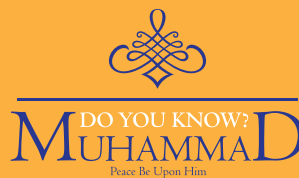


# DO YOU KNOW? MUHAMMAD

Peace Be Upon Him

The Western culture has a long history of Islamophobia that dates back to the 12th Century time of Crusades. Ever since, the Western people have always found it difficult to see Muhammad in a more objective light. Some sectors of Western media have continued this tradition of hostility until today. But the fact of the matter is that no view of our contemporary world is complete without a fair and balanced knowledge of Islam. And to understand Islam and Muslims, one must know Muhammad - the one man who changed the course of history and still continues to inspire over a billion lives across the globe, even 14 centuries after his death. Muhammad didn't just call for faith in One God, he brought a message for every individual to add value to his or her life, and a message for every family to be happy, and a message for every society to be just and reinforce brotherhood, and a message for every nation to emphasise on solidarity and development, and a message for humanity to strengthen knowledge, love and cooperation. To quote Karen Armstrong, a British Academic and Writer: "If we are to avoid catastrophe, the Muslim and the Western World must learn not merely to tolerate but to appreciate one another. A good place to start is with the figure of Muhammad."



If you know him, you'll love him

## Introduction

Over the years, the world has seen many occasions when the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace be upon him), has been both insulted and mocked – through cartoons, books and most recently on films. The Western institutions remain silent on perpetrators under the pretext of 'freedom of speech'. Non-Muslims have been taken aback by the passionate Muslim reaction to these provocative acts. The small numbers who threaten and commit acts of violence in response consistently steal the headlines despite the actions of the overwhelming majority - who may be emotional, vocal and angry, but remain peaceful. They are ordinary people just like millions of others across the world – amongst them are mothers, fathers, teachers, students, doctors, lawyers, engineers and business people. Most people do not understand why Muslims were so offended. They are unable to appreciate how much Muslims admire and love Muhammad. This may be, in part, because much of what has been written in the West about Islam and Muhammad over the centuries has been ill-informed or politically-driven campaign. In this small pamphlet we aim to shed some light, in order to provide a more informed understanding of one of the most important human beings ever to live, and who has been described by the Almighty God, "as a mercy to the worlds" (Qur'an 21:107).

## Who was Muhammad?

Muhammad (peace be upon him) lived in the early 7th Century. He was born in Makkah in the Arabian Peninsula, a town known as a hub of trade and pilgrimage, visited by people from Yemen in the South and Syria in the North. The people of that time had some good qualities, but were also characterized by some extremely unpleasant morals and values that had become norms within their society – in particular with regards to women, orphans, slaves, the poor and vulnerable, and in relation to their religion. Strangely enough, events that took place in the 7th Century Arabia have much to teach us about the events of our time. Muhammad called the prevailing spirit of his time as 'Jahiliyyah' or 'time of ignorance', that is the pre-Islamic Arabia. However, 'Jahiliyyah' does not refer to an historical era, rather a state of mind that breeds injustice, corruption, violence and terror. Until the age of forty, Muhammad lived an ordinary life, other than being widely admired for his integrity, honesty, manners and wisdom. He was actually known among his people as the "Truthful" and the "Trustworthy". He would show an uncommon concern for others, not least towards his family, friends and relations. It was only when he was forty after receiving divine revelation from God that he began his mission to try to change the society around him.

## What was he calling for?

Muhammad (peace be upon him) challenged three core matters that upset the status quo in Makkah. These were:

1. The irrational idea that material things were worthy of worship
2. The social hierarchy that maintained the superiority of certain tribes and families at the expense of others
3. The injustice, corruption and harmful practices of the society

He called for some very positive alternatives:

1. He invited people to worship the one and only God, Who created the universe and all the things in it.
2. The idea that no human being was superior to another because of race, gender or any physical quality. He argued that the only superiority among people is that of moral excellence;
3. A society built around ideas of justice, charity and respect for others, with a strong spiritual and moral foundation.

