

The Man Behind the Cartoons : Do You Know This Man ? You Must Know This Man

1) Do You Know This Man?

History has recorded the appearance and deeds of many religious leaders: Moses, Jesus Christ, Zoroaster, and Abraham, to name just a few. There have also been many self-proclaimed prophets and messengers, each of whom has claimed to bring a divine revelation for mankind. Some have proven to be false, and others have been forgotten. But there is one religious leader who stands alone, an unlettered man who transmitted a revelation from God that literally changed the course of history and the destinies of a major portion of mankind: Muhammad, the Prophet and Messenger of God.

Encyclopedia Britannica confirms:

"...a mass of detail in the early sources shows that he was an honest and upright man who had gained the respect and loyalty of others who were likewise honest and upright men." (Vol. 12) B

George Bernard Shaw said about him:

"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 much-needed peace and happiness." (The Genuine Islam, Singapore, Vol. 1, No. X 1936)

"If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam."

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad 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 for from being an anti-Christ, 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 that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today." (Sir George Bernard Shaw in 'The Genuine Islam,' Vol. 1, No. 8, 1936.)

He was by far the most remarkable man that ever set foot on this earth. He preached a religion, founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, initiated numerous social and political reforms, established a powerful and dynamic society to practice and represent his teachings, and completely revolutionized the worlds of human thought and behavior for all time to come.

"HIS NAME IS MUHAMMAD" May the Peace of God Be upon Him (PBUH).

He was born in Arabia in the year 570 CE, Muhammad started his mission of preaching Islam, the religion of truth and the submission of man to One God, at the age of forty and died at the age of sixty-three. During the short twenty-three year period of his prophet hood, Muhammad (PBUH) changed the entire Arabian peninsula forever. Within the space of one generation, the vast majority of people went from paganism and idolatry to devout and strict monotheism, from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion, from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety, from lawlessness and anarchy to a lifestyle characterized by discipline, from moral bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence.

Human history has never seen such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since-and just imagine that all of these unbelievable wonders took place in just over two decades and because of the efforts of one man.

Michael H. Hart, in his recently published book on the rating of individuals who have contributed towards the benefit and upliftment of mankind writes:

"My choice of Muhammad 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, pp. 33)

Lamartine, the renowned historian, when speaking on the essentials of human greatness, wonders:

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only they founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislation, empires, peoples and dynasties but millions of men in one-third of the then-inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls.... his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers; his mystic conversations with God; his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was two-fold: the unity of God and the immateriality of God-the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the words.

Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire: that is MUHAMMAD. As regards all the standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask IS THERE ANY MAN GREATER THAN HE?" (Lamartine: *Histoire de la Turquie*, Paris, 1854 Vol.11, pp 276- 277).

The world has had its share of great personalities. But these were one-sided figures who distinguished themselves in only one or two fields, such as religious thought or military leadership. The lives and teachings of these great personalities are shrouded in the mists of time. There is so much speculation about the time and place of their birth, the mode and style of their life, the nature and detail of their teachings, and the degree and measure of their success or failure that it is impossible for humanity to reconstruct accurately the lives and teachings of these men.

Not so this man The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) accomplished so much in so many fields of human thought and behavior in the fullest blaze of human history. Every detail of his private life and public utterances has been accurately documented and faithfully preserved to our day. The authenticity of the records so preserved are vouched for not only by the faithful followers but even by his prejudiced critics.

Muhammad (PBUH) was a religious teacher, a social reformer, a moral guide, an administrative colossus, a faithful friend, a wonderful companion, a devoted husband, a loving father-all in one. No other man in history ever excelled or equaled him in any of these different aspects of life- but it was only for the selfless personality of Muhammad (PBUH) to achieve such incredible perfection.

Mahatma Gandhi, speaking on the character of Muhammad (PBUH), says in *Young India*:

"I wanted to know the best of one who holds today 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, 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 the great life."

Thomas Carlyle, in his Heroes and Hero-worship, was simply amazed as to "how one man single-handedly could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades."

"The lies (Western slander) which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only."

"A silent great soul, one of that who cannot but be earnest. He was to kindle the world, the world's Maker had ordered so."

Diwan Chand Sharma wrote:

"Muhammad was the soul of kindness and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him." (D. C. Sharma, The Prophets of the East, Calcutta 1935, pp. 12)

Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, speaking on the profession of Islam write:

"I believe in one God, and Mahomet, a Apostle of God" is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honor of the Prophet has never transgressed the measure of human virtues; and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion." (History of the Saracen Empires, London, 1870, p. 54).

