



The Message  
of

**Muhammad**

*Peace be Upon him*

*Prof. Khurshid Ahmad*

**MANSHURAT**



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بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**W**e are living in an age of restlessness and crisis. Never in the long range of history has man's soul been more desperate, his spirits more bitter and his outlook more bewildered than it is today. Man has lost confidence in himself and his institutions. After having reached the zenith of scientific achievements and after having brought the defiant forces of nature under his control, he feels as desperate and as gloomy as in the Dark Ages. Dr. Albert Schweitzer has summed up the contemporary situation in one sentence: "We have entered a dark journey in a time of darkness". T. S. Eliot, another brilliant thinker of the modern age says:

All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance.

all our ignorance brings us nearer to death.

But nearness to death groups nearer to God

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

The cycle of heaven in twenty centuries,

Brings us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.

Our century is in fact, witnessing a wide-spread disillusionment, a gradual melting of old institutions and the disintegration of cultural values. A new and better order is rising to replace the dying old order. If man is to be freed from his oppressing doubts, if his soul is to be liberated from the shackles of materialistic prejudices and if he is to be inspired with new confidence and new hopes, twentieth century renaissance must occur. It was, perhaps, in view of this crying need that George Bernard Shaw once said:

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad ﷺ in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capability 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 accepted by the Europe of today".

Although Muhammad ﷺ is not amongst us today, his teachings are there. If they are adopted in right earnest, they can bring about the much coveted renaissance.

## 11

## The Life of Muhammad ﷺ

Muhammad ﷺ was born in Arabia in the year 571 A.C. In that hour of human history, Arabia was steeped in ignorance and barbarity. The condition of the world in general too bordered on chaos and crisis. Need for a new order was writ large on the horizon. Only a new cultural upsurge could arrest the world's tragic drift towards disintegration and death. Muhammad ﷺ was the man who changed the course of history. His birth marked the dawn of a new era.

Born in a respectable middle-class family of the most important tribe of Arabia—the Quraish— providence deprived him of his parents in his very infancy. He was brought up by his grand-father and subsequently by his uncle Abu Talib, who not only loved him immensely but stood by him in thick and thin. After coming to age, he adopted trade and commerce as his profession and worked diligently and honestly. Very soon, he earned a name for himself. Everybody respected him and reposed faith in integrity of character and sea green incorruptibility. Everybody called him *Ameen* i.e., one who can be trusted absolutely. At the age of twenty-five he married Khadija, a respectable widow, who was forty at the time of this marriage. He lived a very simple and unassuming life and

years were off, he devoted more and more of his time to prayers, meditation and search for truth. He received his first revelation when he was forty. The angel of God appeared before him and asked him thus:

"Read thou, in the name of thy Lord Who had created;

He has created man from a clot of blood.

Recite; for thy Lord is the most honourable,

He taught man what he did not know.

After three years, he was instructed to preach the mission publicly and convert the people to his creed. From that moment to his last breath, he harnessed his entire energies to the noble mission of spreading the Word of God and thus kindling the lamp of light for the mankind which was helplessly groping in darkness.

Slowly but steadily his message began to spread. As it gained strength, the defenders of the old order grew restless. They were eager to crush this new movement and employed all the instruments of oppression and persecution, but he and his followers stood fast and firm like a rock. They braced all the tempests of adversity and did not budge an inch from the path of righteousness. Indeed, they set up new examples of firmness in the path of truth and proved the sincerity of their faith and the veracity of their conviction. Even non-Muslim historians have admitted this. Dr. Marcus Wodds writes in his book '*Muhammad, Buddha and Christ*' testifies:

"For the truth's sake he risked his life, he suffered daily persecution for years and eventually banishment, the loss of the property, the good-will of his fellow citizens and the confidence of his friends; he suffered as much as any man can suffer short of death, which he only escaped by (hijrat) the flight and yet he unflinchingly proclaimed his message. No bribe, no threat, no inducement could silence



(him)".

When the persecution reached its limits, Allah asked him to migrate from Makkah to Madinah. This migration marks a new chapter in the life of the prophet and the history of Islam, for in its wake was established an Islamic State in Madinah and the prospects of Islamic glory were unfolded. This came about in 622 A.C. and it is from this date that the Muslims start their calendar.

The ensuing years were full of activity. The Quraish again and again invaded the city-state of Madinah, but were always defeated. The Holy Prophet established a new society on the basis of the teachings of Islam and ushered in a new era in the life of world civilization. He reformed the social order, banished all the evil practices of the past, tempered the principles of politics with moral values and ethical tenets and established a new order, which transformed Arabia beyond any semblance of the past and influenced the entire course of human history and all the strands of human thought, be they philosophic or religious, political or economical, social or cultural.

Bertrand Russell, the famous British Philosopher writes: The supremacy of the East was not only in the field of military. Science, philosophy, poetry and the arts, all flourished in the Muhammeden World at a time when Europe was sunk in barbarism. Europeans with unpardonable insularity, call this period "The Dark Ages", but it was only in Europe that it was dark—indeed only in Christian Europe, for Spain which was Muhammeden had a brilliant culture". (*Pakistan Quarterly*, Vol. iv No.3)

H. Hirschfeld says that: "Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization than were the Arabs through Islam".

Dr. Marcus Wodds says, "No one would deny that to Muhammad's contemporaries his religion was an

immense advance on anything they had previously believed in. It welded together the disunited tribes and lifted the nation in the forefront of the important powers in the world".

Professor Stephens writes: "By a single stroke of masterly genius" he (Muhammad) simultaneously reformed the political condition, the religious creed and the moral practice of his countrymen".

Thomas Carlyle says: "These Arabs, the man Muhammad, and that one century—is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark on a world of what seemed black unnoticeable sand, but the sand proves explosive powder, blazes heaven high from Delhi to Grenada. I said, the Great Man was always as lightening out of Heaven; the rest of men waited for him like fuel and they too would flame".

Rober Briffault, in his monumental work ' The Making of Humanity' writes, "It is highly probable that but for the Arabs modern European civilization would never have assumed that character which has enabled it to transcend all previous phases of evolution. For although there is not a single aspect of human growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic culture is not traceable, nowhere is it so clear and momentous as in the genesis of that power which constitutes the paramount distinctive force of the modern world and the supreme force of its victory—natural science and the scientific spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs".

Now the question arises: what were those teachings which brought about these revolutionary and epoch-making changes in human history?

### III

## The Message of the Holy Prophet

The message of Muhammad ﷺ was not something new. He presented Islam, the religion of humanity, the religion of all the Apostles of God. The vagaries of time and the exigencies of the course of history had cast layers of dust upon the paragon of true religion. Muhammad removed the dust and washed the diamond clean. Man had twisted and distorted the true teachings of the Prophets - He (Muhammad) restated the creed of One God in its comprehensive entirety, with nothing superfluous, nothing lacking. The Quran enjoins Muhammad to say:

"The message I bring to you is nothing new. It is the true religion of Abraham, of Moses, Issac, Jacob and Jesus; in fact all the prophets of God".

But as man had lost the thread of true Divine Guidance, he was led astray and the estrangement had run so deep that the teachings of Muhammad seemed new. New they were not; revolutionary they were.

The prophet called the people to the concept of *Tawheed* (Belief in one God). This one word sums up the

teachings of Islam. It is the essence of Muhammad's creed. *Tawheed* means that there is one supreme Lord of the universe. He is omnipotent, the sustainer of the world, the Lord of the universe, the sovereign, the All Powerful.

How can one who observes the inexhaustible creativity of nature, its purposefulness, its conscious relativeness, its preservation of what is morally useful and destruction of what is socially injurious, fail to draw the conclusion that behind nature is an All-pervading Mind whose incessant creative activity the processes of nature are but outward manifestations? The stars scattered through almost infinite space, the vast panorama of nature with charm and beauty stealing into hearts, the planned waxing and waning of the sun, the astonishing harmony of the seasons and the days and nights, the incessant supply of water, the delicate flowers and crystals beneath our feet—all point towards one fact: There is a God, the Creator, the Governor. We witness a superb, flawless plan in the universe, can it be without a planner? We see great enchanting beauty and harmony in its working, can they be without a creator? We observe wonderful design in nature; can it be without a designer? We feel lofty purpose in physical and human existence; can it be without a will working behind it? We find that the universe is like a superbly written fascinating novel; can it be without an Author? Truly not.

"O, Mankind! worship your Lord, Who hath created you and those before you, so that ye may ward off (evil). Who hath appointed the earth a resting place for you, the sky a canopy; and causeth water to pour down from the heavens, thereby producing fruits as food for you. And do not set up rivals to Allah, when We know (better). (Al-Quran. Surah ii : 21-22)

This is the basic tenet to which Muhammad asks the humanity to adhere.

It is an important metaphysical concept and answers the riddles of the universe. It points to the supremacy of the law in the cosmos, the all pervading unity behind the manifest diversity. It presents a unified view of the world and offers the vision of an integrated universe. It is a mighty improvement upon the piece-meal views of the scientists and philosophers and unveils the truth before the human eye. After centuries of groping in the dark man is now coming to realise the truth of this concept and modern scientific thought is moving in this direction.

But it is not a mere metaphysical concept or a mere jumble of barren words. It is a dynamic belief, a revolutionary doctrine, a historic force and a communion with destiny.

It means that all men are the creatures of one God—they are all equal. Distinctions of colour, class, race and territory are sheer illusions. They are the remnants of the days of ignorance which had chained men down to servitude. Humanity is one single family of God and there can be no sanction for these barriers. Men are one—and not Bourgeois or Proletariat, White or Black, Aryan or non-Aryan, Western or Eastern. Islam gives the revolutionary concept of the unity of mankind. The Prophet came to unite the humanity on the word of God. Allah says:

“Hold right to the rope of God, all together and never again falls out. Remember God's gifts and blessings unto you all. When you were enemies; remember how He forged your hearts together in love, and, by His grace, you became brethren at last”. (Al- Quran Surah 3:102)

This concept also enunciates the true position of man in the universe. It says that God is the Creator, the Sovereign and man is His vicegerent on earth. This exalts man to the noble and dignified position of being God's deputy on earth and endows his life with a lofty purpose, to fulfill the will of God on earth. This will solve all the

perplexing problems of human society and establish a new order, wherein equity, Justice, peace and prosperity will reign supreme.

It also means that man is not living an unbridled life. He will have to render accounts before his Lord for all that he does. This makes the human life a responsible venture and also provides the real sanction for morality.

Muhammad ﷺ called the humanity towards this principle of *Tawheed*. It brought out a revolution in human thought and action and man soared to the highest pinnacles of glory. And even today it can transform the human society and enrich it with all the blessings of the heavens and the earth, only if it is honestly adhered to and lived. The world has also suffered at the hands of the brilliant one-sidedness of innumerable reformers. Some have laid emphasis at the spiritual side of life but have ignored the material and the mundane side. They have looked upon this world as an illusion, a deception, a trap and a trash. On the other hand the materialists have totally ignored the spiritual and moral side of life and have dubbed it as a fiction and a figment of imagination. Both these attitudes have spelled disaster. They have robbed mankind of peace, contentment and tranquillity. This lack of balance and pose is manifest even today. It is being widely recognised that if humanity does not pause to set its house in order and re- establish the equilibrium; the march of man may turn out to be a tragic march towards death. French scientist Dr. De Brogbi rightly says:

"The danger inherent in too intense a material civilization, to sum up, is to that civilization itself; it is the disequilibrium which would result if a parallel development of the spiritual life were to fail to provide the needed balance".

Lord Snell is more outspoken when he says, "We have built up a nobly proportioned outer structure, but we

have neglected the essential requirements of an inner order; we have carefully designed, decorated and made clean the outside of the cup, but the inside was full of extortion and excess' we used our increased knowledge and power to administer to the comforts of the body, but we left the spirit impoverished".-(*The New World*).

The message of the Holy Prophet aims at establishing an equilibrium and a balance between these two aspects of human life. He said that everything in the world is for you – but your mission in life is to fulfil the Will of God. His teachings catered to the spiritual as well as the temporal needs of men. He taught man how to purify his soul and be in communion with the Reality and also to reform the mundane life-individual and collective both and establish right over might and virtue over vice. He said that spiritual purity can be achieved only through submission to the Divine Will and in fashioning your life in such a way that it comes in accord with the Commandments of God. He ordered his followers to pray to God with complete submission, to observe fasts and give alms with sincerest devotion, to meditate and love God with every fibre of their being. But he also said that all this would be of no avail if one is not kind to his children and fellow-beings, dutiful and honest in his work, gentle in his behaviour, clean in his dealings, respectful to his elders, helpful to his neighbours and straight-forward in his personal, social, political and other spheres of life.

This is the message of Muhammad and what a unique and life giving message it is? A message which the entire humanity needs today.

## IV

### **Distinctive Characteristics of Muhammad's Life and Teachings**

1. History is replete with the extraordinary achievements of the great men. But it is most conspicuous that although man had believed in God from time immemorial, he was unaware of the moral and practical consequences of this faith in one God. Although he had divined and discovered some noble principles of ethics, he did not know how to translate them into practice and form a socio-cultural order which may embody them. Faith in God, principles of morality and altruism and the every day practices of life were there water-tight compartments and it was Islam which showed their mutual relationship, wedded them into one organic whole and established a living and prosperous civilization on their foundation. He said that faith is not a mere profession of belief; it is the very mainspring of life. Practice must become in tune with the belief. Faith in God, by its very nature, calls for certain kind of morals which are not the objects of mere lip-service, but must be lived and adopted. There should be no chasm between belief and action-both must go hand in hand. The Holy Prophet explained in detail what moral qualities must spring spontaneously from faith in God, and his own life presented the best example of it. Through his personal example, he vindicated the truth, wisdom and practicability



of all that he preached to the people.

Thus Muhammad ﷺ was not only a great thinker, he was a practical man and a true leader of mankind.

2. When one studies the life of Muhammad ﷺ, he is convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that he was above all racial or nationalistic prejudices. He was a true and sincere lover and benefactor of humanity. The Holy Quran calls him as a messenger for the entire mankind. It says, "O people, I am the messenger of God to you all". (7: 158) "A warner to all the nations" (25: 1); "We have not sent thee but as a mercy for all the nations' ". (21: 102); "It is not but a reminder to all the nations". .

To him all men were equal, whatever be their colour, language or nationality. He addressed himself to the conscience of humanity and banished all the barriers of race, status or wealth. There can be no denying the fact that such barriers existed always and exist even today in this so-called enlightened age and these have always checked the progress of mankind in one way or the other. Muhammad removed these impediments and cleared the way for human progress along the revolutionary principles of equality, fraternity and brother-hood. The world may not acknowledge it due to prejudices of various kinds, but everyone knows it. He introduced man to the concept of world brotherhood and mankind as the family of God. That is why his message was universally accepted by the peoples inhabiting the four corners of this globe. Peoples of different lands, nationalities and races acknowledge him as their saviour. Really he was a "blessing unto mankind".

His message is the message of God and hence universal. It admits of no unnatural divisions and barriers. It aims at the betterment of the entire humanity and ensures its unhampered progress. It is not wedded to the peculiar exigencies of a particular period. It is true for all times and climes.

3. Muhammad's method of reform has been unique. He started with the individual and first purified his soul. He purified his thoughts and the purification of acts followed automatically. He filled their hearts with very noble and sublime thoughts and when they translated their thoughts into actions, this world became worth-living. Then he prepared a group of devoted Muslims who were the living emblems of Islamic tenets. He organised them into a brother-hood and made them a dynamic force for the purposes of carrying on social reforms. Unity gave them power and when the circumstances grew favourable, he established a social order, an ideological state with an economic system of its own. He reared an entire civilization and tempered power with virtue. During his time it was not the case of administering law only, he administered justice. The social order gave cardinal importance to that the individual, it did not shun collective life and devoted his energies towards the establishment of a just, equitable and progressive culture. In short, he produced a New Man and a New Society. And in that New Society, the criterion for greatness was neither wealth, nor ancestry or power, but Piety and piety alone. The Holy Quran says, 'O' ye people, surely We have created you of a male and a female; and made you tribes and families so that you may identify each other; surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the one among you who is most pious, most mindful of his duty. Allah is knowing, fully aware".

4. Muhammad's life offers a perfect model of the noblest life. He was a paragon of virtue. He did all what he preached. He was a practical and true embodiment of the Quran. That is why Quran offers the unblemished life of the Holy Prophet in support of the veracity of message.

Then he had to pass through every kind of trial and tribulations, terror and persecution, allurements and temptations: but he always remained steadfast, firm and unmoved. His character remained spotless. The odds were many and mighty. He faced them with the strength of his

conviction and ultimately conquered them. Even as a victor and as a ruler, he set the best example. When he had conquered Makkah, he proclaimed general amnesty for his erstwhile persecutors. He declared:

“No blame or retribution on you this day”.

His life is a model of perfection and there is nothing mysterious or supernatural about it. He was human being. What he achieved was through the integrity of character, piety and virtue.

5. Detailed accounts of his life and his teachings are available in their original form. There has been not an iota of change in this unique historic record. Quran is the revealed book of God which has been in existence for the last fourteen hundred years as the beacon of light. The sayings (Ahadith) and the entire record of the life of the Holy Prophet have been preserved and handed down to us with unprecedented precision and authenticity. Even non-Muslim critics admit this eloquent fact. Professor Reynold A. Nicholson in his "Literary History of the Arabs" says:

"We shall see, moreover, that the Quran is an exceedingly human document, reflecting every phase of Muhammad's personality and standing in close relationship to the outward events of his life; so that here we have materials of unique and incontestable authority for tracing the origion and early development of Islam as do not exist in the case of Buddhism or Christianity or any other ancient religions".

This is an incontestable and unique feature of Muhammad's prophethood.

## V

**The Last Word**

The world today has become an arena of competing barbarisms. The finer values of life have lost all their glory. Human feelings are conspicuous by their absence. Utilitarian tendencies hold the sway. Worship of the demons of wealth, worldly power and pleasures is the order of the day. Peace and contentment have lost their meanings and have become a forlorn hope. The ominous shadows of war are hovering over our heads. Economic exploitation, moral laxity, colour discrimination, class conflict and national and various kinds of rivalries have torn life asunder. The greatest achievements of our age are gloom and frustration.

Man's control over nature has enabled him to forge new and novel instruments of destruction – destruction of largest possible number in smallest possible time. Technological advancement has annihilated time and space. Now we are faced with the prospects of our own annihilation, through the deadliest weapons we have made.

The greatest need of our times is moral and spiritual renaissance. This renaissance can be brought about and man can be saved from the impending disaster

only if the teachings of Muhammad are sincerely adopted. It is up to us what we choose – life or death?

Muslims who believe in the Holy Prophet and have faith in the truth and efficacy of his teachings have to shoulder a mighty responsibility. They must become, by word and action, true missionaries of this gospel of *Tawheed*, peace and brotherhood without any mental reservations whatsoever. This is the crying need of the hour.

## Who is MUHAMMAD?

*Khurram Murad*

According to every standard by which human greatness can be measured Prophet Muhammad was matchless; no person was ever greater! In this booklet, the author brings you in contact with this great personality.

## Self-development

*Khurram Murad*

Self Development is a science today. Seminars and workshops are held for this pupose. The author describes all the practical

*Principles of*

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*Yusuf al-Qaradawi*

Eleven principles determine what is Halal and what is Haram? You have to act accordingly. It all looks very simple, very

## Instruments of Character Building

*Khurshid Ahmad*

Dhikr, 'Ibādah, Tawbah and Istighfār, Sabr, Ihtisāb, Du 'ā' all play a role in Character Building. The author describes relevance and importance of each.

## INTRODUCING the QUR'ĀN

*Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi*

What kind of book is the Qur'ān? In what manner was it revealed? What underlies its arrangement? What is its subject? What is its true purpose? What is the central theme to which its multifarious topics are intrinsically related? What kind of reasoning and style does it adopt in elucidating its central theme? You will find clear, lucid answers to these questions by

## IMAGES

*from the Prophet's Life Album*

*Khurram Murad*

Khuram Murad adopts a unique style of character sketching. He presents the fascinating images formed through a lifetime study of the Seerah. The author in his unique style calls us to submit our lives to the Will of Allah and stand witness to the Truth.

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