## What was the impact of his call?

Many were convinced by him, from amongst the elite of society and from amongst the poor and the slaves – whereas those in positions of power responded with anger, intense hatred and slanders. Muhammad and his followers endured violence and torture from the people of Makkah, but they did not retaliate or raise arms. They responded to the aggression by stepping up their non-violent challenge of ideas in the society. After 13 years of persistence in Makkah, a group of people from another town called Madinah invited Muhammad to live with them, accepting him as their leader, and pledging to defend him and his message. This marked a shift from persecution by those in Makkah towards the Muslims, to a declaration of war by them on him and his newly founded state. After many battles over many years, the Prophet's state, centered in the city of Madinah, triumphed – and he entered Makkah victorious, but demonstrating his incredibly magnanimous nature, forgave almost all his former enemies. He then set about carrying his message to the neighboring regions. Implementing the ruling of the Qur'an, he forbade anyone from being forced to convert to Islam. Belief, he said, had to be a free choice without compulsion. But where he saw oppression, or where people were not allowed that free choice, he used his army to end oppression, establish justice and allow people to choose if they wished to become Muslim, or not.

## What were his beliefs?

Something that can be worshiped is termed a 'god' (Arabic 'ilah'). He argued that people should worship the ONLY thing worthy of worship – the 'God' that created us all (Arabic 'Allah'). He

explained that this central part of his message was not new. Rather it was the same message that had been proclaimed before by previous Prophets – Jesus, Moses, Abraham and others (peace and blessings be on them all). Unlike other religions, he absolutely prevented any kind of priesthood or clerical hierarchy. He ordered that after him, Muslims should choose their leader and remain united behind their leader as long as he fulfilled his contract and duty towards them, according to the laws of Islam. The leader of the Muslims – the Caliph (the Arabic word 'Khalifah' means 'Vicerent' or 'Deputy') was not divinely chosen and had no divine right to rule. He was rather, the one 'Deputized' by the other Muslims to lead them. The Prophet did not forbid his followers from asking questions. He did not suppress debate or scientific inquiry – and he obliged people to account their leaders – warning of dire consequences if leaders were not brought to account. However, he forbade mockery of other faiths; as well as the spread of malicious gossip and slander. The Islamic world that was built on the foundation of his example entered a 'golden age' of intellectual and scientific inquiry, and academic thought, amidst unparalleled justice and harmony between people of different backgrounds.

## What was his spiritual message?

As well as inviting people to think about where they had come from, how they had been created and why they are here, he tapped into that innate spiritual instinct people have – a desire to connect with something greater than themselves that inspires awe – and to search for tranquility in the heart. Based on the Qur'an, he defined for his followers some regular rituals which encourage a spiritual connection saying "Worship Allah, say your five daily prayers (Salaat), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat (charitable payment to the poor), Perform Hajj (pilgrimage) if you can afford to". He encouraged a direct link between an individual and God – and showed that any good deed could be



an act of worship if done with a pure intention and connected to one's belief or in response to an order from God. The Qur'an that was revealed to him is a miracle – a scripture of unparalleled quality and depth, which contained a challenge to anyone to produce even one chapter of equivalent quality. Over the centuries, many tried but all failed - and have continued to fail.

## A way for humanity to live together

The Prophet defined a distinct way for people to live together. His society worked on two levels. The first was to encourage individual behavior by teaching the instructions of the Qur'an, by his personal example and by reminding people of their individual responsibility and accountability to God. He said, "Remember, one day you will appear before Allah and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone". The second was by implementing laws on a state level that secured the virtues and values he encouraged in individuals, as well as carrying them in the international arena.

His message was for all humanity, all time – not for a few chosen people, nor for a single race. He showed how humanity could live together in peace and harmony. He firmly opposed all forms of racism, saying instead "All mankind is from Adam and Eve. No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab. Also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over white except by piety and righteous deeds". He encouraged a meritocratic society where he said that people should follow their leader – even if he were a slave (i.e. regardless of race or social status). He encouraged the freeing of slaves – for slavery was a norm at that

time – and following his teachings, slavery eventually died out in the Muslim world (see Qur'an 49:13). He conveyed the message that everyone with any moderate means should give 2.5% of their annual unused wealth as a regular charitable tax (called Zakah) – and beyond that if people were able to give more they would be rewarded accordingly (though that was not compulsory). He forbade punitive taxes such as income tax, sales taxes, as well as interest bearing loans like those that has today crippled individuals, families, and nations. He did not forbid the possession of personal wealth but discouraged people from pursuing it excessively. Instead, his way encouraged wealth to circulate, stimulating trade and the economy. He said: "Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. God has forbidden you to take usury (interest); therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity". While private citizens were allowed to own property, he insisted that vital commodities – water, sources of fuel, mineral wealth etc – are for all citizens to share, and not to be monopolized by a few. He said, "People have a right in three things: water, pastures and fire (meaning all fuel)". He ordered that land should be made productive by its owners, or else it would be given to hardworking people who would use it themselves. In this way he broke a monopoly of a few people owning vast tracts of unproductive land and allotted sections of it to those who had none.

He built an identity that overcame race, class, tribe and color – such that Muslims had to see each other as 'brothers' and 'sisters' as a one nation - 'Ummah'. He insisted that all citizens needed to be just to each other, protecting rights to worship, of property, life and honor for all including non-Muslim citizens – which is why after hundreds of years non-Muslim communities continued to thrive in



Muslim countries. He said that if people harmed non-Muslim citizens, it would be as if they had harmed the Prophet himself. He even went so far as to say that people should treat animals well, not waste water, not cause pollution and not harm their surrounding environment. He established the Qur'anic ideal that man is a deputy on earth, with responsibility towards everything on the planet. He encouraged all these things in peoples' personal behavior, but also institutionalized many of them as laws in his state, so as to secure these values in society (see Qur'an 2:30).

## Wasn't he violent?

Muhammad's career is divided into the Makkan period (first 13 years) and Madinan period (last 10 years). The revelation in Makkan period is characterized by the story of the rejected and persecuted Prophet. Had the assassination plot against him in 621 succeeded, his religious career would have ended like that of Jesus. However, Muhammad escaped (by God's grace) and went to live in Madinah, where he led a larger community and faced the challenges of creating a new society and state. The Qur'an continued to be revealed, but the focus broadened now from the purely spiritual to include the more temporal issues of community building, lawmaking, and social institutions. In Madinah, he came under direct military attacks for the first time. Consequently, the message also focused on defining the concept of 'just' war. Formal permission to fight is first given in Madinan period. "They ask thee concerning fighting in the Prohibited Month. Say: Fighting therein is a grave (offence); but graver is it in the sight of God to prevent access to the path of God, to deny Him, to prevent access to the Sacred Mosque, and drive out its members. Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter. Nor will they

cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith if they can. And if any of you Turn back from their faith and die in unbelief, their works will bear no fruit in this life and in the Hereafter; they will be companions of the Fire and will abide therein. Those who believed and those who suffered exile and fought (and strove and struggled) in the path of God; they have the hope of the Mercy of God. And God is Off-forgiving, Most Merciful" (Qur'an 2:217-218). Throughout this period, the Muslim community was in mortal danger and literally fighting for its survival. The notions of spiritual-striving and God-consciousness are hallmarks of jihad. War in Islam is defensive and is placed within the larger concept of striving for what is right. Though jihad might involve bloodshed, its broader meaning is exerting an effort for improvement, not only politically or militarily, but also in the moral, spiritual, and intellectual realms. Muhammad is often quoted for calling the militant aspect the "minor" jihad, while referring to the improvement of one's self as the "greater" jihad. Other revelations during this period concerned the proper treatment of prisoners of war and non-combatants, the sanction against killing innocent civilians, and the respectful treatment of enemy corpses. The wanton destruction of property, animals or agricultural resources was put off limits too. Even words of consolation for captives are found in the Qur'an (Qur'an 8:70). In times of war, Muhammad always put himself on the front line, enduring the risks and hardships his people had to endure. In his capacity as a military leader, he defined rules of etiquette in war that showed his integrity – and the integrity he expected of all Muslims who followed him. His successor and closest friend, Abu Bakr, summarized the Prophet's teaching on warfare when he said to his armies: "I command you ten things. Learn them by heart: Don't betray, defraud (by stealing the spoils of war), or break treaties. Don't mutilate, kill women, young children, or the elderly. Do not uproot or burn palm trees. Do not cut down fruitful trees, slaughter sheep, cows or camels except for eating. You will come across people secluded in monasteries, so leave



them and what they are devoted to." [The History of At-Tabari, Volume 3]

## Wasn't he oppressive? And didn't he use harsh punishments?

The Prophet addressed problems in his society from a viewpoint of prevention. On a personal level, he encouraged a sense of right and wrong, along with consciousness of pleasing God, which established a wholesome environment. On a political level he made sure people were fed, clothed and sheltered. All of this reduced wrongdoing and crime. But when it came to people violating the law within such an environment, he established an unparalleled system of justice as part of his state. He ruled that it was better to let a guilty man free, rather than punish an innocent man, and he set the standards of evidence so high, that proof in the courts had to be beyond doubt – not beyond 'reasonable' doubt. Thereafter, if someone was found guilty (a relatively rare occurrence) the punishments were very firm and therefore acted as a deterrent. He made it very clear that no one was above the law – not even his own family members. The British political philosopher and politician, Edmund Burke, once said: "We have referred you to the Muhammedan law, which is binding upon all, from the crowned head to the meanest subject; a law interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned, and most enlightened jurisprudence that perhaps ever existed in the world."

## What about his attitude towards women?

Much that has been said in the West about the Prophet's attitude to women is false – whether it is looking at the treatment of women or about the numbers of wives he had. He married for the first time

later than average for a man in his community. He remained solely married to his first wife Khadija who was 15 years older than him, until she passed away, which was also unusual as men at that time commonly had many wives. In the end Islam limited this practice to four wives and established strict conditions of justice on a man who took more than one wife. Later, after his beloved Khadija passed away, he married again and more than once, but for different reasons: to give an example to others to marry widows and divorcees; or to strengthen political relationships. In his personal life, he was the best of husbands. He did not raise his voice or lose his temper, even under provocation. He helped with the household chores. He showed affection and warmth to his wives. He took their opinions on matters and heard their criticisms. He advised Muslims, "Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers". He was the best of fathers – and extremely kind to children – especially orphans. Women in 7th century Arabia (for that matter, women in the whole world) had few if any rights. Even the right of life could be in question, since it was not uncommon for small girls to be buried alive during times of scarcity. In the Qur'an, it is said that on Judgment Day 'buried girls' will rise out of their graves and ask for what crime they were killed. Part of Muhammad's legacy was ending infanticide and establish explicit rights for women. Islam teaches that men and women are equal before God. It grants women divinely sanctioned inheritance, property, social and marriage rights, including the right to reject the terms of a proposal and to initiate divorce. In Islam's early period, women were professionals and property owners, as many are today. Muhammad himself frequently counseled Muslim men to treat their wives and daughters well. "You have rights over your women" he is reported to have said, "and your women have rights over you". He once remarked that, "Heaven lies at the feet of mothers". As the father of four daughters in a society that prized sons, he told other fathers that, if their daughters spoke well of them on the Day of Judgment, they would enter Paradise. Today, social systems in the Muslim world fall short of women's rights by varying degrees, but Muslims generally view Islam as progressive in these matters. Muslim feminists hold the view that the problems presently hindering Muslim women are not Islam-related; they are those that hinder women of all backgrounds worldwide - oppressive cultural practices, poverty, illiteracy, political repression and patriarchy. The same present-day barriers to women's equality prevailed in 7th century Arabia, and Muhammad opposed them and was able to improve women's position in his lifetime. Many modern Muslims continue to value his example, which they site when pressing for women's rights.

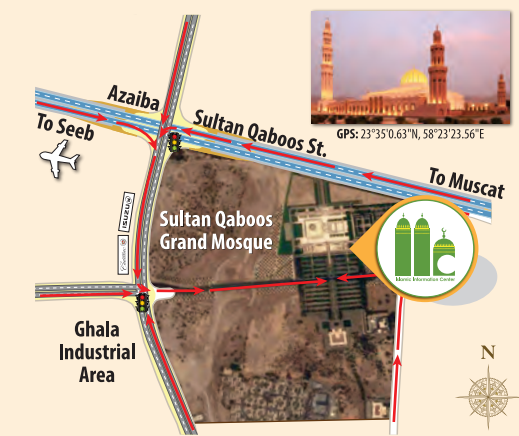
## What was his legacy?

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was both a Prophet of God and a statesman. His leadership was both comprehensive and dynamic. As a political leader, the Prophet unified the Arabian Peninsula, established the first Islamic state whose capital was Madinah, and set the foundations for a distinct political system. The state he established was both unique and timeless, built on justice, accountability and genuine care for all citizens. Whether Muslim or otherwise, all were treated equally in the eyes of the law. The story of Tu'mah ibn Abra'q is an excellent example of justice for all people under his authority; Tu'mah, who was a Muslim, stole someone's armor in Madinah and then he blamed a Jewish man. God sent a special revelation to warn people against such injustice (Qur'an 4:110-112). The Jewish citizen of Madinah was declared innocent and Tu'mah was found guilty. The state and political system he established, known as the Caliphate, endured for hundreds of years, and ruled vast areas of the world encompassing areas as widespread as Spain, Eastern Europe, Turkey, as well the Middle East, Africa, India, China and the Far East. The Caliphate was known in its heyday as a bastion of innovation, creativity and progress at a time when Europe was going through its dark ages.

## How God describes Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an

"And We have not sent you, (O Muhammad), except as a mercy to the worlds" (Qur'an 21:107). "O Prophet (Muhammad), indeed We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a Warner; And one who invites to God, by His permission, and an illuminating lamp" (Qur'an 33:45-46). "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of God (Muhammad) an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and (who) remembers God often" (Qur'an 33:21). "And indeed, for you (Muhammad) is a reward uninterrupted; And indeed, you (Muhammad) are of a great moral character" (Qur'an 68:3-4). "O you who have believed, obey God and obey the Messenger (Muhammad) and do not invalidate your deeds" (Qur'an 47:33). "And whoever obeys God and the Messenger (Muhammad) - those will be with the ones upon whom God has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions" (Qur'an 4:69). "Indeed, God confers blessing upon the Prophet (Muhammad), and His angels (ask Him to do so). O you who have believed, ask (God to confer) blessing upon him and ask (God to grant him) peace" (Qur'an 33:56). "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is God's Messenger and the seal of the Prophets. God has knowledge of all things" (Qur'an 33:40). "And obey Allah and the messenger (Muhammad) that you may obtain mercy" (Qur'an 3:142). "He who obeys the messenger (Muhammad), has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you (O Muhammad) as a watcher over them" (Qur'an 4:80). "On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed the messenger (Muhammad) will wish that they were buried in the earth, but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah" (Qur'an 4:42). "O mankind! Verily, there has come to you the messenger (Muhammad) with the truth from your Lord. So believe in him, it is better for you. But if you disbelieve, then certainly to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise" (Qur'an 4:170).

## How to find us...



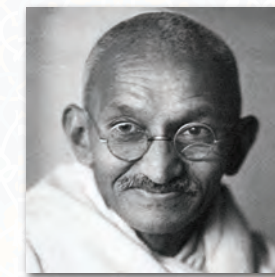
**Islamic Information Center**  
Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque  
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman  
Tele/Fax: +968 24505170  
Email: info@iicomam.om  
Website: www.iicomam.om

## Muhammad - a servant, messenger and perfect example

A prophet is a unique person - a human being, yet he speaks for God. The difficult task has always been that of dealing with a human being as a prophet. It is easy to go to one extreme of making him divine or another of considering him an ordinary person. Jesus (peace be upon him) is a good testimony of a prophet that has been made divine. One must contrast the delicate balance offered by Islam - Muhammad (peace be upon him) is presented as the servant, messenger and 'perfect example' of human being, but he is not divine. He speaks for God, but he is not God. He is the object of our gratitude, ardent love, devotion, and unwavering allegiance. But he is not the object of our worship. The testimony of faith, "there is no god but Allah; and Muhammad is His servant and messenger" protects Muslims from making him divine. Muslims are also asked to invoke God to send His blessing and peace on him (Qur'an 33:56) which also protects Muslims of treating the Prophet like an ordinary man for it is not possible for those who always invoke God's blessings and peace for the Prophet to degrade him to the level of just an ordinary person. Muslims thus find in Muhammad - the perfect example to follow; they also find him a mighty servant and messenger to love and respect. He left behind a rich human legacy and to love him and follow him is to set upon a life-long journey of aligning to the Divine Will. He was an orphan and a father; a husband and a widower; a shepherd and a trader; a commander and a spiritualist; a ruler of his people and among the poorest of them; a father who suffered the heartbreak of burying his children and a grandfather who relished the delightful time with his grandchildren. He exemplified truthfulness, justice, forgiveness, compassion, tolerance, restraint, perseverance, thankfulness, gratitude, cleanliness, modesty and the many etiquettes of beauty.



## TESTIMONIALS



**Mahatma Gandhi**

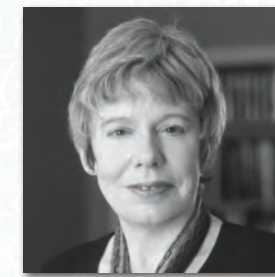
(1869 - 1948) A political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement

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I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today an 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 Muhammad, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion of 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 second volume (of the Prophet's Biography), I was sorry there was not more for me to read of that great life.

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Muhammad was not a man of violence. We must approach his life in a balanced way, in order to appreciate his considerable achievements. As a paradigmatic personality, Muhammad has important lessons, not only for Muslims, but also for Western people. His life was a Jihad: as we shall see, this word does not mean “holy war”, it means “struggle”. Muhammad literally sweated with the effort to bring peace to war-torn Arabia, and we need people who are prepared to do this today. His life was tireless campaign against greed, injustice, and arrogance. If we are to avoid catastrophe, the Muslim and Western worlds must learn not merely to tolerate but to appreciate one another. A good place to start is with the figure of Muhammad.



**Karen Armstrong**

A British academic and writer. Winner of TED Prize 2008  
Author of “Muhammad A Prophet For Our Time” 2007

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**Michael Hart**

He is an Astrophysicist who has also written three books on history.  
The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History, 1978 (Revised Edition, 1992)

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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 secular and religious level...It is probable that the relative influence of Muhammad on Islam has been larger than the combined influence of Jesus Christ and St. Paul on Christianity...Its is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.

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‘I believe in one God, and Muhammad, the 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 honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue; and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.

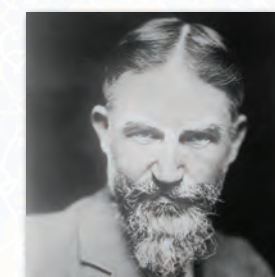


**Edward Gibbon**

Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, in 'History of the Saracen Empire'  
London, 1870, p.54

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**George Bernard Shaw**

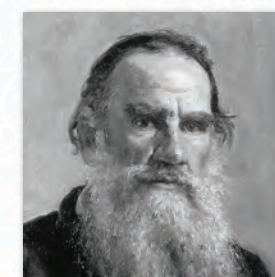
(1856 - 1950) An Irish playwright and a co-founder of the London School of Economics. He was also an essayist, novelist and short story writer.

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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 Savior of Humanity.

“

Muhammad has always been standing higher than the Christianity. He does not consider god as a human being and never makes himself equal to God. Muslims worship nothing except God and Muhammad is his Messenger. There is not any mystery and secret in it.



**Leo Tolstoy**

(1828 - 1910) A Russian writer who primarily wrote novels and short stories, a master of realistic fiction and is widely considered one of the world's greatest novelists.

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### First Revelation

Before his call to prophethood, Muhammad used to spend time alone in the cave of Hira, just outside Makkah, in meditation and reflection, away from the hustle and bustle of Makkah city and the misbehavior of some of its inhabitants. He loathed the idols which the Arabs used to worship, and the many bogus religious traditions built around them. However, he did not know any better. One day while in the cave he heard an unfamiliar voice calling him several times to: “Recite...” He asked to what he should recite, and was eventually told to: “Recite in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot of blood. Recite! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who by the pen taught man what he did not know” (Qur’an 96:1-5). These were the first words of the Qur’anic revelation Muhammad had received. As God was able to create man from a clot of blood, so too could He choose an illiterate man from Arabia for His most illustrious mission and final testament to mankind. Muhammad had no ambitions to become a prophet or receive revelation, and was genuinely overwhelmed by the experience, but as soon as he realized the nature of his task, he embarked on building the community of Islam, similar to what earlier prophets, such as Abraham and Moses, had done. A fair and objective assessment of Muhammad’s life would reveal that he fulfilled that honorable task and he stands out as a foremost leader and benefactor of the whole human race.