Muhammad was nothing more or less than a human being But he was a man with a noble mission, one which was to unite all human beings on the worship of the one and only God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living based on the commands of God. He always described himself as "a servant and messenger of God," and every single one of his actions proclaimed loudly the truth of this phrase.

Bosworth Smith: "He was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue; if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammed, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports." (Bosworth Smith, MOHAMMAD AND MOHAMMADANISM, London, 1874, p. 92.)

Annie Besant: "It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher." (Annie Besant, THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF MUHAMMAD, Madras, 1932, p. 4.)

W. Montgomery Watt: "His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad." (W. Montgomery Watt, MOHAMMAD AT MECCA, Oxford, 1953, p. 52.)

James A. Michener: "In all things Muhammad was profoundly practical. When his beloved son Ibrahim died, an eclipse occurred, and rumours of God's personal condolence quickly arose. Whereupon Muhammad is said to have announced, "An eclipse is a phenomenon of nature. It is foolish to attribute such things to the death or birth of a human being." "At Muhammad's own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the

noblest speeches in religious history: "If there are any among you who worshipped Muhammad, he is dead. But if it is God you worshipped, He lives forever." (James A. Michener, "ISLAM: THE MISUNDERSTOOD RELIGION," in READER'S DIGEST (American edition), May 1955, pp. 68-70.)

Sarojini Naidu, the famous Indian poetess speaking on the aspect of equality before God in Islam, stated:

"It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy for, in the mosque when the call for prayer is sounded and worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim: "God Alone is Great." I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes man instinctively a brother. (S. Naidu, "Ideals of Islam," vide Speeches ~ Writings, Madras, 1918, p. 169).

Prof. Hurgronje: "The League of Nations founded by the prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity and human brotherhood on such universal foundations as to show candle to other nations ... the fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done towards the realization of the idea of the League of Nations." The world has not hesitated to raise to divinity individuals whose lives and missions have been lost in legend. Historically speaking, none of these legends achieved even a fraction of what Muhammad accomplished. And all of his striving was for the sole purpose of uniting mankind for the worship of the one God on the codes of moral excellence. Muhammad or his followers never at any time claimed that he was a son of God, a God-incarnate, or a man having a divine nature-he always was and is even today considered as only a human messenger chosen by God.

Today even after a lapse of fourteen century, the life and teachings of Muhammad (PBUH) have survived without the slightest loss, alteration, or interpolation. They offer the same undying hope for treating mankind's many ills that they did when he was alive. This is not a claim of Muhammad's followers but also the inescapable conclusion reached by a critical and unbiased study of human history. Maybe it is time for you to get to know this outstanding person who has influenced the life of billions of people over the last fourteen hundred years. He could also change your life.

2) You Must Know This Man - Muhammad

Biography, mission and the message of Muhammad - the Prophet of Islam

You may be an atheist or an agnostic or you may belong to any of the religious denominations that exist in the world today. You may have been a Communist or a believer in democracy and freedom. No matter what you are, and no matter what your religious and political beliefs, personal and social habits happen to be- YOU STILL MUST KNOW THIS MAN!

He was by far the most remarkable man that ever set foot on this earth. He preached a religion, founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, initiated numberless social and political reforms, established a dynamic and powerful society to practice and represent his teachings, and he revolutionized the worlds of human thought and human action for all time.

His name was Muhammad (peace and blessings of Almighty Creator be upon him)-and he accomplished all these wonders in the unbelievably short span of twenty-three years.

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in Arabia in 570 CE, and when he died at the age of 63, the whole of the Arabian Peninsula had changes from paganism and idol worship to the worship of One God; from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion; from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety; from lawlessness and anarchy to disciplined living; from utter moral bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence. Human history has never known such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since.

The Encyclopedia Britannica calls him "the most successful of all religious personalities of the world." Bernard Shaw said, "if Muhammad (pbuh) were alive today, he would succeed in solving all those problems which threaten to destroy human civilization in our times." Thomas Carlyle was amazed as to how one man, single-handedly, could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades. Napoleon and Gandhi never tired of dreaming of a society along the lines established by this man in Arabia fourteen centuries ago.

Indeed no other human being ever accomplished so much, in such diverse fields of human thought and behavior, in so limited a space of time, as did Muhammad (pbuh). He was a religious teacher, a social reformer, a moral guide, a political thinker, a military genius, an administrative colossus, a faithful friend, a wonderful companion, a devoted husband, a loving father-all in one. No other man in history ever excelled or equaled him in any of these difficult departments of life.

