



Muhammad The Last Prophet

Muhammad was born in Mecca in the year 569 C.E.. He earned his living as a trader and was known by his people as the trustworthy one " al-Amin". When Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (Pbuh) reached the age of 40, the Angel Gabriel came to him with revelations that established his Prophethood. Muhammad (Pbuh) was first ordered to talk to his immediate family about Islam, including his beloved wife Khadija. Eventually it was revealed to him that he should begin delivering the message to all of mankind. In the following 23 years of his life, he communicated the message of Allah (Arabic word for God) to his people, and set an example for how each human being should lead his or her life.

Muslim scholars and non-Muslim researchers have written about the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). He is the only Messenger and Prophet whose life is known in great detail and a full biography would fill many volumes. His deeds and sayings are solid historical facts and not pious myths and legends. He is, as noted in the Encyclopedia Britannica, "the most successful of all the Prophets", as manifested by the spread of Islam. As a private person, he is a husband, father, friend and businessman. As a public figure, he is a statesman, leader, legislator, judge, and the Chief of Staff. In Summary he is a Messenger of God, a lawgiver, preacher, theologian, saint and mystic. Such a combination is unique in history and well befits the "Seal of the Prophets.

Michael H. Hart in, The Top 100: A Ranking Of The Most Influential Persons in History, New York: Hart Publishing Company, Inc., 1978 said." 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 level."

"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?" Lamartine, Histoire De La Turquie, Paris, 1854

"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.

In the opinion of Prof. Hurgronje "the league of nations founded by the prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity of human brotherhood on such Universal foundations as to show candle to other nations." In the words of the same Professor "the fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done the realization of the idea of the League of Nations."

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.

Muhammad persisted in his call to Islam refusing offers of wealth and power in return for abandoning his mission. Consequently, the Muslims began to experience persecution, which ranged from boycott to physical torture. In spite of all the persecution, the number of Muslims grew steadily. Converts to Islam included, but were not limited to, Jews and Christians as well as idol-worshipping Arabs.

Muhammad (Pbuh) left Mecca for Madinah in 622 C.E. to join the increasing number of Muslims who

immigrated to Madinah to escape persecution in Mecca. In Madinah, he established a nation of equals based on the brotherhood between the Muslims in Madinah and those from Mecca regardless of wealth or social status.

Muhammad invited the Jews to join the new society as an independent nation, governed by rabbinical court, within the Muslim Nation. The Jews accepted and an agreement known as The Covenant of Madinah was signed. This gave birth to the world's first written constitution.

The spread of Islam in Arabia and the growing strength of the Muslims threatened the leadership position of Mecca and its trading missions. The leaders of Mecca and their allies resorted to force in an attempt to eliminate Islam before the Muslims become too strong. Several battles followed but Mecca's hopes were shattered.

The Muslims won or held their own against superior forces in all the battles. This led to the spread of Islam at a more rapid pace. The conflicts with Mecca ended when Muhammad entered the city at the head of 4 armies. The city offered practically no resistance after Muhammad gave his word that everyone who remained at home or in the mosque would be safe.

Despite all the exhortation of the Prophet, the disbelievers persisted in asking him for a sign from his Lord, so that they would believe. The Prophet replied: "Because miracles had proved inadequate to convince. Noah was sent with signs, and with what effect?"

Many Muslim scholars studied the Old and New Testaments and show that many verses in the Bible can be interpreted to refer to Mohammed. There appear to have been references to his similarity to Moses, to his birthplace, to his migration from Mecca to Madinah amongst other facts of his life.

He accepted all invitations, all apologies, all presents. He returned favors with equal or higher

value presents. He visited the sick, was the first to greet people he met, was the last to pull away when shaking hands with someone or embracing him. He always listened to others until they finished what they had to say. At home, he cleaned and mended his clothing repaired his shoes, milked his sheep and saddled his camel and horse. He lived a very simple life and donated anything he earned or received beyond his minimum requirements to the needy on a daily basis. He placed his faith in God to provide for his future needs. He prayed frequently which meant his body and clothing were always clean since Muslims must complete a cleansing ritual before praying.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once summarized his code to be: "mindfulness of God privately and publicly, fairness in anger or satisfaction, moderation in poverty or wealth, connecting with those who avoided him, giving to those who deprived him, forgiving those who wronged him, speaking out for what is good, and making his silence a meditation, his speech a recital of the name of God, and what he saw a lesson."

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) always guarded against becoming a divine intermediary. He emphasized being the servant of God at all times.

" Say thou: I am but a man like you: It is revealed to me by Inspiration, that your Allah is one Allah: so stand true to Him, and ask for His Forgiveness." And woe to those who join gods with Allah" Quran 41:6

Mohammed came with a book that was preserved in exactly the same text that it was revealed to him in. This book is the Quran. Mohammed also made speeches that were not part of the Quran. Those were not recorded in written form during his life and are called the sayings, "Hadith," of Mohammed. The fact that the Hadith was not recorded in Mohammed's life gave rise to some uncertainty over the authenticity of some of these Hadiths and to some variations in Islam. These variations do not affect the core of Muslim belief but rather the execution of duties of a Muslim.

Muhammad's call to Islam met with stiff resistance from most of the people of Mecca. They were afraid to lose Mecca's advantage, as a trading and religious center for Arabia if Arabs abandon the idols in Mecca and embrace Islam. The Arabs, hundreds of years earlier, had abandoned the religion of Abraham and Ishmael and used idols as intermediaries between them and God.

On the sacred month of pilgrimage (632 C.E.), Muhammad (Pbuh) makes a farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. He addressed the assembled multitude from the top of Mount Arafat in the following words:

"O people! Listen to my words, for I know not whether another year will be vouch safe to me after this year to find myself among you. Your lives and property are sacred and unfringeable among one another until you appear before the Lord, as this day and this month are sacred for all; and remember, you will have to appear before your Lord Who will demand from you an account for all your actions. O people, you have rights over your wives, and your wives have a right over you. Verily you have taken them on the security of Allah and have made their people lawful unto you by the words of Allah. And your slaves, see that you feed them with such food as you eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff you wear, and if they commit a fault which you are not inclined to forgive, then part with them; for they are the servants of the Lord and are not to be harshly treated. O people listen to my words and understand them. Know that all Muslims are brothers. You are one brotherhood; but no man shall take ought from his brother, unless by his free consent. Keep yourselves from injustice. Let him who is present tell this to him who is absent. It maybe that he who is told this afterward may remember better than he who has now heard it.

The Prophet concluded his sermon by exclaiming: "O Lord, I have fulfilled my message and accomplished my work." The assembled multitude, all in one voice, cried: "Yea, verily you have." The Prophet again exclaimed: "O Lord, I beseech You, bear witness to it."

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, and a loving father—all in one. No other man in history ever excelled or equaled him in any of these difficult departments of life.

After the death of Prophet Muhammad his followers continued to spread Islam by following his Sunnah (his way of life and mannerism).

Some Sayings of the Prophet

- "None amongst you believes (truly) till one likes for his brother that which he loves for himself"
- "He will not enter Paradise, he whose neighbor is not secure from his wrongful conduct"
- "He is not a perfect believer, who goes to bed full and knows that his neighbor is hungry"

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