

WHO WROTE THE QURAN?

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Introduction:

The book before the reader deals with three related subjects.

1. Who Wrote The Quran?
2. Islam And The Western Thought.
3. Who Was Prophet Muhammad?

The three chapters promise to be interesting, informative and even spellbinding! Muslims as well as the first time readers about the Quran, Islam and Muhammad should find the book historically, scientifically and factually reliable and revealing. It allows the reader to analyze its own authenticity, and the author believes this to be the most significant factor in this work. The reader should find the time reading this book well-spent.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO AL THOSE WHO SEEK WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE WHEREVER IT IS.

WHO WROTE THE QURAN?

Quran is a relatively small book, even smaller than the New Testament. It has only about 7,200 verses and 80,000 words.

Who wrote the Quran? The non-Muslims' answer to this important question is all too familiar:

1. "The Quran was authored by a human being. It is not a revelation from God."
2. "It is a book created by human intelligence, like any other book."

3. "As a matter of historical fact, it was written by Muhammad of Mecca, fourteen centuries ago."

If your view is similar to this, rest assured that you have plenty of 'good' company. However, you should also know that this point of view brings with it some serious difficulties. To hold such views, you must believe that Muhammad knew the most amazing scientific facts about the universe – facts about which humanity was in total darkness until recently.

[Note: According to the common methodology, the Surahs (Chapters of the Quran) and their verse numbers are given like this: Surah 4, verse 82 will be written as 4:82. CE will mean the Common Era (through the solar calendar). Muhammad (S) will mean, the exalted Muhammad.]

Who revealed the Quran if not God?

The skeptics come up with much conjecture and accusation. For example:

1. "Muhammad was a lunatic." But how could a lunatic possess the profound knowledge, a glimpse of which you are about to see?

2. "Sorry, he was a liar." Show me in the Quran some of the lies he told.

3. "No, he was a deluded man who sincerely believed in his delusions." Then he was not a liar. Show me one delusion in the Quran.

4. "Oh, someone tutored Muhammad." Did this tutor have access to the 20th century technology? Did he possess spacecrafts, diver's gear, electron microscope, the most advanced telescope, and modern archaeology equipment? Did he master history, geography, sociology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, psychology, anthropology, zoology, botany, embryology, all modern science, the Bible and other Scriptures, all, all that in the 7th century?!

5. "Let me take that back. It was written by the devil." Well, is the devil mightier than God? Why don't we find any contradictions in the Quran, then? Can the devil even think of such a benevolent Message as the following?

2:190 God does not love aggressors.

5:2 Let not the hatred of a people lead you to transgression ... Help one another in acts of collective benefit and righteousness, and do not help one another in deeds that hurt humanity and in creating a wedge between people ...

5:8 ... Be upholders of justice for the sake of God as witnesses to the truth. Let not the hatred of any people move you away from justice. Deal justly. That is closer to being upright ...

13:17 The real existence on earth is of the person or the system that

benefits humanity. (Paraphrased)

41:34 Since good and evil cannot be alike, repel evil with what is decent.

59:9 ... They (the true believers) give the needy preference over themselves, even though poverty be their own lot. And whoever is saved from greediness of the heart, such are the ones who truly prosper.

76:9 (They do all this selflessly) saying, "We provide for you for the sake of God alone. We want no return from you, not even a word of thanks."

These are just a few examples out of hundreds that we find in the Quran. Could these be the devil's teachings?

Could the devil tell us to begin his book in the following manner?

A'UZUBILLAHI-MIN-ASH-SHAYITAN-IR-RAJEEM

(I seek refuge with God against devil, the rejected. Please note that the devil or Satan is no extrinsic entity. It is the human ego or selfish desire that rebels against Divine commands).

6. "Oh, sorry again! 'Koran' is nothing but deception and it is loaded with mistakes." Would you oblige me by pointing out one place where it deceives? Or, tell me a single mistake that you are aware of?

7. "Well, it denies the Sonship of Jesus Christ." Is that a mistake or a powerfully documented and logical disagreement with the Pauline Doctrine?

Conclusion: Many of our Muslim and non-Muslim friends are well aware of the position the Catholic Church has taken in the late 20th century: "All Christian theories promulgated about the origination of the Quran during the last 14 centuries have proven to be false."

If the Quran was "authored" by Muhammad (S), you must also believe the following:

1. He knew that the earth and the heavenly bodies were once a single cohesive mass that was exploded asunder.

21:30 Are the disbelievers not aware that the heavens and earth used to be one solid mass and We exploded them asunder? ...

Here is a clear allusion to the Big Bang theory. Numerous celestial bodies came into being and started swimming along in their orbits. Almost all modern astrophysicists believe that this Universe has originated as one entity from one single element, Hydrogen, that became consolidated with gravity and then broke apart into celestial bodies. 21:33, 24:45, 36:40, 79:30.

If you do not believe that he had access to special knowledge that made possible this prefiguring of the modern Big Bang theory - a theory entirely unknown to the seventh century world - you must conclude that 21:30 of the Quran is merely an intriguing coincidence, a matter of getting something right by chance.

Perhaps this passage is simply an intriguing coincidence. If it is, however, it is not the only one.

2. He must have known what modern science knows about the life on earth: That life originated from water and that all living beings have water in their composition.

24:45 And God has created every living creature from water. Some of them crawl on their bellies, some walk on two legs, and some walk on four ...

21:30 ... And that out of water We made every living thing? Will they not, then, acknowledge the truth?

The biological and evolutionary science strongly attests to this fact. We know that 80-85% of the protoplasm is water. The science of evolution also proves that life on the planet initially began from water.

3. He knew that things are created in pairs?

By the way, this discovery earned the British physicist, Paul Dirac, the Nobel Prize in 1933.

36:36 Glory to Him Who has created pairs of everything that the earth grows, and of themselves, and of things they have no knowledge yet.

43:12 And He it is Who has created all things in pairs

Let us think of animal and plant life, male and female flowers, acid and alkali, positive and negative magnetic poles, the electrical currents, action and reaction, matter and antimatter, explosion and implosion and so on. The apparent few exceptions to the rule will qualify for 'and of things they have no knowledge yet'.

4. Muhammad (S), the supposed "author" of the Quran, must have known about the relativity of time.

22:47 And so (O Prophet) they challenge you to hasten the doom, but God never fails to fulfill His promise. A day of your Lord is like a thousand of your years.

23:112 He (God) will ask, “What number of years have you spent on earth?”

23:113 They will say, “We stayed a day or part of a day. But ask those who keep count.”

23:114 He will say, “You stayed only a little, if you had only realized then!”

70:4 The Universal forces and the Divine Energy ascend unto Him in a Day the measure of which is fifty thousand years.

All things in the Universe evolve in stages to fulfill the Divine Plan. Some of these stages take one thousand years each, and others fifty thousand years by the human calendar. Either the exalted Prophet had some extraordinary source of knowledge that allowed him to discuss the relativity of time thirteen and a half centuries before Einstein, or we are looking at another intriguing coincidence!

Which is it?

And yet:

5. The same “author” must have known that the Universe is constantly expanding.

51:47 And it is We Who built the Universe with power, and certainly, it is We Who are steadily expanding it.

The Belgian cosmologist Georges Lemaitre and the Russian scientist A. Friemann first proposed the continued expansion of the Universe. Soon after, in 1929, the American astronomer Edwin Hubble was the first to observe and document the phenomenon. Today, all experts on astronomy accept this astounding scientific discovery. The Quran had given us this knowledge 14 centuries ago!

6. The Prophet must have known that the celestial bodies ‘swim along’ in their orbits through their own power.

‘Sabah’ means swimming along.

21:33 And He is the One Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. They swim along, each in an orbit.

31:29 ...He has subjected the sun and the moon to His laws, each running along its course for an appointed term...

36:40 It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outrun the day. All of them swim along in their orbits.

It is amazing to note a 1400-year-old book describing the sun and the moon, not only moving, but rather swimming along in their assigned orbits

(21:33, 36:40). Who but the Creator could have had that knowledge at the time when science had no concept of orbits in the space? The Greeks thought of the sky as a revolving dome on which the sun, the moon and stars were studded fixed!

7. He must have known that there is cosmic material between galaxies.

5:17 God's is the Dominion of the heavens and earth and all that is between them.

19:65 Lord of the heavens and the earth and of all that is between them! Therefore, serve Him and be constant in His service. Do you know any whose name is worthy of mentioning side by side with His? ['all that is between them' = 'The stardust' = Intergalactic material]

Numerous other verses in the Quran refer to "The earth and the skies and that which is between them" (for instance 20:6, 25:59, 32:4). The great U.S. telescope Mount Wilson only in the 20th century has started describing the Interstellar Galactic Material. Who could have even thought of its existence even until 200 years ago!

8. He knew that iron is not native to earth. It has, instead, extraterrestrial sources.

57:25 ...And We have bestowed on from high the iron in which there is awesome power and many benefits for people...

[As proven by modern science, the iron is not native to earth. It has come down from higher celestial bodies, the Nova stars. In 1920, Charles Edouard Guillaume was awarded the Nobel Prize in physics in recognition of the service he had rendered to this research.]

9. He must have known about Time Zones.

7:97 Can the people of any community ever feel secure that Our requital will not come upon them at night, while they are asleep?

7:98 Or do the people of townships feel secure from the coming of Our requital upon them in the daytime while they play?

[The Hour will come upon the Universe suddenly. Some areas on earth will have day, and others night.]

6:31 Losers are those who deny meeting with God, until the Hour suddenly comes upon them.

7:187 They ask you (O Messenger), about the Hour, when the end of the world will come to pass. Say, "That knowledge is only with my Lord. He alone will manifest it at the appropriate time. Heavy it is in

the heavens and earth. It will come upon you suddenly."

10. He knew about winds pollinating the plants?

15:22 We send the winds as pollinators that fertilize plants, and cause water to come down from the height for you to drink. Who holds the stores of the Universe? You do not.

It took eleven centuries after the exalted Prophet for science to learn that winds play a major role in fertilizing the plants!

11. If Muhammad (S) is the author of the Quran, he must have known that the earth is ovoid in shape.

This was impossible to know in the 7th century.

39:5 He is the One Who has created the heavens and earth with a definite purpose. He rolls the night over the day, and rolls the day over the night. And He has subjected the sun and the moon, each running along its course for a term appointed. Is He not the Almighty, the Absolver of Imperfections?

***Yukawwir* = 'He rolls' comes from the word *Kurah* = Ball.**

Astronauts have observed the phenomenon happening exactly as stated in the Quran and photographed the night and day "wrapping around" each other!

79:30 And after that, He made the earth shoot out from the Cosmic Nebula and spread it out oval (flattened at its poles). [*Dhahaha* entails all the meanings rendered. 21:30, 41:11]

All these might be coincidences. But the skeptic's problems are not over yet. There are far too many coincidences in the Book that is supposed to have been written by a man who passed on in the seventh century, year 632.

Galileo was tried in court and imprisoned in his home only because he accepted and supported Copernicus's theory that the planets move around the sun. This is because the Bible declares the earth to be a static body around which the sun, the moon and the stars are revolving. The Quran on the other hand, perfectly agrees with the Earth being an ovoid body that revolves around the sun.

12. He was aware of the gravitational force between heavenly bodies.

13:2 God is the One Who raised the skies without pillars visible to you. Then, upon the Throne of His Almighty, He assumed Supreme Control

of the entire Universe...

13. He must have known that even the sun is not stationary. It is fast moving to an appointed destination.

36:38 And the sun: it is running to its appointed destination. That is the measure of the Almighty, the Knower.

Until recently, the sun was thought to be static. But, the celebrated Russian philosopher, astronomer and mystic, P.D. Ouspensky (author of Tertium Organum, 1878-1947), had maintained that any science that contradicted the Quran would turn out to be false. Then, during Ouspensky's lifetime, it was discovered that the sun, along with its Solar System, is moving towards a specified destination at 12 miles per second, 43,200 miles per hour! This destination has been assigned names such as the Solar Apex and the Constellation of Hercules. Guess what Ouspensky did! He embraced Islam.