The world has had its share of great personalities. But these were one-sided figures who distinguished themselves in but one or two fields, such as religious thought or military leadership. None of the other great leaders of the world ever combined within himself so many different qualities to such an amazing level of perfection as did Muhammad (pbuh).

The lives and teachings of other great personalities of the world are shrouded in the mist of time. There is so much speculation about the time and the place of their birth, the mode and style of their life, the nature and detail of their teachings and the degree and measure of their success or failure that it is impossible for humanity today to reconstruct accurately and precisely the lives and teachings of those men.

Not so this man Muhammad (pbuh). Not only was he born in the fullest blaze of recorded history, but every detail of his private and public life, of his actions and utterances, has been accurately documented and faithfully preserved to our day. The authenticity of the information so preserved is vouched for not only by faithful followers but also by unbiased critics and open-minded scholars.

At the level of ideas there is no system of thought and belief-secular or religious, social or political - which could surpass or equal ISLAM-the system which Muhammad (pbuh) propounded. In a fast-changing world, while other systems have undergone profound transformations, Islam alone has remained above all change and mutation, and retained its original form for the past 1400 years. What is more, the positive changes that are taking place in the world of human thought and behavior truly and consistently reflect the healthy influence of Islam in these areas.

It is not given to the best of thinkers to put their ideas completely into practice, and to see the seeds of their labors grow and bear fruit in their own lifetime. Except of course, Muhammad (pbuh), who not only preached the most wonderful ideas but also successfully translated each one of them into practice. At the time of his death his teachings were not mere precepts and ideas straining for fulfillment. They had become the very core of the life of tens of thousands of perfectly trained individuals. At what other time or place and in relation to what other political, social, religious system, philosophy or ideology-did the world ever witness such a perfectly amazing phenomenon? Except of course, ISLAM, which was established as a complete way of life by Muhammad (pbuh)himself. History bears testimony to this fact and the greatest skeptics have no option but to concede this point.

In spite of the phenomenal success which crowned his efforts, he did not for a moment claim to be God or God's incarnation or Son -but only a human being who was chosen and ordained by the Creator to be a teacher of truth to mankind and a complete model and pattern for their actions.

He was a man with a noble and exalted mission -and his unique mission was to unite humanity in the worship of the One and only God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living in accordance with the laws and commands of God. He always described himself as a Messenger and servant of God, as indeed every single action and movement of his proclaimed him to be.

A world which has not hesitated to raise to Divinity individuals whose very lives and missions have

been lost in legend and who, historically speaking, did not accomplish half as much-or even one tenth-as was accomplished by Muhammad (pbuh), should stop to take serious note of this remarkable man's claim to be God's messenger to mankind.

Today, after the lapse of some 1400 years, the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), have survived without the slightest loss, alteration or interpolation. Today they offer the same undying hope for treating mankind's many ills which they did when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was alive. This is our honest claim and this is the inescapable conclusion forced upon us by a critical and unbiased study of history.

The least YOU should do as a thinking, sensitive, concerned human being is to stop for one brief moment and ask yourself: Could it be that these statements, extraordinary and revolutionary as they sound, are really true? Supposing they really are true, and you did not know this man Muhammad (pbuh) or hear about his teachings? Or did not know him well and intimately enough to be able to benefit from his guidance and example? Is it not time you responded to this tremendous challenge and made some effort to know him? It will not cost you anything but it may well prove to be the beginning of a completely new era in your life.

Come, let us make a new discovery, the life of this wonderful man Muhammad (pbuh), the like of whom never walked on this earth, and whose example and teachings can change YOUR life and OUR world for the better. May God shower His choicest blessings upon him!

Written by S. Husain Pasha.

Read also:

- a.. Prophet Muhammad: The Leader
- b.. Muhammad the Compassionate
- c.. The Prophet's Methods for Correcting People's Mistakes (E-Book)
- d.. The Prophet's Contribution to Human Thought
- e.. Honesty & Trustworthiness
- f.. The Finality of Prophethood
- g.. Prophethood: Its Nature and Necessity
- h.. The Prophet's Generosity
- i.. The Prophet's Mercy
- j.. The Prophet as Educator
- k.. The Prophet's Patience
- l.. Mohammad's Prophethood: an Analytical View
- m.. The Prophet's Compassion for Children
- n.. The Prophets Were Examples

o.. Do Muslims Exaggerate in Praising Prophet Muhammad?

p.. Muhammad: The Man & The Message

Compiled from the following sources: