (peace be upon him) women were prevented from listening to him or asking about matters of concern to them. Therefore, they requested him to appoint one day a week when they could have free access to him, a proposal to which he agreed. He took special care of them and always treated them with kindness so that they would feel free to ask him about anything.

As result of the Prophet's good temperament and kindness, women used to ask him questions. Although the companions were often surprised at their boldness, he never showed any dislike or intolerance for their questions. In fact, Abu Sa'id, Aisha, Anas, Ibn Abbas, Jabir, and many other companions related that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever has two or three daughters or sisters and treats them well will go to Paradise." (Abu Dawud)

These stories are reflective of the Prophet's mercy and kindness towards women. But he went even farther. He tried to liberate women from all kinds of injustice, maltreatment and oppression. He can genuinely be viewed as a liberator of women. He gave women such rights and privileges that even Western women did not enjoy until centuries later, like the right to own and use property independently of her husband and family. She also had a voice in the public sphere and politics, as the example of Prophet's giving audience to women shows.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) gave women rights that Western women did not enjoy until centuries later, like the right to own property independently of her husband.

The Universal Message of the Prophet

Peace be upon him

Theologically speaking, the universality of Prophet Muhammad's message (peace and blessings be upon him) comes from the concept of one God who is the God of all, not only the God of Muslims.

God describes Himself in the first chapter of the Qur'an - which is recited by all Muslims around the world in their five daily Prayers- as "*Rabb al-`Alamin*" i.e. the God of all creation. Whether humans are aware of this fact or not, God is the God of all mankind -Muslims, Christians, atheists, etc.- regardless of their differences. God is the Creator of everything, with no exception.

All People Are Equal

The Prophet was also very sensitive towards human sufferings. When he heard of a slave being tortured, he commanded one of his Companions to buy that slave's freedom. His famous hadith about the treatment of slaves is a great example of his universal teachings. He used to say, **"Your slaves are your brothers and Allah has put them under your command. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats and dress him of what he wears. Do not ask them (slaves) to do things beyond their capacity (power) and if you do so, then help them."** (Bukhari)

Slaves demonstrated great love toward Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). On one occasion, he

asked Zayd ibn Harithah, a slave he freed, if he would like to go back with his father who had come to take him, and Zayd refused, preferring to stay with the Prophet.

The Messenger's Farewell Sermon on the plain of `Arafat also has remarkable aspects of the universality of his message. In this sermon, he spoke about women, the relationship between races, and slaves. In fact, because of Muhammad's message, within the span of thirty years after his death it was difficult to find slaves in Arabia. The Qur'anic verse clearly says that,

(O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you) (Al-Hujurat 49:13)

In his Last Sermon, the Prophet emphasized this aspect of his message. He said that all humankind is from Adam and Eve: an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab and a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab. Also, a white person has no superiority over a black one and a black person has no superiority over a white one. Furthermore, of women he stressed that it is true that husbands have certain rights in regard to their women, but their women also have rights over them. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) successfully established a sense of responsibility and conscience in the minds and hearts of his people.

"...an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab and a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab. Also, a white person has no superiority over a black one and a black person has no superiority over a white one..."

All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; white has no superiority over black, nor does a black have any superiority over white; [none have superiority over another] except by piety and good action.

From the Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