14. He knew that the earth's atmosphere is a protective shield around the planet.

21:32 And We have rendered the high atmosphere a canopy well guarded. Yet, they turn away from the signs that these things point to.

[Canopy: The atmosphere keeps in safe balance the gases and temperature, and protects us from the incoming noxious rays and meteorites.]

15. The Prophet must have known that human development in the womb takes place in well-defined stages.

Modern experts in human embryology confirm this observation. To cite one example, Dr. Keith Moore of Toronto, the foremost embryologist in the world, has made changes in his textbooks ('Before We Are Born', 'Clinical Embryology') to mention the Quran's 'Alaqa' (leech-like lump of flesh), seeing a picture of leech and comparing it with the early appearance of the embryo.

23:13 Then We placed him as the male and female gametes in a safe lodging.

23:14 Then We fashioned the gametes into zygote, then a leech-like mass of flesh, then the hanging little lump, the embryo. Then We created bones within the embryonic lump, and then clothed the bones with flesh. (Thus, We designed it into a fetus). And then We made it into a new creation (the

human infant). So Blessed is God, The Best of creators.

71:14 He is the One Who has created you in successive stages.

22:5 O Mankind! If you are in doubt that one day you will be resurrected back to life after death, consider the process of your own evolution. We have created you in stages: From dust, then from male and female gametes, then from a zygote, then from an embryo, shapely and first shapeless. We thus clearly explain things for you. The embryo and then the fetus stay in the womb until an appointed term according to Our laws. Then We bring you forth as infants and carry you to maturity. While some of you die young, others live to the feeblest old age so that they know nothing after knowing much. You see a dry barren land, but when We send down water on it, it vibrates with life and grows all kinds of beautiful plants.

[Recapturing the earlier stages of evolution, We initiated life from inorganic matter, the clay, then hydrated clay. Through it We brought forth the single life cell, the unicellular organism. Then We created the male and the female cells. Thus procreation came into play. Male and female gametes join, a clot, a little lump of flesh, turning into the embryo that 'hangs' in the womb. The embryo is partly formed and partly unformed, until it becomes the fetus and then assumes the final evident proportions. For the origin of life on the planet and creation of the human being, herein are given some important references for the research minded reader: 4:1, 6:2, 6:38, 6:99, 7:11, 11:6, 11:61, 15:26, 21:30, 23:12-14, 24:45, 25:54, 30:20, 31:28, 32:7-9, 35:11, 36:77, 39:6, 40:64-67, 51:49, 53:45, 55:14, 71:14, 76:2-3, 86:5-7, 96:1-2]

Is all this knowledge a matter of chance? OK, let us proceed.

16. Did he know that the roots of mountains extend deep into the earth and prevent shocks on the surface?

16:15 And He has placed mountains firm like stabilizing pegs in the earth, lest it sway with you; and made streams and paths, so that you may find your way.

[21:31, 31:10. Mountains are the most vivid evidence of the geological history of the earth. With the earth's interior still being almost a molten fluid, the earth crust cooled off becoming hard, and mountains came into being like pegs as the crust shrank. Mountains clench different plates of the earth together like a peg. In this way, they create more stability in the earth's crust and take away much energy from earthquakes. 78:6-7]

17. Oh, he also knew the details of the water cycle that remained a mystery to scientists until the twentieth century.

Formation of clouds:

24:43 Have you not seen how God drives the clouds, then gathers them, then makes them layers, and then you see the rain coming forth from them? He sends down, from the heights, hail and loads of snow to cover some ground and leave some uncovered, according to His laws. The flashes of lightning and the brightness of the snow dazzle the sight, all but snatching it away.

[The exact order of cloud formation has been described in this verse. Also, the fact that clouds are layered has been discovered only in the last century through aviation technology and satellites.]

30:48 It is God Who sends forth the winds so that they raise a cloud, and then He spreads it along the high atmosphere according to His laws. And causes it to break up, and you see rain pour down from within it. And when He makes it fall on His servants by His laws, they rejoice.

23:18 We send down from the sky water in due measure, and We cause it to soak in the soil. And certainly, We are Able to drain it off.

43:11 And He is the One Who sends down water from the sky in due measure. And We revive with it many a dead land, thus will you be brought forth.

The Water Cycle is very precise and balanced. The knowledge that rain does not fall in a random pattern, but in due measure through the Water Cycle, is something only recent science has understood. No one knew of a possible Water Cycle in the exalted Prophet's times and centuries after. The great Greek philosophers had postulated the presence of underground conduits (Abyss tartarus) that drained the subsoil water to the oceans, and their views had never been challenged until the advent of the Quran. Other stalwarts maintained that the amount of water on earth increased with every rainfall!

18. He must have known about The Seven Heights.

This may apply to the cosmic orbits as well as to the earth's atmosphere.

2:29 He is the One Who has created for you whatever is on earth – all of it. And He has applied His Design to the sky and fashioned it in several ascending heights. He is the Supreme Knower of what all things are destined to be.

[The subject of seven ascending heights is still under scientific investigation, but many astrophysicists already believe in it. 11:7, 53:31, 57:1-2. *Saba'* indicates seven or several. Thinking of the earth's atmosphere, it contains seven layers: The Troposphere, Stratosphere,

Ozone Layer, Mesosphere, Thermosphere, Ionosphere and the Exosphere. This has only been discovered in the last century. The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the importance of scientific observation and intellectual inquiry. 3:191, 7:185, 17:36, 88:17-21]

23:17 We have created above you seven celestial orbits, and We are never unaware of the creation.

19. He had intricate knowledge of the brain and its functions.

96:15 Let him beware! If he does not desist, We will seize him by the forelock (to a state of humiliation).

96:16 A forelock that is given to denial and committing fault upon fault.

Forelock, pointing to the frontal lobes of the brain, indicates all cognitive abilities. Who knew 1400 years ago that the cognitive function was located in the frontal lobes of the brain?

20. How about the finger tips?

75:4 We have the power to restore his very finger tips.

Science came to know about the uniqueness of the fingerprints only in the 19th century. Even twins have their own uniquely different fingerprints.

21. The supposed “author” of the Quran must have known what modern oceanographers have now learned: There are huge bodies of water that meet but do not mix with each other.

25:53 And He is the One Who has given freedom of movement to the two kinds of great bodies of water. One is palatable and fresh, the other salty and bitter. Yet, He has made a barrier between them, a barrier that is not to be crossed.

55:19 He has let free the two seas. They meet. [19:20, 25:53]

55:20 Yet, there is a barrier between them that they cannot exceed.

The great bodies of salt water and fresh water do not mix. Otherwise, we would not have the only 0.5 percent drinkable of all water present on earth. Without this barrier all water on earth would have been undrinkable. It is noteworthy that Surah 55 calls this barrier a blessing of the Beneficent.

22. He also knew that oceans have complex subsurface wave pattern.

24:40 Or like total darkness in the midst of a deep ocean, with waves upon waves and a thick cloud above - darkness upon darkness.

When he holds out his hand, he can barely see it

[Light consists of several wavelengths. In deep waters, each wavelength can only penetrate to a certain depth. In this way, light loses its intensity per layer, darkness over darkness. There is recent scientific observation of a phenomenon called 'internal waves' which is created in different densities in the deep water where the layers of water have their own wave structure, waves upon waves. Captain Dr. Bernard Jarman, a renowned oceanographer, upon reading this verse, asked, "Oh, was this man Muhammad a sailor who had been through storms?" On learning that he only lived in a desert, Dr. Jarman embraced Islam in 1923.]

23. Could anyone in the middle of a desert know the existence of atoms with certainty in the 7th century?

34:3 ---. Not an atom's weight in the heavens and the earth, escapes His Knowledge

Finished? Not yet.

24. Even things smaller than an atom!

Did anyone know that until the 20th century? Did the Prophet have an electron microscope? Did he know that every atom has electrons and protons? Now see what 10:61 has to say.

10:61 Not an atom's weight in the Low nor in the Height escapes your Lord's knowledge. Nor, a thing smaller or bigger, everything is recorded in a clear Database. [Smaller than atom: Who could think of electrons and protons in the 7th century?]

25. How could the Prophet have known that the sun is the source of light, while the moon only reflects that light?

25:61 Blessed is He Who set up in the sky great constellations, and put therein a radiant Lamp, and a Moon shining with light.

While the Bible conveniently refers to the sun and the moon as the greater light and the lesser light and moves on, the Quran strikingly terms the sun as Siraj. "Siraj" means a lamp that gives off its own light. But the moon is Munir that refers to a body that reflects light! [27:61, 71:15, 78:12]

26. Was he aware that in communities of honeybees, only the females are workers?

(The Arabic verbs here can connect only to females).

16:68 And consider how your Lord inspired the bee, “Build for yourself dwellings in hills and in trees, and in what people may build.”

16:69 “And then eat of all kind of fruit, and follow the ways that your Sustainer has made easy for you.” (We endowed the bee with navigational skills). And then comes forth from their bellies a delicious drink of many hues, in which there is health for people. In all this, behold, there is a message for people who are willing to listen. [Notice the female gender used throughout for bees. They are the worker bees. Interestingly, Shakespeare wrote, “Honeybees are soldiers and they have a king.” The German ethologist Karl von Frisch discovered much of what we know today about honeybees and was honored with a Nobel Prize in 1973. He humbly admitted, “I feel honored that the Muslim Scripture agrees with my research in all perfection.” The world will eventually realize that the Glorious Book is the property of all mankind, not only of Muslims.]

27. How did he know, seven years ahead of time, that the defeated Byzantine Army of his day would secure a major victory against the Persians?

30:2 The Romans have been defeated,

30:3 In the lands close-by. Yet, despite this defeat, they shall be victorious.

[Byzantine Romans were defeated at the hands of the Persians in the nearby lands of Syria-Palestine-Egypt in 613-615 CE. The war between the two super powers of the times carried on from 603 to 624 CE. Muhammad (S) had been commissioned as a Prophet in 610 CE.]

30:4 Within ten years! God’s is the command in the past and in the future. On that day the believers too will have cause to rejoice.

[The believers were victorious against the much stronger Makkans bent upon annihilating them at the most crucial battle of all history, the Battle of Badr near Madinah, in 624 CE. This was exactly the time in which the Byzantine Romans soundly defeated the Persians]

28. Prophet Muhammad (S) must have known something none on earth knew! - The body of the Pharaoh of Moses’ times had been preserved.

10:92 Nay, but this day We will only preserve your body so that you may remain a lesson for generations to come. A great many of mankind remain heedless of Our signs.

[The Pharaoh’s body was only discovered during the excavations of 1898. Today it is on display in the Royal Mummies Chamber of the Egyptian Museum]

Another coincidence? Happenstance? But the list is endless.

29. This man in the desert knew how to refer to the Egyptian head of the state of Prophet Joseph's era! - 'Malik' (Ruler or King), and not as 'Pharaoh'.

12:54 The King said, "Bring him to me so that I may appoint him a close adviser to me." And when he had spoken with him, the King decreed, "From today on, you have a high standing with us, invested with all trust."

[Note the Egyptian head of state of Prophet Joseph's era is referred to as 'Malik' (Ruler or King) and not as Pharaoh, the title that appears erroneously in the Book of Genesis. The term 'Pharaoh' came in use only for kings after 1500 BC which historians call the New Kingdom. Prophet Joseph lived around 1700 BC during the Old Kingdom, that of Amalekites. In the story of Moses, the term Pharaoh is used for the Egyptian ruler. Moses lived around 1400 BC during the New Kingdom, that of Pharaohs.]

30. How did he know about the lost, ancient city of Iram?

89:6 Have you noted how your Lord dealt with 'Aad?

89:7 Those whose capital was *Iram*, the city of towers and lofty mansions. 89:8 The like of which (the towers and castles) were never built in other cities. [26:128-134]

['Iram' were the generation of Iram, son of Sam, son of Noah. The capital of the nation of 'Aad bears the same name, Iram, and now lies buried in Al-Ahqaf, the Sand-dunes of Southern Arabia. 46:21. Its ancient existence was discovered through archaeology only in 1990.]

46:21 And remember the brother of 'Aad when he warned his people in their Land of Sand-dunes. Warners came and went before and after him, saying, "Serve none but God. I fear for you the retribution of a Tremendous Day."

31. He knew that the huge flood that had destroyed the ancient Kingdom of Sheba, came from their dam system.

This fact was similarly discovered by modern archeology.

34:15 The People of Sheba had a homeland that was a marvel, with gardens everywhere on the right and the left (Yemen-Somalia-Abyssinia). "Enjoy what your Sustainer has provided for you, and render thanks to Him for a goodly land and a Sustainer Absolver of imperfections."

34:16 But they turned away from Permanent Values and We sent on

them the Flood of the *Aarim* released from water dams. And We turned their Gardens into 'gardens', producing wild bitter fruit, and a thorny Lote-tree here and there.

[The ruins of the greatest of these dams, Ma'arib, are found in Yemen, indicating that it was at least two miles long and 120 ft. high.]

32. He must have known about Haman, a close adviser to the Pharaoh of Prophet Moses' era.

- The name Haman does not appear in the Torah's version of the story of Moses.

- The ability to translate the hieroglyphic language system of the Egyptians had been utterly lost for centuries at the time of the revelation of the Quran. And it would remain lost until the year 1799. After the discovery in that year of the Rosetta Stone, scholars were able to unlock the mystery of the hieroglyphs and confirm that there was indeed a Haman, unmentioned in the Hebrew scriptures. He was close to the Pharaoh in this period, and he planned and supervised the construction of towers and temples, just as the Quran says.

[If we believe that human authorship is the only possible explanation for the origin of the Quran, we must assume either that Muhammad (S) somehow had access to this information, or we must believe that this passage is yet another in a remarkably long series of intriguing coincidences.]

28:38 Pharaoh said, "O Chiefs! I have not known any god for you other than myself. Well, then, O Haman! Kindle me a fire for baking bricks and then build me a lofty tower so that I may have a look at the 'god' of Moses, although I think, he is of the liars."

Again, it is amazing to see that among the numerous scientific verses in the Quran, not one, not a single one turns out to be contrary to the established science! In Islam, science and religion have thrived like twin sisters. Therefore, during the Quranic glory of Islamic civilization, science made incredible progress from which the West was later enlightened.

33. Plant Life. The Bible indicates that the earth had green plant life before the sun was created. This is a gross scientific error. And the Quran is perfectly free of this and such other mistakes. Obviously, no vegetation could sprout without sunlight.

34. The Great Flood. According to the Bible, the Great Flood of Noah occurred in 2100 BC and destroyed all people and animals on earth. But it is a well-known historical and archaeological fact that during those times, active civilizations were flourishing in Egypt, Babylonia, China, South America and elsewhere. The Quran on the other hand describes the great Flood involving only the people of Noah. Recent research indicates that

the Flood occurred only in the lands of Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which the nation of Noah inhabited.

How could an unlettered man living in the remotest of the deserts, cut off from all civilization, contemplate the universal phenomena with such clarity and accuracy 14 centuries ago?

35. Cloud of Smoke. The Bible indicates that at the time of Genesis (creation of the universe) the spirit of God was moving over waters. The Quran on the other hand, refers to a huge cloud of smoke, meaning a huge cloud of gas consisting of very fine particles. Modern science is in total agreement with this statement regarding the origin of the universe. One cannot help but appreciate that the term "smoke" (Surah 44) is simple enough for the lay person and descriptive enough for the scientist! The Quran is a miracle of literature and linguistics as well, but that is not the scope of my book.

36. East and the West. In 70:40, the Quran talks of the East and the West (in plural). How many people in the 7th century knew that the points of sunrise and sunset keep changing in different seasons!

70:40 But nay! I call to Witness the Lord of all points in the East and all points in the West, We are Able,

37. Aerospace Experience. The Quran describes the feelings of a person who rejects Islam as if his chest were getting tight upon ascending toward great height. Scarcity of Oxygen and the resulting tightness in the chest with difficulty in breathing on great heights is only a phenomenon experienced by man in the aerospace age.

6:125 --- And whoever violates God's law of guidance, feels his chest tight and narrowed as if he were climbing to the sky. ---.

The secret of my heart do I reveal here
Not a book it is, it's something beyond
-Sir Iqbal

How many coincidences do we need to get the message?

The lesson is simple: No human mind could have produced this book in the seventh century.

Please know that there are many, many more such "coincidences" in the Quran.

I have listed here only those that do not require advanced knowledge in such topics as Arabic linguistics, mathematics, Middle Eastern history and geography, Islamic history, etc.

Even with the brief list I have provided, there comes, I think, a point at which one is obliged to evaluate the Quran's Message carefully, closely, and respectfully. These supposed coincidences are clear signs to all mankind that the Quran's Message is of a superhuman quality, and therefore, it must not be ignored.

Only a deep reflection on the Quran's verses can settle such a phenomenal question, "Who wrote the Quran?"

If you are a person who believes that there is no such thing as a Divinely inspired revelation, the question is: How many "coincidences" will it take for you to consider that a miraculous revelation to humanity is possible?

If you are a person who believes that there IS such a thing as a Divinely inspired revelation, the question is: How many "coincidences" are you willing to ignore before considering the possibility that a particular book does present such a Revelation?

The truly remarkable thing is that ALL of these features should present themselves in a text supposedly composed by human intelligence. Is not there the profound unlikelihood of these facts being mere intriguing coincidences?

Knowing what you now know about these supposed coincidences, do you honestly believe that the Quran is simply the product of human intelligence, a book like any other book? Or, does it seem more likely to you that it is a Book far beyond human authorship?

Some Additional Considerations:

1. The Book claims that if it were from other than God, you would find much contradiction and inconsistency in it. Yet, no one has been able to find a single sustainable inconsistency in the Quran in the last 14 centuries.

4:82 Will they not then, try to understand this Quran? If it were from other than God, they would have found in it much contradiction and inconsistencies.

2. The world knows that it were Muslims who, for the first time ever and beyond the universally accepted Greek theories and hypotheses, emphasized the importance of direct observation and experimentation.

They were the ones who brought mere philosophy into the realm of rationality. This is what we call science today.

Did the Quranic teachings such as the following not inspire them in that direction?

17:36 And you shall not follow blindly any information of which you have no direct knowledge. (Using your faculties of perception and conception) you must verify it for yourself. In the Court of your Lord, you will be held accountable for your hearing, sight, and the faculty of reasoning. [32:9, 45:23, 46:26]

3. Here are a couple of verses among many others inspiring us to understand and harness the forces of Nature.

3:190 Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men and women who will to understand.

3:191 (Men and women of understanding keep reflecting upon how God's laws operate in the Universe.) Standing, sitting, and reclining, they reflect upon the wonders of creation in the skies and earth, saying, "Our Lord! You have not created all this without purpose ...

When humans harness the forces of Nature and use them for the common good of all, they serve humanity, and thus, fulfill their human potential. The Quran emphasizes on us the importance of scientific observation and testing and thus the correct understanding of Reality. Consequently, the early Muslims started to investigate the Universe and made stunning discoveries during the times that the western historians call the 'Golden Age'. This Golden Age triggered the Enlightenment of Europe.

"Roger Bacon owed his illumination to the Muslim Moors of Spain. The great figures of European Renaissance could see further because they stood on the shoulders of the giants of the Muslim world. -- Those achievements represent what the Muslim world has been in the past. They also point to what it could become in the future." (US President Richard Nixon - *Nixon's Ten Commandments*)

"The Renaissance of Europe did not take place in the 15th century. Rather it began when Europe learned from the culture of the Arabs. The cradle of European awakening is not Italy. It is the Muslim Spain." (Robert Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*)

4. You did not know this.

The Quran emphatically claims to reveal the true knowledge unknown to people.

3:44 (O Messenger) We are revealing to you these events of the unseen history (so that you may dispel conjecture). You were not present with them when they threw their pens (casting lots) which of them should take charge of Mary (after Zakariya). And you were not present with them when they quarreled about it.

12:102 (O Prophet Muhammad) These are the chapters of the Unseen (history) that We reveal to you. You were not there when the brothers of Joseph decided together and were making their schemes.

5. Any questions or objections?

The word ‘Qaalo’ (they say) and ‘Qul’ (say), each appears in the Quran 336 times. But there are only 35 questions or objections the opponents of the Quran bring forth about the Book. See what the Quran says:

25:33 And no question or objection do they bring to you but We reveal to you the absolute truth and its best explanation.

5:48 (O Messenger) We have sent to you this Divine Writ, setting forth the truth. It confirms the remaining truth in the earlier scriptures since it is a watcher over them. So, judge between them by what God has revealed, and do not follow their desires diverging from the truth that has come to you. For each (community) among you, We have appointed certain rites and a traced-out way. If God had willed, He could have made you all one single community. But He decided to let you test yourselves by what (potentials) He has granted you. So, outdo one another in doing good to the society. To God you will all return, and He will then make you understand wherein you differed.

22:54 Those who have blessed themselves with knowledge, will recognize that this (Quran) is the truth from your Lord, and so they accept it. Then their hearts are made humble to it. God Himself is the Guide of those who choose to believe, to a straight way. [5:48, 15:19]

6. Ask those who know:

29:42 God knows whatever they call upon instead of Him. He is Almighty, Wise.

29:43 Such are the examples We cite for mankind, but only men and women with knowledge of sciences will make best use of their intellect.

16:43 (O Prophet) before you We sent none but men to whom We granted revelation. (Tell the deniers), “If you do not know this, ask the bearers of the reminder (People of the Book).”

7. Prove me wrong:

The Quran is the only Scripture in the world that offers a falsification test. Paraphrase it like this: "Prove me wrong if you can."

2:23 (For the real skeptic, here is a reason-friendly offer.) If you are still in doubt concerning what We have revealed to Our servant (Muhammad), call and set up (a committee, commission, organization, association of the highest order) all your helpers besides God, and then produce just one *Surah* like this, if you are truthful.

17:88 Say, "If all mankind, in towns and villages, get together to produce the like of this Quran, they will not be able to produce the like of it, no matter how much help they give one another." [2:23, 10:38, 11:13]

52:34 Let them produce a speech like this if they are truthful. [2:23, 10:38, 11:13, 17:88]

8. There was a simple way to disprove the Prophet.

Look at Surah 111.

111:1 Perished is the power of Abi Lahab, and perished is he!

111:2 His wealth and gains will avail him not.

Abi Lahab was one of the staunchest enemies of the exalted Prophet. Surah 111 predicts that he would perish because of his stubborn opposition and persecution of the Prophet. He could have easily announced his acceptance of the Message, and that would have falsified this Surah, and thus, the entire Quran. How did Muhammad (S) know that Abi Lahab would not be able to do this simple task? And Abi Lahab lived 10 years since this Surah was revealed! Imagine how many enemies would have coaxed and persuaded him to falsify the Prophet and the Quran. But he stuck to his denial until smallpox took his life, and his body lay unburied since even his family was afraid of contracting the disease from it.

There is much more information remaining, but I think, we can conclude the subject here for this edition.

Thanks for reading and reflecting!

Sincerely,

Shabbir Ahmed, M.D.

ISLAM AND THE WESTERN THOUGHT

Billions of people in the last millennium have loved, revered and honored Islam. Conversely, billions have hated, criticized and defamed it. As a matter of fact, the situation applies equally to any other major religion.

Although Islam in its original form is not a religion, the Muslim clergy have indeed reduced it to a set of dogmas, rituals, superstitions, myths, legends, and means of attaining 'salvation', the essential hallmarks of a "religion".

Through the centuries, we come across brilliant minds that have been able to see the diamond in the rough. They have scratched the surface and let the reality shine forth in all splendor. Then they have immediately realized that Islam is not a religion per se although it has been made to appear so. In fact, Islam being the most pragmatic System of Life is a massive challenge to religion.

The renowned intellectuals, writers, thinkers, theologians, poets, artists and intelligentsia become the voice of a society. Their very popularity hinges upon, and attests to, their ability to echo the silent voice of the masses. How many lines from Aristotle, Plato, William Shakespeare, Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln have blended with the intellectual and social fabric of civilizations!

The question may be raised that other greats have said things contrary to what the author has compiled in this booklet. Quite a valid objection, isn't it? Being consciously aware of this fact, and for the sake of intellectual honesty, I have selected quotes from the best of the best and overwhelmingly non-controversial figures.

It is quite natural for the casual observer to judge an ideology by the results it achieves. To paraphrase from the Bible, a tree is known by its fruit.

Mathew 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

To paraphrase from the Quran, a good land brings forth decent vegetation.

The Quran 7:58 A good soil brings forth decent produce by the leave of its Lord, while the bad one yields that which is of poor quality ---.

This point has been extensively elaborated in my new book, *Islam: The True History And False Beliefs*. The parables of the tree and soil apply well to the spoiled fruit of today's counterfeit Islam.

Now let us see what greatness the true Quran-based Islam has achieved in the past and how wonderful are its prospects to regain its lost glory.

The central themes of the pristine Islam are service of humanity and benefiting God's creation. As soon as the dust of myth is wiped off, Islam will once again become the Beacon of Light for all humanity. And surely it will be the front-line force in making this planet a better place to live.

Let me stop here and let us all listen to the great non-Muslim minds, predominantly Western. These greats might very well be echoing the inherent voice of truth within our inner selves.

Note: Any where in this book Muhammad (S) will denote Muhammad, our salutations unto him.

SOME OUTSTANDING INTELLECTUALS EXTOLLING ISLAM

- Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*
- A. S. Tritton, *Islam*
- De Lacy O'Leary, *Islam at the Crossroads*
- Edward Gibbon, *History of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*
- Stanley Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table Talk of the Prophet Muhammad*
- Annie Besant, *The Life and Teachings of Mohammad*
- W. C. Taylor, *The History of Muhammadanism and its Sects*
- Reverend Bosworth Smith, *Muhammad and Muhammadanism*
- Simon Ockley, *History of the Saracen Empire*
- Edward Montet, *La Propagande Chretienne et ses Adversaries Musulmans*, 1890.
- Dr. Gustav Weil, *History of the Islamic Peoples*
- Alphonse de LaMartaine, *Historie de la Turquie*, 1854.
- "Mahatma" Gandhi, Statement published in *Young India*, 1924.
- Sir George Bernard Shaw, *The Genuine Islam*, 1936.
- Michael Hart, *The 100, A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons In History*
- Dr. William Draper, *History of Intellectual Development of Europe*
- J. W. H. Stab, *Islam and its Founder*
- Washington Irving, *Life of Muhammad*
- Arthur Glyn Leonard, *Islam, Her Moral and Spiritual Values*
- Charles Stuart Mills, *History of Mohammadanism*
- Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*
- Stanley Lane-Poole, *Studies in a Mosque*
- J. M. Rodwell, *Preface to his translation of the Holy Quran*
- W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*
- D. G. Hogarth, *Arabia*
- Washington Irving, *Mahomet and His Successors*
- James Michener, *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion*
- Lawrence E. Browne, *The Prospects of Islam*

- **Jules Masserman, *Who Were History's Great Leaders?* TIME Magazine July 15, 1974**
- **Rev E. Stephenson - *My Reflections***
- **George Rivorie - *Visages de L' Islam***
- **Sir William Muir - *Life of Mohammad*, India 1860**
- **M. H. Hyndman - *The Awakening of Asia***
- **Raymond Lerouge - *Life de Mohamet***
- **Dr. Marcus Dods - *Mohammad, Buddha and Christ***
- **Carra de Vaux - *The Philosophers of Islam*, Paris, 1921**
- **Marcel Clerget - *La Turquie, Passe et Present*, Paris, 1938**
- **Thomas Arnold - *The Call to Islam***

Michael the Elder (Great) as Quoted in *Michael the Elder, Chronique de Michael Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d' Antioche*, J. B. Chabot, Editor, Vol. II, Paris, 1901

James Addison - *The Christian Approach to the Moslem*

Marmaduke Pickthall - *Tolerance in Islam*, Lecture, 1927, Madras, India

- **Sir John Bagot Glubb - *Reflections on a Great ERA***
- **R. V. C. Bodley - *The Messenger*, London, 1946**
- **James Gavin - *Dialogue with a U.S. General***
- **W. A. R. Gibb - *Whither Islam***
- **K. S. Ramakrishna Rao, *Mohammed: The Prophet of Islam***
- **Sir Richard Gregory - *Religion in Science and Civilization***
- **Lewis Mumford - *Transformation of Man***
- **Abraham Maslow – *Self-actualization of humans*, essays**
- **Sir Arthur S. Eddington 1882-1944 - *Science and the Unseen World***
- **Albert Einstein (1879-1955) - *Out of My Later Days***
- **Nicholes Berdyeau - *Destiny of Man***
- **Hastings Rashdall (1858-1924) – *The Theory of Good and Evil***
- **Immanuel Kant, German philosopher (1724-1804) - *Critique of***

Practical Reason

Robert Briffault (1934-1993) - *The Making of Humanity*

Prof. A. N. Whitehead (1861-1947) - *Adventure of Ideas*

Prof. Alfred Cobban - *The Crisis of Civilization*

Robert Murray - *The Individual and the State*

Professor Hugh Miller - *Country and State*

Neveres Emery - *The Anatomy of Peace*

Arnold Toynbee - *The World and the West*

W. Chardin - *Building of the Earth*

Gummer Murdael - *Beyond the Welfare State*

Erich Fromm (1900-1980) - *The Sane Society*

Some of the well known scholars who had the blessed fortune of having learned Arabic by socializing with the Bedouins:

- The Swiss Muslim Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in the 1810s.
- The British Muslim Sir Richard Burton in the 1850s.
- The German (openly non-Muslim, confidentially Muslim) Heinrich von Maltzan during 1860s.
- The Austrian Muslim Leopold Weiss (Muhammad Asad) in the 1950s.
- The French surgeon Maurice Bucaille in the 1950s.

Some Translations and Translators of the Quran into European languages:

- 1143 - Latin, [Robertur Tetenensis], MS printed in 1543 by Bibliander
- 1616 - German, [Schweigger]
- 1647 - French, [Du Ryer]
- 1649 - English, [A. Ross]
- 1698 - Latin, [Marchi], complete with Arabic text and commentary
- 1734 - English, [George Sale]
- 1773 - German, [Boyson]
- 1776 - Russian, [Official translation by a committee at St. Petersburg]
- 1783 - French, [Savary]
- 1828 - German, [Wahl]
- 1840 - German, [Ullmann]
- 1840 - French, [Kasimerski]
- 1861 - English, [J.M. Rodwell]
- 1876-1880 - English, [E.H.Palmer]
- 1925 – English, [Muhammad Ali]
- 1930 – English, [Marmaduke Pickthall]
- 1938 – English, [Abdullah Yousuf Ali]
- 1937-1939 English, [Dr. Richard Bell]
- 1953 – English, [A. J. Arberry]
- 2003 – English, [Dr. Shabbir Ahmed]

In the quotations given below, the Western writers have sometimes used the term *Muhammadanism* for Islam. They were perhaps unaware that, for a Muslim, *Muhammadanism* conveys the erroneous impression that Islam was founded by Prophet Muhammad, or that the Muslims might be worshipping him.

Muslims believe in the same God as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus believed. Prophet Muhammad obeyed and propagated the Message of the One and Only God (in Arabic, Allah), the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. Hence, his Mission was essentially the same as that of the earlier Prophets of God. He was the last Prophet Messenger, and sent for the entire humanity for all times to come.

Let us begin with the greatest social philosopher of Victorian England, Thomas Carlyle.

Thomas Carlyle - *Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History* London 1841:

.... As there is no danger of our becoming, any of us, Mahometans, I mean to say all the good of him I justly can....

When Pocke inquired of Grotius, where the proof was of that story of the pigeon, trained to pick peas from Mahomet's ear, and pass for an angel dictating to him? Grotius answered that there was no proof!

A greater number of God's creatures believe in Mahomet's word at this hour than in any other word whatever. Are we to suppose that it was a miserable piece of spiritual legerdemain [trick], this which so many creatures of the almighty have lived by and died by?

A poor, hard-toiling, ill-provided man; careless of what vulgar men toil for. Not a bad man, I should say; Something better in him than hunger of any sort, — or these wild Arab men, fighting and jostling three-and-twenty years at his hand, in close contact with him always, would not revere him so! They were wild men bursting ever and anon into quarrel, into all kinds of fierce sincerity; without right worth and manhood, no man could have commanded them. They called him prophet you say? Why he stood there face to face with them; bare, not enshrined in any mystery; visibly clouting his own cloak, cobbling his own shoes; fighting, counseling, ordering in the midst of them: they must have seen what kind of man he was, let him be called what you like! No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting. During three-and-twenty years of rough actual trial, I find something of a veritable Hero necessary for that, of itself...

These Arabs, the man Mahomet, and that one century, - is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark, on a world of what proves explosive powder, blazes heaven-high from Delhi to Granada! I said the Great man was always as lightning out of Heaven; the rest of men waited for him like fuel, and then they too would flame...

The lies [Western slander] which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man [Muhammad] are disgraceful to ourselves only. He was a great soul, one of that who cannot but be earnest. He was to kindle the world; the world's Maker had ordered so A man of truth and fidelity, true in what he did, in what he spake and thought—this is the only sort of speech worth speaking.

A. S. Tritton - *Islam* 1951:

The picture of the Muslim soldier advancing with a sword in one hand and the Quran in the other is quite false.

De Lacy O'Leary - *Islam at the Crossroads* London 1923:

History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.

Edward Gibbon - *History of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*
London 1788:

The good sense of Muhammad despised the pomp of royalty. The Apostle of God submitted to the menial offices of the family; he kindled the fire; swept the floor; milked the ewes; and mended with his own hands his shoes and garments. Disdaining the penance and merit of a hermit, he observed without effort of vanity the abstemious diet of an Arab The creed of Mohammad is free from ambiguity and the Quran is a glorious testimony to the unity of God The greatest crime, the greatest "sin" of Mohammad in the eyes of the Christian West is that he did not allow himself to be slaughtered, to be "crucified" by his enemies. He only defended himself, his family and his followers; and finally vanquished his enemies. Mohammad's success is the Christians' gall of disappointment He did not believe in any vicarious sacrifices for the sins of others.

George Rivorie - *Visages de L' Islam:*

He laid the foundation of a universal government. His law was one for all. Equal justice and love for everyone.

Stanley Lane-Poole - *Speeches and Table Talk of the Prophet Muhammad:*

He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him; they who described him would say, "I have never seen his like either before or after." He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said....

Sir William Muir - *Life of Mohammad, India 1860:*

Mohammad brought an end to idol worship. He preached monotheism and infinite Mercy of God, human brotherhood, care of the orphan, emancipation of slaves, forbidding of wine—No religion achieved as much success as Islam did.

Simon Ockley - *History of the Saracen Empire 1823:*

A rugged, strife-torn and mountaineering people...were suddenly turned into an indomitable Arab force, which achieved a series of splendid victories unparalleled in the history of nations, for in the short space of ninety years that mighty range of Saracenic [Nomad Arabs] conquest embraced a wider extent of territory than Rome had mastered in the course of eight hundred.

The greatest success of Mohammad's life was affected by sheer moral force. It is not the propagation but the permanency of his religion that

deserves our wonder, the same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina is preserved after the revolutions of twelve centuries by the Indian, the African and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran.... The Mahometans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. 'I believe in One God and Mahomet 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 honors 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.

M. H. Hyndman - *The Awakening of Asia*:

Mohammad never assigned himself a status more than a common man and a messenger of God. People had faith in him when he was surrounded by poverty and adversity and trusted him while he was the ruler of a great Empire A man of spotless character who always had confidence in himself and in God's help No aspect of his life remained hidden nor was his death a mysterious event.

Annie Besant - *The Life and Teachings of Mohammad*, Madras, 1932:

It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knew how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel, whenever I reread them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.

Pringle Kennedy - *Arabian Society at the Time of Mohammad*:

The height of human achievement and glory was Mohammad.

W. C. Taylor - *The History of Muhammadanism and its Sects*:

So great was his liberality to the poor that he often left his household unprovided, nor did he content himself with relieving their wants, he entered into conversation with them, and expressed a warm sympathy for their sufferings. He was a firm friend and a faithful ally.

Reverend Bosworth Smith - *Muhammad and Muhammadanism*, London, 1874:

Head of the State as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue. If ever a man ruled by a right divine, it was Muhammad, for he had all the powers without their supports. He cared not for the dressings of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life.

In Muhammadanism every thing is different here. Instead of the shadowy and the mysterious, we have history.... We know of the external history of Muhammad.... While for his internal history after his mission had been proclaimed, we have a book absolutely unique in its origin, in its preservation, on the Substantial authority of which no one has ever been able to cast a serious doubt.... Absolutely unique in history, Muhammad is a three-fold founder of a nation, of an empire and of a religion. The unlettered one bestowed upon the world the Book which is a miracle, the eternal miracle and the true miracle.

Rev E. Stephenson - *My Reflections*:

The message of Mohammad, Islam, is nothing but a blessing for mankind—The usher from darkness to light and from Satan to God.

Edward Montet - *La Propagande Chretienne et ses Adversaries Musulmans*, Paris 1890: [Also in T.W. Arnold in 'The Preaching of Islam,' London 1913]

Islam is a religion that is essentially rationalistic in the widest sense of this term considered etymologically and historically.... 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.... 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.

Dr. Gustav Weil - *History of the Islamic Peoples*:

Muhammad was a shining example to his people. His character was pure and stainless. His house, his dress, his food - they were characterized by a rare simplicity. So unpretentious was he that he would receive from his companions no special mark of reverence, nor would he accept any service from his servant which he could do for himself. He was accessible to all and at all times. He visited the sick and was full of sympathy for all. Unlimited was his benevolence and generosity as also was his anxious care for the welfare of the community.

Tor Andre - *Muhammad, the Man and His Faith*:

Islam is a forceful spiritual energy. Its true meaning will manifest itself when it will be implemented on large scale.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe - *Letter to Eckermann 1830*, Sir Henry Elliott's collection, 1865:

The teachings of Islam can fail under no circumstances. With all our systems of culture and civilization, we cannot go beyond Islam and, as a matter of fact, no human mind can go beyond the Koran.

Alphonse de LaMartaine - *Historie de la Turquie*, Paris, 1854:

Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman; to subvert superstitions which had been imposed between man and his Creator, to render God unto man and man unto God; to restore the rational and sacred idea of divinity amidst the chaos of the material and disfigured gods of idolatry, then existing. Never has a man undertaken a work so far beyond human power with so feeble means, for he [Muhammad] had in the conception as well as in the execution of such a great design, no other instrument than himself and no other aid except a handful of men living in a corner of the desert. Finally, never has a man accomplished such a huge and lasting revolution in the world....

If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astonishing results are the three criteria of a human genius, who could dare compare any great man in history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws, and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples, dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls.

On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blends together peoples of every tongue and race. He has left the indelible characteristic of this Muslim nationality the hatred of false gods and the passion for the One and Immaterial God. This avenging patriotism against the profanation of Heaven formed the virtue of the followers of Muhammad; the conquest of one-third of the earth to the dogma was his miracle; or rather it was not the miracle of man but that of reason.

The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of the fabulous accounts of the origin and descent of the gods, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient temples of idols and set on fire one-third of the world. His life, his meditations, his heroic reveling [rebellion] against the superstitions of his country, and his boldness in defying the furies of idolatry, his firmness in enduring them for fifteen years in Mecca, his acceptance of the role of public scorn and almost of being a victim of his fellow countrymen: all these and finally, his flight, his incessant preaching, his wars against odds, his faith in his success and his superhuman security in misfortune, his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea

and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold the unity of God and the immateriality of God: the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with words.

Philosopher, Orator, Apostle, Legislator, Conqueror of Ideas, Restorer of Rational beliefs.... The founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire-that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?

J. H. Denison - *Emotions as the Basis of Civilization*:

Muhammad saved the human civilization from extinction. Ponder! Which person is it who taught mankind the way to establish the greatest society; the society in which blessings descend upon every individual.

Mahatma Gandhi - *Young India*, 1924:

The more I study, the more I discover that the strength of Islam does not lie in the sword. The more I desired 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 ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the second volume of the Prophet's biography, I was sorry there was not more for me to read more of that great life.

The verified sayings of Muhammad are a treasure of wisdom not only for Muslims but for all mankind - (M. K. Gandhi's *Preface to "The Sayings of Muhammad" by Sohrawardi*).

Sir George Bernard Shaw - *The Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1936:

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

.... I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age....I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity.

.... I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that

would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.

Dr. Mawde Royden - *The Problem of Palestine*:

Mohammad introduced the concept of such Glorious and Omnipotent God in Whose eyes all worldly systems were pieces of straw. Islamic equality of mankind is no fiction as it is in Christianity. No human mind has ever thought of such total freedom as established by Mohammad.

F. J. C. Hearushaw - *The Science of History*:

The Christian World came to wage crusades against Muslims but eventually knelt before them to gain knowledge. They were spellbound to see that Muslims were owners of a culture that was far superior to their own. The Dark Ages of Europe were illuminated by nothing but the beacon of Muslim civilization.

Michael Hart - *The 100 A Ranking Of The Most Influential Persons In History*, New York, 1978:

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.... It 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.

Dr. William Draper - *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, London 1875:

Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born in Mecca, in Arabia, the man who, of all men, has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race.... To be the religious head of many empires, to guide the daily life of one-third of the human race, may justify the title of a Messenger of God.... The towering personality of Muhammad has left bright and indelible imprints on all mankind.... The man who of all men exercised the greatest influence upon the human race.... During the period of the Caliphs the learned men of the Christians and the Jews were not only held in great esteem but were appointed to posts of great responsibility, and were promoted to the high ranking job in the government.... He (Caliph Haroon Rasheed) never considered to which country a learned person belonged nor his faith and belief, but only his excellence in the field of learning.

H. N. Spalding - *Civilization in the East and West*:

Mohammad was the greatest Executive Officer for implementation of the Divine Will. Like other prophets he knew that time will come when all mankind will become one community In Islam the believer is a

worshiper and a soldier ever ready to go to the battlefield but only for that battle which is waged to eradicate aggression, the evil.

Robert Briffault - *The Making of Humanity*:

The Renaissance of Europe did not take place in the 15th century Rome. Rather it began when Europe learned from the culture of the Arabs. The cradle of European awakening is NOT Italy. It is the Muslim Spain.

J. W. H. Stab - *Islam and its Founder*:

Judged by the smallness of the means at his disposal, and the extent and permanence of the work that he accomplished, his name in world's history shines with a more specious luster than that of the Prophet of Mecca. To the impulse which he gave numberless dynasties have owed their existence, fair cities and stately palaces and temples have arisen, and wide provinces became obedient to the Faith. In Islam, science and religion have thrived like twin sisters. Therefore, during the Koranic glory of Islamic civilization, science made incredible progress from which the West was later enlightened... And beyond all this, his words have governed the belief of generations, been accepted as their rule of life, and their certain guide to the world to come. At a thousand shrines the voices of the faithful invoke blessings on him, whom they esteem the very Prophet of God, the seal of the Apostles.... Judged by the standards to human renown, the glory of what mortal can compare with his?

Arthur Glyn Leonard - *Islam, Her Moral and Spiritual Values*:

It was the genius of Muhammad, the spirit that he breathed into the Arabs through the soul of Islam that exalted them. That raised them out of the lethargy and low level of tribal stagnation up to the high watermark of national unity and empire. It was in the sublimity of Muhammad's deism, the simplicity, the sobriety and purity it inculcated the fidelity of its founder to his own tenets that acted on their moral and intellectual fiber with all the magnetism of true inspiration.

Charles Stuart Mills - *History of Mohammadanism*:

Deeply read in the volume of nature, though extremely ignorant of letters, his mind could expand into controversy with the wisest of his enemies or contract itself to the apprehension of meanest of his disciples. His simple eloquence was rendered impressive by a manner of mixed dignity and elegance, by the expression of a countenance where the awfulness of his majesty was so well tempered by an amiable sweetness, that it exerted emotions of veneration and love. He was gifted with that authoritative air of genius which alike influences the learned and commands the illiterate.

Philip K. Hitti - *History of the Arabs*:

Within a brief span of mortal life, Muhammad called forth of unpromising material, a nation, never welded before; in a country that was hitherto but a geographical expression he established a religion which in vast areas suppressed Christianity and Judaism, and laid the basis of an empire that

was soon to embrace within its far flung boundaries the fairest provinces of the then civilized world Kingdom of God on Earth: God's messenger serving as the greatest proponent of human brotherhood, His viceroy on earth in the form of Muhammad.

Islam does not set impossible goals. There are no mythological intricacies in this message. No hidden meanings or secrets and absolutely no priesthood.

Encyclopedia Britannica, 4th & 11th editions:

Muhammad was the most successful of all religious personalities.

Stanley Lane-Poole - *Studies in a Mosque*:

He was one of those happy few who have attained the supreme joy of making one great truth their very life spring. He was the messenger of One God, and never to his life's end did he forget who he was or the message which was the marrow of his being. He brought his tidings to his people with a grand dignity sprung from the consciousness of his high office, together with a most sweet humility.... Mohammad was an enthusiast in the noblest sense.

Rev. J. M. Rodwell - *The Preface to Translation of the Holy Quran*:

Mohammad's career is a wonderful instance of the force and life that resides in him who possesses an intense faith in God and in the unseen world. He will always be regarded as one of those who have had that influence over the faith, morals and whole earthly life of their fellow men, which none but a really great man ever did, or can exercise; and whose efforts to propagate a great verity will prosper.

W. Montgomery Watt - *Muhammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1953:

His readiness to undergo persecution for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as a leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad.... Thus, not merely must we credit Muhammad with essential honesty and integrity of purpose, if we are to understand him at all; if we are to correct the errors we have inherited from the past, we must not forget the conclusive proof is a much stricter requirement than a show of plausibility, and in a matter such as this only to be attained with difficulty.

D. G. Hogarth - *Arabia*:

Serious or trivial, his daily behavior has instituted a canon which millions observe this day with conscious memory. No one regarded by any section of the human race as Perfect Man has ever been imitated so minutely. The conduct of the founder of Christianity has not governed the ordinary life of his followers. Moreover, no founder of a religion has left on so solitary an eminence as the Muslim Apostle.

Washington Irving - *Mahomet and His Successors*:

He was sober and abstemious in his diet and a rigorous observer of fasts. He indulged in no magnificence of apparel, the ostentation of a petty mind; neither was his simplicity in dress affected but a result of real disregard for distinction from so trivial a source.

In his private dealings he was just. He treated friends and strangers, the rich and poor, the powerful and weak, with equity, and was beloved by the common people for the affability with which he received them, and listened to their complaints.

His military triumphs awakened no pride nor vain glory, as they would have done had they been effected for selfish purposes. In the time of his greatest power he maintained the same simplicity of manners and appearance as in the days of his adversity. So far from affecting a regal state, he was displeased if, on entering a room, any unusual testimonials of respect were shown to him. If he aimed at a universal dominion, it was the dominion of faith; as to the temporal rule which grew up in his hands, as he used it without ostentation, so he took no step to perpetuate it in his family.

Ramsey Clark, Former U.S. Attorney General, *Our Planet 1994, Lecture*:

Islam is the only religion that gives dignity to the poor.

James Michener - *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion*, Reader's Digest, May 1955, pp. 68-70:

No other religion in history spread so rapidly as Islam. The West has widely believed that this surge of religion was made possible by the sword. But no wise modern scholar accepts this idea, and the Koran is explicit in the support of the freedom of conscience.

Muhammad, the inspired man who founded Islam, was born about A.D. 570 into an Arabian tribe that worshiped idols. Orphaned at birth, he was always particularly solicitous of the poor and needy, the widow and the orphan, the slave and the downtrodden. At twenty he was already a successful businessman, and soon became director of camel caravans for a wealthy widow. When he reached twenty-five his employer recognizing

his merit proposed marriage. Even though she was fifteen years older, he married her and as long as she lived remained a devoted husband.

Like almost every major prophet before him, Muhammad fought shy of serving as the transmitter of God's word sensing his own inadequacy. But the Angel commanded 'Read'. So far as we know, Muhammad was unable to read or write, but he began to dictate those inspired words which would soon revolutionize a large segment of the earth: "There is one God."

In all things Muhammad was profoundly practical. When his beloved son Ibrahim died, an eclipse occurred and rumors of God's personal condolence quickly arose. Whereupon Muhammad is said to have announced, "An eclipse is a phenomenon of nature. It is foolish to attribute such things to the death or birth of a human being."

At Muhammad's own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the noblest speeches in religious history: "If there are any among you who worshiped Muhammad, he is dead. But if it is God you worshiped, He lives for ever."

Lawrence E. Browne - *The Prospects of Islam*, 1944:

.... Incidentally these well-established facts dispose of the idea so widely fostered in Christian writings that the Muslims, wherever they went, forced people to accept Islam at the point of the sword.

Under his influence people became united in one bond which they knew not, the bond of true monotheism. (*The Eclipse of Christianity in Islam*)

K. S. Ramakrishna Rao - *Mohammed: The Prophet of Islam*, 1989:

My problem to write this monograph is easier, because we are not generally fed now on that (distorted) kind of history and much time need not be spent on pointing out our misrepresentations of Islam. The theory of Islam and sword, for instance, is not heard now in any quarter worth the name. The principle of Islam that "there is no compulsion in religion" is well known In the person of the prophet of Islam we see the rarest phenomenon on earth walking in flesh and blood i.e. the union of the theorist, the organizer and the leader in one man.

P. D. Ouspensky - *Tertium organum*:

Any science that collides with the Koran will turn out to be false.

Jules Masserman - *Who Were History's Great Leaders?* TIME Magazine, July 15, 1974:

The greatest leader of all times was Mohammad, who combined all the three functions; religious, political and moral. To a lesser extent, Moses did the same.

Napoleon Bonaparte as Quoted in Cherfils, *Bonaparte et Islam*, Paris, France:

Moses has revealed the existence of God to his nation. Jesus Christ to the Roman world, Muhammad to the old continent....

Arabia was idolatrous when, six centuries after Jesus, Muhammad introduced the worship of the God of Abraham, of Ishmael, of Moses, and Jesus. The Ariyans [The Unitarian followers of Father Arius] and some other sects had disturbed the tranquility of the east by agitating the question of the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Muhammad declared that there was none but one God who had no father, no son and that the trinity imported the idea of idolatry....

I hope the time is not far off when I shall be able to unite all the wise and educated men of all the countries and establish a uniform regime based on the principles of Koran which alone are true and which alone can lead men to happiness.

Bertrand Russell - *History of Western Philosophy*, London, 1948:

Our use of phrase 'The Dark ages' to cover the period from 699 to 1,000 marks our undue concentration on Western Europe.... From India to Spain, the brilliant civilization of Islam flourished. What was lost to Christendom at this time was not lost to civilization, but quite the contrary.... To us it seems that West-European civilization is civilization, but this is a narrow view.

Herbert George Wells - *Happiness of Mankind*, Kent, 1938:

The Islamic teachings have left great traditions for equitable and gentle dealings and behavior, and inspire people with nobility and tolerance. These are human teachings of the highest order and at the same time practicable. These teachings brought into existence a society in which hard-heartedness and collective oppression and injustice were the least as compared with all other societies preceding it ... Islam is replete with gentleness, courtesy, and fraternity.

Diwan Chand Sharma - *The Prophets of the East*, 1935:

Mohammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him.

Raymond Lerouge - *Life de Mohamet:*

The Arabian Prophet Mohammad is the founder of a revolution unparalleled in history. He founded a political state that will ultimately embrace the entire planet. The law of that Government would rest on justice and kindness. His teachings revolve around human equality, mutual cooperation and universal brotherhood.

Dr. Marcus Dods - *Mohammad, Buddha and Christ:*

Mohammad's religion reformed all existing dogmas and brought the Arabs ahead of the super powers of the time.

Phillip Hitti - *Short History of the Arabs:*

During all the first part of the Middle Ages, no other people made as important a contribution to human progress as did the Arabs, if we take this term to mean all those whose mother-tongue was Arabic, and not merely those living in the Arabian peninsula. For centuries, Arabic was the language of learning, culture and intellectual progress for the whole of the civilized world with the exception of the Far East. From the 9th to the 12th century there were more philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical works written in Arabic than in any other human tongue.

Carra de Vaux - *The Philosophers of Islam, Paris, 1921:*

Finally how can one forget that at the same time the Mogul Empire of India (1526-1857 CE) was giving the world the Taj-Mahal (completed in 1648 CE) the architectural beauty of which has never been surpassed, and the 'Akbar Nameh' of Abul Fazl: That extraordinary work full of life ideas and learning where every aspect of life is examined, listed and classified, and where progress continually dazzles the eye, is a document of which Oriental civilization may justly be proud. The men whose genius finds its expression in this book were far in advance of their age in the practical art of government, and they were perhaps in advance of it in their speculations about religious philosophy. Those poets those philosophers knew how to deal with the world or matter. They observe, classify, calculate and experiment. All the ideas that occur to them are tested against facts. They express them with eloquence but they also support them with statistics.... the principles of tolerance, justice and humanity which prevailed during the long reign of Akbar.

Marcel Clerget - *La Turquie, Passe et Present, Paris, 1938:*

Many proofs of high cultural level of the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent are to be found in the development of science and law; in the flowering of literary works in Arabic, Persian and Turkish; in the contemporary monuments in Istanbul, Bursa, and Edirne; in the boom in luxury industries; in the sumptuous life of the court and high dignitaries, and last but not least, in its religious tolerance. All the various influences - notably Turkish, Byzantine and Italian mingle together and help to make this the most brilliant epoch of the Ottomans.

Thomas Arnold - *The Call to Islam*:

We have never heard about any attempt to compel Non-Muslim parties to adopt Islam or about any organized persecution aiming at exterminating Christianity. If the Caliphs had chosen one of these plans, they would have wiped out Christianity as easily as what happened to Islam during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain; by the same method which Louis XIV followed to make Protestantism a creed whose followers were to be sentenced to death; or with the same ease of keeping the Jews away from Britain for a period of three hundred fifty years.

Michael the Elder (Great) as Quoted in *Michael the Elder, Chronique de Michael Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d' Antioche*, J. B. Chabot, Editor, Vol. II, Paris, 1901:

This is why the God of vengeance, who alone is all-powerful, and changes the empire of mortals as He will, giving it to whomsoever He will, and uplifting the humble beholding the wickedness of the Romans who throughout their dominions, cruelly plundered our churches and our monasteries and condemned us without pity, brought from the region of the south the sons of Ishmael, to deliver us through them from the hands of the Romans. And if in truth we have suffered some loss, because the Catholic churches, that had been taken away from us and given to the Chalcedonians, remained in their possession; for when the cities submitted to the Arabs, they assigned to each denomination the churches which they found it to be in possession of (and at that time the great churches of Emessa and that of Harran had been taken away from us); nevertheless it was no slight advantage for us to be delivered from the cruelty of the Romans, their wickedness, their wrath and cruel zeal against us, and to find ourselves at people.

[Michael the Elder, Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch wrote this text in the latter part of the twelfth century, after five centuries of Muslim rule in that region.]

James Addison - *The Christian Approach to the Moslem*:

Despite the growth of antagonism, Moslem rulers seldom made their Christian subjects suffer for the Crusades. When the Saracens finally

resumed the full control of Palestine the Christians were given their former status as citizens. The Coptic Church, too had little cause for complaint under Saladin's strong government, and during the time of the earlier Mameluke sultans who succeeded him, the Copts experienced more enlightened justice than they had hitherto known. The only effect of the Crusaders upon Egyptian Christians was to keep them for a while from pilgrimage to Jerusalem, for as long as the Frank were in charge heretics were forbidden access to the shrines. Not until the Moslem victories could they enjoy their rights as Christians.

Marmaduke Pickthall - *Tolerance in Islam*, Lecture, 1927, Madras, India:

In the eyes of history, religious toleration is the highest evidence of culture in a people.... It was not until the Western nations broke away from their religious law that they became more tolerant, and it was only when the Muslims fell away from their religious law that they declined in tolerance and other evidences of the highest culture. Before the coming of Islam tolerance had never been preached as an essential part of religion....

If Europe had known as much of Islam, as Muslims knew of Christendom, in those days, those mad, adventurous, occasionally chivalrous and heroic, but utterly fanatical outbreaks known as the Crusades could not have taken place, for they were based on a complete misapprehension....

Innumerable monasteries, with a wealth of treasure of which the worth has been calculated at no less than a hundred millions sterling, enjoyed the benefit of the Holy Prophet's Charter to the monks of Sinai and were religiously respected by the Muslims. The various sects of Christians were represented in the Council of the Empire by their patriarchs, on the provincial and district council by their bishops, in the village council by their priests, whose word was always taken without question on things which were the sole concern of their community....

The tolerance within the body of Islam was, and is, something without parallel in history; class and race and color ceasing altogether to be barriers.

Sir John Bagot Glubb - *Reflections on a Great ERA*:

The Abbasid Khalifa [Caliph] Al-Ma'mun's period of rule (813 - 833 CE) may be considered the 'golden age' of science and learning. He had always been devoted to books and to learned pursuits. His brilliant mind was interested in every form of intellectual activity. Not only poetry but also philosophy, theology, astronomy, medicine and law all occupied his time.

By Mamun's time, medical schools were extremely active in Baghdad. The first free public hospital was opened in Baghdad during the Caliphate of

Haroon-ar-Rashid. As the system developed, physicians and surgeons were appointed who gave lectures to medical students and issued diplomas to those who were considered qualified to practice. The first hospital in Egypt was opened in 872 AD and thereafter public hospitals sprang up all over the empire from Spain and the Maghrib [Morocco] to Persia.

On the Holocaust of Baghdad (1258 CE) Perpetrated by Hulagu: The city of Haroon and Mamun was systematically looted, destroyed and burnt. Eight hundred thousand persons are said to have been killed. The Khalifa Mustasim was sewn up in a sack and trampled to death under the feet of Mongol horses. For five hundred years, Baghdad had been a city of palaces, mosques, libraries and colleges. Its universities and hospitals were the most up-to-date in the world. Nothing now remained but heaps of rubble and a stench of decaying human flesh.

R. V. C. Bodley - *The Messenger*, London, 1946:

No man whose external conditions changed so much ever changed himself less to meet them.

James Gavin - *Dialogue with a U.S. General*:

Among leaders who have made the greatest impact through ages, I would consider Muhammad before Jesus Christ.

Giyani Balbir Singh - *Navan Hindustan*, 1947:

Those who believe Islam was spread by force are fools who neither know the ways of Islam nor the ways of the world.

W. A. R. Gibb - *Whither Islam*:

The Message of Mohammad is not a set of metaphysical phenomena. It is a complete civilization.

Rev. B. Margoliouth - *Biographies of Mohammad*:

The Book revealed to Mohammad is one and unique of its kind. It has left indelible impression on the hearts of humanity. Nothing can overcome its majesty. The Quran has given new dimensions to human thinking. Surprising reforms, stunning success! The power that created in Muslims ravenous appetite for knowledge sprung from the Quran.

Sir Richard Gregory - *Religion in Science and Civilization*:

The Book revealed to Muhammad defines an unalterable guide to individual and collective life of people.

Lewis Mumford - *Transformation of Man*:

Fellow inhabitants of the planet! Search for the ideal Prophet, who in the 7th century, has shown you the way to total success.

Abraham Maslow: The great American sociologist and thinker of the 20th Century, Abraham Maslow, understood the development of the human 'self' beautifully. What the Quran calls *Tazkia* (derived from *Zaku* meaning development of the personality 2:232, 4:49), he terms as Self-actualization or fulfillment of the human personality.

[Quran 4:49 Have you seen those who claim that they have purified their souls? Purification or development of the 'self' can only be achieved according to the laws of God, by service of humanity and not through rituals or mysticism.]

Sir Arthur S. Eddington 1882-1944 - *Science and the Unseen World*

In order to make true progress, man must exercise his free will in accordance with the Divine guidance. Man must do this, not to put God under any obligation, but for the evolution of his own SELF.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) - *Out of My Later Days*

The code of permanent values can only come through Revelation to chosen personalities (messengers) of God. Science can tell what is. It cannot tell what ought to be.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) - *On Heroes and Hero Worship*

The word of Mohamet is a voice, direct from nature's own heart . . . all else is wind in comparison.

Nicholes Berdyeau - *Destiny of Man*

If the society is not conducive to the growth of human personality, people would remain slaves even if such a society were perceived to be free. --- Islam offers a beautiful collective system which says Yes to Life. - *The Divine and the Human*

Hastings Rashdall (1858-1924) – *The Theory of Good and Evil*

For the development of SELF I need a society where others' benefit feels like my own. --- The real progress entails development of an international social order in which every individual can grow to one's full potential.

[Quran 76:9 (They do all this selflessly) saying, "We provide for you for the sake of God alone. We want no return from you, not even a word of thanks.]

Immanuel Kant, German philosopher (1724-1804) - *Critique of Practical Reason*

The ideal society will be one where the wellness of others will feel like my own wellness.

Robert Briffault (1934-1993) - *The Making of Humanity*

The development of the human personality [NAFS] can take place only collectively with other members of the society.

Prof. A. N. Whitehead (1861-1947) - *Adventure of Ideas*

The purpose of life is the development of humanity in a collective social order.

Prof. Alfred Cobban - *The Crisis of Civilization*

A complete way of life which would be universal is neither present in human instinct nor can we devise it through intellect. It can only come through Revelation. [Quran 2:129 "Our Lord! Raise from among them a Messenger who will convey Your messages to them and instruct them in the scripture (by personal example) and the wisdom (behind each command). And also teach them how to grow in goodness. You are Almighty, the Wise."]

Robert Murray - *The Individual and the State*

We need a religion that can transcend nationalism and make the world one Nation. [Quran 2:213 Mankind were one single community (but selfishness divided them). So, God sent Prophets as bearers of good news and warnings.]

Professor Hugh Miller - *Country and State*

It is the sacred duty of our civilization that we revive the true human brotherhood which existed at the beginning of life and after which people divided.

Neveres Emery - *The Anatomy of Peace*

The solution to humanity's problems lies not in internationalism. It rests in the Kuranic teaching of universal brotherhood of all men.

Arnold Toynbee - *The World and the West*

Only Islam can transcend the boundaries of nationalism.

W. Chardin - *Building of the Earth*

The time for nations has already passed. The era of mankind as one community is about to dawn.

Gummer Murdael - *Beyond the Welfare State*

The world will shortly see a single government without borders in which the affairs of human beings will be a matter of counsel. [Quran 2:27 (Just as there is One Creator, likewise mankind is but one Community.) Those who break this ratified Bond of God and cut asunder the unity of mankind that God has commanded them to uphold, and thus lay the foundation of chaos on earth, those will be the losers in the long run.]

Erich Fromm (1900-1980) - *The Sane Society*

No tangible forces, no intangible powers, can stop Islam from becoming the universal faith. This is because only Islam can march along with the evolution of human civilization.

The Quran Goes Further: Dear reader, the Quran recognizes these goals but it takes us far beyond.

The believers give preference to the needs of others over their own even when they themselves are needy. (59:9)

And thus, righteous people are those who make their SELF (*NAFS*) grow by fulfilling the needs of others. And they do so because of IMAN (Conviction) in Allah's Promise. They know that they will be rewarded manifold in both worlds. Wasn't Goethe right that no human mind and no system could go beyond the Quran?

And, the exalted Messenger said:

“The best among people are those who serve humanity.”

“The best of the works is service of humanity.”

“The only person who exits the circle of Islam is the one who knowingly helps the oppressor.”

If we do not make progress toward self-actualization, the development of our personality stalls. This state of being left behind and cessation of progress is termed by the Quran as *JAHEEM* (The Insurmountable Barrier, a term repeatedly used in the Book for Hellfire).

**"If I march I am, if I don't I am not."
-Sir Iqbal**

It has been stated before that according to the Quran, the development of the human "SELF" (*TAZKIA*) can only take place by giving, by serving humanity. If any kind of worship and rituals do not lead a person to that noble end, those acts will turn out to be vain. Accordingly, Sheikh Sa'adi, the renowned Persian poet-philosopher said,

**Worship is naught but service of creation
Rosary, rug and robe are not devotion.**

The real existence on earth is of the one who benefits mankind (Quran 13:17)

Dear reader, don't these quotations from some of the greatest minds resonate with the Book? According to the Quran, mankind was, and will become, one community (2:213, 9:32-33, 10:19). Based on that authority and on my own reflection, I believe that people will, in the near future, see what the great thinkers are seeing today. People will lay aside their biases and prejudices. Nations in search of solutions to their political and socio-economic problems will turn to the Quran and find the Light. East or West, all people will recognize that THE QURAN IS THE PROPERTY OF NOT ONLY MUSLIMS BUT OF ALL HUMANITY. While the Muslims are badly entangled in trivial disputes, schisms and blind following, the West will probably see the Light first. They will recognize that the downfall of Muslims is despite Islam, and not because of it. It is their abandonment of the Wise Quran. Then, in Sir Iqbal's words they will say to Muslims:

**Your ancestors were honored for being Musalman
And you are miserable for leaving the Quran.
-Sir Iqbal**

Then, there no longer will be a League of Nations or the United Nations. These manmade organizations have failed, and will continue to fail, in becoming harbingers of peace, security and justice to the world. Instead, it will be the United Mankind. That is what the destiny of humanity is. And

that is the direction humanity has been moving in during the last 14 centuries. The Quran predicts the pleasant outcome on three occasions.

All people will recognize that the Quran is the **ULTIMATE TRUTH** and that the Quranic System will prevail over all other systems of life (9:32-33, 48:28, and 61:9).

A glance at history can easily dispel any doubts about this Quranic claim. Just a few examples will suffice to show that Islam has been marching on through the past fourteen centuries. This has been so despite the Muslims lagging far behind the Quran and even trailing the developed nations. These examples are being presented in the next chapter now.

THE GLORIOUS MARCH OF ISLAM

The ideas that inspired the French Revolution and the Declaration of Rights that guided the framing of the American Constitution and inflamed the struggle for independence in the Latin American countries [and elsewhere] were not inventions of the West. They find their ultimate inspiration and source in the Holy Koran.

- Robert Briffault

Sometimes people wonder if Islam has run its course. The bullet has been fired. What remains is just the empty barrel. This is a dangerously false assumption. Dangerous because it deprives humanity of the only hope it has. An examination of history bears out the fact that Islam has not failed, Muslims have. And Muslims have failed because they abandoned the Quran in favor of manmade books written centuries later! The moment they return to the Book, the Muslims will attain their lost glory. Or, whichever nation for that matter, embraces the Quran will establish the ideal state on the planet. Let us recall what George Bernard Shaw had said, "Mohammad, the wonderful man - in my opinion he must be called the Savior of humanity." -- "I predict that tomorrow's Europe will embrace Islam." Thus, the exalted Messenger will prove to be the Savior of humanity as he did 14 centuries ago. His sublime Message is perfectly alive and well. The Divine Laws are not biased for or against any group of people. Any nation that adopts them reaps the harvest.

As we have discussed, all universe and our own planet have been created as parts of a Master Plan. They will keep moving to their appointed destinations. Likewise, the human civilization has been evolving throughout history. When the humans follow Divine Revelation, times are shortened and emergent evolutions take place. What would otherwise take centuries by trial and error, can materialize in years. In Sir Iqbal's words, "*Revelation economizes human effort.*"

Without the benefit of the Quranic Light the world is still moving, though slowly, toward its destination of unity of mankind. Who is not aware of "Globalization and the global village"? Evolution of the human civilization is taking place. Islam is on the march.

Now let us examine a few glittering examples from history and see how correct Robert Briffault is in his observations and conclusions. It is interesting to note that Aristotle had pointed out 2,500 years ago, "A time will come when human ways will coincide with Divine ways."

ISLAM IS ON THE MARCH

1. Despotism: At the time of the advent of Islam in 610 CE, kings and tyrants were ruling countries, nations and tribes. There was no idea of human liberty and rule of law, no concept of people having any say in the government. Islam's was the first voice against that universal exploitation of the masses.

No person has the right to command obedience of people even though he be a messenger of God (3:79).

Command belongs only to (the Law of) Allah (6:57).

Now look at the recent history. Isn't the world moving away from despotism, kingdoms and autocracies?

2. Democracy: It is often thought that Bacon, Rousseau, Locke and other European thinkers laid down the foundations of modern democracy. But the Quran decreed 14 centuries ago:

The affairs of the believers are a matter of counsel (42:38).

This Injunction was meticulously observed in the seventh century Islam. The Muslim rulers had to be elected and then obtain allegiance of the masses. They always worked with an advisory council.

Today, mutual consultation in political matters is the hallmark of democracy. (Ironically kingdoms, sheikdoms, despotism and autocratic rule today are seen mostly among countries that call themselves Muslim. This is another instance of the Muslims' departure from the Quran).

It may not be out of place to mention here that mutual counsel in today's democracies will soon take one more vital step; all legislation would take place in the Light of Divine Guidance. Whichever country takes that vital step will formulate a truly Islamic government and become a model state

for the rest of the world. Other nations will follow suit. This is no utopia. Please see the conviction in Al-Quran 2:213, 9:32-33, 10:19.

3. Human worship: The exalted Messenger broke the idols of personalities. The greatest man who ever walked this earth kept repeating,

"I am but a human like you." (18:110)

"O People! I am only Muhammad son of Abdullah."

"I am the son of an ordinary Quraishi woman who used to (save and) eat dry meat."

Further, Muhammad (S) said, "One who loves that people keep standing before him, should seek his abode in hellfire."

We observe that since the exalted Messenger's advent human worship has been dwindling throughout the world. (Ironically again, today it is mostly Muslims who are prostrating before religious people, before their ancestors' graves or humbling themselves in front of those in power and authority).

4. Racism: 14 centuries ago the whole world was drenched in racism. Aristotle taught around 500 BC that the Greeks were superior to all nations. The Romans divided their own people among classes. There were about 8 slaves per Roman elite. India demonstrated racism to the extreme degree where a newborn's whole life depended on whether he was born into a Brahman, Khatri, Vaish, or Shudra family.

