



What They Say About Islam

The Islam that was revealed to Muhammad (Pbuh) is the continuation and culmination of all the preceding divine religions and hence it is for all times and all peoples. This status of Islam is sustained by glaring facts. Firstly, there is no other revealed book extant in the same form and content as it was revealed. Secondly, no other revealed religion has any convincing claim to provide guidance in all walks of human life for all times. But Islam addresses humanity at large and offers basic guidance regarding all human problems. Moreover, it has withstood the test of fourteen hundred years and has all the potentialities of establishing an ideal society as it did under the leadership of the last Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh).

It was a miracle that Prophet Muhammad could bring even his toughest enemies to the fold of Islam without adequate material resources. Worshipers of idols, blind followers of the ways of forefathers, promoters of tribal feuds, abusers of human dignity and blood, became the most disciplined nation under the guidance of Islam and its Prophet. Islam opened before them vistas of spiritual heights and human dignity by declaring righteousness as the sole criterion of merit and honor. Islam shaped their social, cultural, moral and commercial life with basic laws and principles which are in conformity with

human nature and hence applicable in all times as human nature does not change.

It is so unfortunate that the Christian West instead of sincerely trying to understand the phenomenal success of Islam during its earlier time, considered it a rival religion. During the centuries of the Crusades this trend gained much force and impetus and huge amount of literature was produced to tarnish the image of Islam. But Islam has begun to unfold its genuineness to the modern scholars whose bold and objective observations on Islam belie all the charges leveled against it by the so-called unbiased orientalisists.

Here we furnish some observations on Islam by great and acknowledged non-Muslim scholars of modern time. Truth needs no advocates to plead on its behalf, but the prolonged malicious propaganda against Islam has created great confusion even in the minds of free and objective thinkers.

"But Islam has a still further service to render to the cause of humanity. It stands after all nearer to the real East than Europe does, and it possesses a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and cooperation. No other society has such a record of success uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavours so many and so various races of mankind . . . Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of East and West is to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition. In its hands lies very largely the solution of the problem with which Europe is faced in its relation with East. If they unite, the hope of a peaceful issue is immeasurably enhanced. But if Europe, by rejecting the cooperation of Islam, throws it into the arms of its rivals, the issue can only be disastrous for both." -- H.A.R. Gibb, Whiter Islam, London, 1932, p. 379.

"I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a "Muslim" as "one surrendered to God," but I believe that embedded in the Quran and other expressions of the Islamic vision are vast stores of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn, and 'Islam is certainly a strong

contender for the supplying of the basic framework of the one religion of the future." --W. Montgomery Watt, Islam and Christianity Today, London, 1983, p. ix.

"It (Islam) replaced monkishness by manliness. It gives hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature." --Canon Taylor, Paper read before the Church Congress at Walverhamton, Oct. 7, 1887; Quoted by Arnoud in The Preaching of Islam, pp. 71-72.

"How, for instance, can any other appeal stand against that of the Moslem who, in approaching the pagan, says to him, however obscure or degraded he may be 'Embrace the faith, and you are at once equal and a brother.' Islam knows no color line." (S. S. Leeder, Veiled Mysteries of Egypt)

"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 far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour 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." --G.B. Shaw, The Genuine Islam, Vol. 1, No. 81936.

The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue..." (A.J. Toynbee, Civilization On Trial, New York, p. 205)

"Medieval Islam was technologically advanced and open to innovation. It achieved far higher literacy rates than in contemporary Europe; it assimilated

the legacy of classical Greek civilization to such a degree that many classical books are now known to us only through Arabic copies. It invented windmills, trigonometry, lateen sails and made major advances in metallurgy, mechanical and chemical engineering and irrigation methods. In the middle-ages the flow of technology was overwhelmingly from Islam to Europe rather than from Europe to Islam. Only after the 1500's did the net direction of flow begin to reverse." (pg 253) Jared Diamond a world renowned UCLA sociologist, and physiologist won the Pulitzer Prize for his book: "Guns, Germs, and Steel."

Islam is a religion that is essentially rationalistic in the widest sense of this term considered etymologically and historically. The definition of rationalism as a system that bases religious beliefs on principles furnished by the reason applies to it exactly . . . It cannot be denied that many doctrines and systems of theology and also many superstitions, from the worship of saints to the use of rosaries and amulets, have become grafted on the main trunk of Muslim creed. But in spite of the rich developments, in every sense of the term, of the teachings of the Prophet, the Quran has invariably kept its place as the fundamental starting point, and the dogma of unity of God has always been proclaimed therein with a grandeur, a majesty, an invariable purity and with a note of sure conviction, which it is hard to find surpassed outside the pale of Islam. This fidelity to the fundamental dogma of the religion, the elemental simplicity of the formula in which it is enunciated, the proof that it gains from the fervid conviction of the missionaries who propagate it, are so many causes to explain the success of Muhammadan missionary efforts. A creed so precise, so stripped of all theological complexities and consequently so accessible to the ordinary understanding might be expected to possess and does indeed possess a marvelous power of winning its way into the consciences of men. Edward Montet, "La Propagande Chretienne et ses Adversaries Musulmans," Paris, 1890; Quoted by T.W. Arnold in The Preaching of Islam, London, 1913, pp. 413-414.

Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read in the Qur'an I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world." De Lacy O'Leary, *Islam at the Crossroads*, London, 1923, p.8:

"Muhammad is the most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities." Encyclopedia Britannica

The founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammed. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he? " Lamartine, *Historie de la Turquie*, Paris 1854, Vol. 11 pp. 276-2727

"If a man like Muhammed were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness." George Bernard Shaw .Sir George Bernard Shaw in "The Genuine Islam" Vol 1, No.8, 1936

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Islam is an authentic faith that shapes our Muslim neighbors' innermost being and determines their attitude in life. And the Islamic faith is generally more tradition-oriented than the recent Western shape of Christian faith, which has experienced considerable

secularization. Yet we are only fair to the Islamic population when we understand them from their religious core and respect them as a faith community. Muslims have become important partners in faith conversation." Paul Varo Martinson (editor), ISLAM: An Introduction for Christians, Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1994, p. 205:

"Islam stands in a long line of Semitic, prophetic religious traditions that share an uncompromising monotheism, and the belief in God's revelation, His prophets, ethical responsibility and accountability, and the Day of Judgement. Indeed, Muslims, like Christians and Jews, are the Children of Abraham, since all trace their communities back to him. Islam's historic religious and political relationship to Christendom and Judaism has remained strong throughout history. This interaction has been the source of mutual benefit and borrowing as well as misunderstanding and conflict." L. Esposito, ISLAM: the Straight Path, Oxford University Press, New York, 1988, pp. 3-4:

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