**Muhammad's Farewell Sermon**

"... O People, just as you regard this month, this day, and this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (Interest), therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived... Beware of Satan, for your safety and safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things. O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have right over you... Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers... O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers, fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give your wealth in Zakat. Perform Hajj if you can afford to. You know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. You are all equal. Nobody has superiority over other except by piety and good action. Remember, one day you will appear before Allah and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not go astray from the path of righteousness after I am gone. O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born... I leave behind me two things, the Qur'an and my example, the Sunnah and if you follow these you will never go astray. All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again... Be my witness O Allah, that I have conveyed your message to your people."

### ABSTINENCE

Kill not your hearts with excess of eating and drinking.

### ADULTERY

The adultery of the eye is to look with desire on the wife of another; and the adultery of the tongue is to utter what is forbidden.

### AGED PERSONS

Verily, to honor an old man is showing respect to God.

### ALMS-GIVING

The best of alms is that which the right hand gives, and the left hand knows not of.

### ANIMALS

Fear God in treating animals and ride them when they are fit to be ridden and get off them when they are tired.

### BACKBITING

Backbiting vitiates ablution and fasting.

### BEAUTY

God is Beauty and He is delighted in the beautiful.

### BEGGING

Whoever opens unto himself the door of begging, God will open unto him the door of poverty.

### BENEFITS

There are two benefits, of which the generality of men are the losers, and of which they do not know the value – time (leisure) and health.

### CHARITY

Every good act is charity.

### CHASTITY

Modesty and chastity are part of the faith.

### CLEANLINESS

God is pure and He loves purity and cleanliness.

### COFFIN

When a coffin passes by you whether of Jewish, Christian or Muslim person, rise to your feet.

### COMPASSION

There is no reward but Paradise for a Muslim who suffers with patience when the soul of his affectionate friend is taken.

### CONSCIENCE

All actions are judged by the motive prompting them.

### CONTENTMENT

Riches are not from an abundance of worldly goods, but from a contented mind. God loves those who are content.

### CONTROL OF SELF

Whoever suppresses his anger, when he has in his power to show it, God will give him great reward.

### COURTESY

Humility and courtesy are acts of piety.

### CULTIVATION OF LAND

There is no Muslim who plants a tree or sows a field, and man birds or beast eat from them, but it is charity for him.

### THE DEAD

Do not speak ill of the dead.

### DEATH

The grave is the first stage of the journey into eternity. None of you must die but with full submission to the will of God, and with hope for his mercy and pardon.

### DELIBERATION

Deliberation (consultation) in undertakings is pleasing to God.

### DISPOSITION

I have been sent to explain fully good dispositions. Verily the most beloved of you by me are those of the best dispositions.

### DIVORCE

The thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce.

### DUTY OF BELIEVERS

Worship God as thou you see Him; for if you don't see Him, He sees you.

### ENVY

Keep yourselves far from envy; It eats up and takes away good actions, like fire eats up and burns wood.

### EXPERIENCE

He is not a perfect man of fortitude, who has not fallen into misfortunes; and there is no physician without being experienced.

### FORGIVENESS

That person is nearest to God, who pardons, when he has power to retaliate.

### GOOD WORK

Be persistent in good actions.

### HEART

Beware! verily there is a piece of flesh in the body of man, which when good, the whole body is good; and when bad, the whole body is bad, and that is the heart.

### HEAVEN & HELL

Hell is veiled in delights, and Heaven in hardships and miseries.

### HOSPITALITY

He who believeth in one God, and afterlife, let him honor his guest.

### KINDNESS

He who is not kind to God's creatures, and to his own children, God will not be kind to him.

### LABOUR

God is gracious to him that earns his living by his own labor, and not by begging.

### LEARNING

The person who shall pursue the path of knowledge, God will direct him to the path of Paradise. Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.

### MAN'S GROWTH

He is the best man whose life is long and whose actions are good.

### MONOPOLY

Monopoly is unlawful in Islam. The holder of a monopoly is a sinner and an offender.

### MOTHERS

Paradise lies under the feet of mothers.

### NEIGHBOURLINESS

The best of persons in God's sight is the best amongst his friends; and the best of neighbors is the best person in his own neighborhood.

### ORPHANS

The best house is that in which there is an orphan, who is well-treated; and the worst house is that in which an orphan is ill-treated.

### PARENTS

He who wishes to enter Paradise must please his parents. God's pleasure is in a parent's pleasure; and God's displeasure is in parent's displeasure.

### PEACEMAKING

Shall I not inform you of a better act than fasting, alms, and prayers? Making peace between one another: enmity and malice tear up heavenly rewards by the roots.

### POVERTY

Do not turn the poor away, without giving them, if but half a date.

### PRAYER

Prayer is the "miraj" (ascendance to God) of the Faithful.

### PRIDE

The proud will not enter Paradise, nor a violent speaker.

### PROGRESS

The best of good acts in God's sight is that which is constantly attended to although in a small degree.

### PUNISHMENT

God does not remove anyone out of the world, but that He wishes to pardon him; by suffering in this world, he is exempted for punishment in hereafter.

### PURITY

Religion is admonition, and it means being pure. Those who will enter the Garden of Bliss are the ones who have a true, pure, and merciful heart.

### Selected Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad

Muhammad's prophethood took place in the 'daylight of history' where almost everything is known about his bio; the place of birth, the places where he lived and the place of his death and burial. His lineage and descendants are fully known. The names of his companions, friends and adversaries are known. We know what he liked, what he ate and how he dressed. There are detailed accounts what he looked like (without images) and what his mannerism. The chronicles of his practice (Sunnah) and his sayings (Hadith) – separate from the revelation (the Qur'an) – are documents of exemplary import and reference. These chronicles are supported and authenticated by documented unbroken chains of communication (handing down) leading up to a source amongst the Prophet's companions and contemporaries. The supreme importance of the Prophet's saying apart from their general ethical value, can be fully realized only when one becomes aware that the whole religious, moral, social, and political fabric of over 1.6 billion Muslims rests on the Prophet's Sunnah and Hadith, in addition to the Qur'an.

Thus the practice of Muhammad and his utterances form a living commentary on and a supplement to the Qur'an. While utterances of other important historical figures may become the object of enthusiastic admiration, the Prophet's sayings have already acquired a force of law. A Muslim may question the genuineness of an individual Sunnah or Hadith; but once its authenticity is proved, it is binding upon him or her as the injunctions and prohibitions in the Qur'an. What a powerful influence the example of the Prophet exercises over the hearts and imagination of his followers may well be realized from the fact that today the approved mode of entering and leaving homes, bed-time sleeping, the etiquette of dinner-table, popularity of wearing the beard and head-cover, greetings, treatment of neighbors, and many other Muslims' customs are all due to conscious or unconscious imitation of this great Prophet of God (peace be upon him). Yet, the ethical sweetness, beauty, strong common sense, practicality, and modernity of thought of some of the Prophet's utterances will not fail to appeal to people of all minds.

### GENTLENESS

God is gentle and loves gentleness. Whoever has been given gentleness has been given a good portion, in this world and the next.

### GOD

Whoever loves to meet God, God loves to meet him or her. If you love your Creator, love your fellow-beings first.

### GOD'S FORGIVENESS

God says, "Verily my compassion overcomes my wrath."

### GOD'S KINDNESS

God's kindness towards his creatures is more than a mother's towards her babe.

### HUMILITY

Humility and courtesy are acts of piety. Verily God instructs me to be humble and lowly and not proud; and that no one should oppress another.

### ISLAM

To believe in God; after which obey the commandments, and abandon the things forbidden.

### JESUS

Both in this world and in the hereafter, I am the nearest of all people to Jesus, the Son of Mary. The Prophet are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one.

### JIHAD

The most excellent Jihad is that for the conquest of self.

### MARRIAGE

Marriage is incumbent on all who possess the ability.

### MEANNESS

Shall I tell you the worst among you? Those who eat alone, whip the slaves, and give to nobody.

### MISHAPS

No misfortune or displeasure befalls a servant of God, small or great, but on account of his faults committed.

### MODESTY

Modesty and chastity are parts of the Faith. True modesty is the source of all virtues.

### PRIDE

The proud will not enter Paradise, nor a violent speaker.

### PROGRESS

The best of good acts in God's sight is that which is constantly attended to although in a small degree.

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