Muhammad (S) toppled the world of false ideas, "There is no superiority of a black over a white or a white over a black. All of you humans belong to the same single stock. The best among you is the one who is best in conduct." (Farewell Address)

Now let us think. Is not the world moving away from racism? At least open expression of racial bias has become condemnable in most parts of the world.

5. Human Rights: Here I suggest that the reader examine three most celebrated documents on human rights:

- The British Magna Carta**
- The American Constitution**
- The United Nations Charter of Human Rights.**

Then study only the brief "Farewell Sermon" of Messenger Muhammad, the exalted, and compare. The intelligently written human documents seem to

fade away and pale in comparison to just one sermon of Muhammad (S)! Please see Robert Briffault's quote at the beginning of this chapter.

Haven't human rights become a vital issue at the international scene? True, the world including Muslims have to go a long way. But, Islam is on the march. The Quran had declared in the 7th century, "Now, indeed, We have conferred dignity on all children of Adam (as their birth-right)." (17:70)

History stands witness to the blessings of the Quranic Way of Life. In the truly Quranic era of Islam, the (emancipated) black slave of Ethiopia, Bilal, the poor laborer of Rome, Suhaib, and the lonely wanderer of Persia, Salman, were equal to, and had the same rights as, the most powerful man of the time. Umar Farooq the Great, the second Caliph of Islam, used to address Bilal, "O My master!" He requested that Suhaib lead the Caliph's funeral. And the exalted Messenger had himself honored Salman by calling him a member of his own household.

A brief resume of human rights given in the Quran will now be given. These points also reflect the Moral Code of Islam.

- a. Equal human dignity by birth (17:70, 95:4)
- b. Gender equity (4:32, 33:35)
- c. Superiority by character only (49:13, 46:19)
- d. Rule of law, not of individuals (3:79)
- e. Full compensation of work (53:39, 53:41, 39:70, 37:39)
- f. Provision of basic needs (20:118-119)
- g. Security of faith, life, mind, honor, and property (6:109, 6:152, 2:269, 17:36, 24:2, 22:40, 6:152, 5:90, 2:195, 5:32, 17:32, 17:35, 17:29, 83:1)
- h. Choice of spouse (4:3, 4:19)
- i. Freedom of religion (22:40, 6:109, 2:256)
- j. Freedom of expression (2:42, 3:71)
- k. Redress of grievances (4:148)
- l. Privacy (33:53, 24:27)
- m. Care of the handicapped (4:36, 70:24)
- n. Presumption of innocence (49:6)
- o. Sanctity of name and lineage (49:11, 33:4)
- p. Right to residence (4:100, 2:85, 6:41)
- q. Aesthetic choice (18:31, 76:13-15)
- r. Protection of chastity (17:32, 24:2)
- s. Race, color, gender, lineage, wealth are no criteria of superiority.
- t. Degrees of people according to their deeds (2:212, 3:163, 6:132)

It is noteworthy that the United Nations and the UNESCO Commission subject human rights to certain conditions and limitations. They further differentiate between a person owning those rights and application of

those rights according to the local law. Human rights outlined in the Quran are not subject to the whims of nations or individuals.

6. The Caste System: The exalted Messenger declared and established human brotherhood and equality by personal example. He belonged to the noblest of tribes and families. Yet, he humbly repeated "I am a human just like you." He further advised his closest family members that being a relative of Muhammad will be of no avail to them. Last, he established that the only criterion of superiority among men and women is their conduct. Color, creed, family, gender, wealth would not impart honor to any individual.

Now which way is the world moving? India, which has been the chief cradle of the detestable caste system, is trying to get rid of this curse of humanity. The Untouchables are being called "Harijan", 'the bearers of Divine Spirit'. And India is just one example. Remember what happened to apartheid in South Africa?

7. Slavery: The exalted Messenger shook up the so-called masters of men, "Their mothers had born them free. How could you enslave them? What if you were made their slaves and they were made your masters!"

The Quran, while explicitly pronouncing equality and brotherhood of all men, ordered to "Free all slaves for ransom or better as kindness" (47:4). Few people know that the Islamic methodology resulted in the emancipation of slaves (male and female) without the least friction and bloodshed. Islam initiated a noble revolution in the hearts of people. Without the Divine Light, the 19th century America, even under the great leadership of Abraham Lincoln, had to sacrifice one million dead and wounded attempting to abolish slavery!

8. Priesthood: At the Dawn of Islam, priesthood was the worst oppressor of humanity. They were considered to possess infinite occult powers. They were thought to know the Unseen and supposed to be intercessors between man and God. They enjoyed greater authority than the kings did. Well, they knew what was in a person's heart! They could condemn the "Children of God" to be hanged, crucified or burnt alive! Their tyranny outlasted their own lives. Their tombs remained centers of worship and exploitation.

The Quran announced that Allah is the only Knower of the Unseen (72:26). There is no medium between man and God because He is "closer to him than the Vena Cava" (50:16). Now we see that humanity has been gaining freedom from priesthood the world over. (Ironically once again, Muslims, not currently heeding the Quran, are lagging behind even in this arena.)

**The modernization of my nation consists
Of what has been outworn by all creation
-Sir Iqbal**

9. Womens' Rights: In the times when the woman was considered the property of the man and was treated worse than slaves; when "Eve" and "evil" were thought to be synonymous and woman was a "shameful load of sin", when she spent her life in bondage first to her father, then to her brothers and eventually to her husband; when Christian conferences were discussing questions such as

- Does the woman have a soul?**
- Is she human?**
- Will she be resurrected?**

The Quran thundered that Allah has created people males and females.

**"Women have rights unto you as you have rights unto them." (2:187)
"Every person will be rewarded according to one's actions; male or female." (4:32)**

And the "Mercy for the Worlds" Muhammad, the exalted taught:

"Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers."

"The best among you is the one who is best to his wife."

"O Men! You will be questioned about your treatment of women."

On the other hand, Michael Hart notes that the New Testament still teaches: "Let the woman learn in silence . . . She is to keep silent . . . Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children (Timothy 2:11-15). "The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband . . . for if a woman will not veil herself then she should have her head shaved . . . woman [was created] for man" (Corinthians 11:3-10).

Now, look back with an open mind. Which way has the mankind moved in the last 1400 years? Surely, Islam is on the march! It may also be of interest to note here that in the USA women gained the right to vote in 1920. When did Muslim women attain it? In the 7th century!

10. Science: While Europe was struggling through the Dark Ages, Muslims were performing scientific miracles under the Quranic teaching that natural laws had been made subservient to man. (This topic of the Quran and Science will be further discussed in a later chapter). Here is an example of the scientific guidance in the Quran: Until recently, the sun was thought to

be stationary in the center of the solar system. The Quran had, however, revealed 1400 years ago, "The sun is moving along toward its appointed destination."(36:38) The great Russian philosopher, astronomer and scientist, P.D. Ouspensky, maintained that any science that contradicted the Quran would turn out to be false. Then, during Ouspensky's lifetime, it was discovered that the sun is moving toward a specific destination at 12 miles per second i.e. 43,200 miles per hour! This destination has even been assigned names, the Solar Apex, the Constellation of Hercules. Guess what Ouspensky did! He embraced Islam.

“Roger Bacon owed his illumination to the Muslim Moors of Spain. The great figures of European Renaissance could see further because they stood on the shoulders of the giants of the Muslim world. -- Those achievements represent what the Muslim world has been in the past. They also point to what it could become in the future.” (Richard Nixon - *Nixon's Ten Commandments*)

11. Nationalism: Arnold Toynbee in his 1952 work, *The World and the West*, called nationalism a form idol worship. In his writing and lectures he repeatedly urged the world leadership to break this idol. After all, who is unaware of the devastation caused to our planet by the World Wars I and II. Nationalism was the obvious root cause of this massive trauma to humanity.

Years before Toynbee, Sir Iqbal, on the authority of the Quran, called nationalism "the modern idol which the humanity has sculpted". The Quran ordained all mankind to be one nation and declared that all believers in the Final Revelation, regardless of where and when they live, are tied in the sacred bond of brotherhood and sisterhood (49:10). That announcement left no room for manmade geographical boundaries.

It is heartening to note that great western minds such as Nicholes Berdyeau, Henry Bergson, A.C. Ewing, Rene Guenon, Alfred Cobban, Frederick Hertz, H.G. Wells, and numerous others, not only support the unity of mankind but also predict it!

12. Pragmatism: At the dawn of Islam, Greeks were the torchbearers of knowledge in the world. Many scholars including Briffault and Higgins have correctly remarked that the Greek knowledge rested on theory and logic. Experimentation had no place in the Greek system of learning. Aristotle had written that women were deficient in intellect because they had only 28 teeth. He never even bothered to look! He also stated that an egg would float in the ocean! It was only Islam that taught mankind of the necessity of testing a theory or ideology by way of experimentation.

Quran 17:36 And you shall not follow blindly any information of which you have no direct knowledge. (Using your faculties of perception and conception) you must verify it for yourself. In the Court of your Lord, you will be held accountable for your hearing, sight, and the faculty of reasoning.

“The Renaissance of Europe did not take place in the 15th century. Rather it began when Europe learned from the culture of the Arabs. The cradle of European awakening is not Italy. It is the Muslim Spain.” (Robert Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*)

For the sake of brevity, our list has been kept very incomplete.

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WHO WAS MUHAMMAD?

(A brief biography)

Respected readers,

We have seen a glimpse of the illumination issuing forth from some brilliant minds, mostly Western. Isn't it time that we listened to these sincere voices and did some of our own reflection instead of getting carried away by hearsay?

Why Should We Know Muhammad?

We must, because he was by far the most remarkable and the most influential man that ever set foot on this earth. If we do not know him, we will remain oblivious to what phenomenal potential we as humans are endowed with and how this potential can be actualized.

He preached a most glorious System of Life, founded a state, built a nation, set up a moral code, initiated countless social and political reforms, set forth a dynamic and powerful society, and revolutionized human thought and behavior for all times to come. And he accomplished all these wonders in an astonishingly short span of 22 years!

When Muhammad died in 632 CE, the whole Arabia had changed from paganism and idol worship to the devotion of One True God, from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion, from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety, from violence to tranquility, from lawlessness and anarchy to orderly living, from moral bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence. History has never known such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since.

He was a most versatile personality, a social reformer, a moral guide, a political thinker, a military genius, a superb administrator, a faithful friend, an honest and successful merchant, an ideal neighbor, a wonderful companion, a devoted husband, a loving father, and a farsighted, inspiring leader. And he was a model of perfection in each of these areas.

Yes, there have been other great leaders in the world. But none combines so many qualities to such an amazing level of perfection as did Muhammad. The lives and teachings of other great figures in history are shrouded in the mist of time and legend. There is so much speculation about the time and place of their birth, the mode and style of their lives, the nature and detail of their teachings that it is impossible for humanity today to reconstruct accurately and precisely the personalities and teachings of those great figures. Not so with this man, Muhammad. Not only was he born in the fullest blaze of recorded history, but every detail of his private and public life, of his actions and utterances, has been accurately documented and preserved to our day in one simple Book, the Quran.

Muhammad not only preached the most wonderful ideas, but also successfully translated each one of them into action. At the time of his death his teachings were not mere precepts and ideas straining for fulfillment. They had become the very core of life of tens of thousands of perfectly trained individuals. In a few decades, his followers had established the greatest empire in history. Such was the prosperity and peace in this empire that it was almost impossible to find a single person worthy of receiving alms and charity. A young woman could travel alone hundreds of miles without any fear but the fear of God. At what other time or place and in relation to what other political, social, religious system, philosophy or ideology - did the world ever witness such a perfectly astounding phenomenon? The answer is, NEVER AND NOWHERE!

In spite of the phenomenal success that crowned his success, he did not for a moment claim to be anything but only a human being who was chosen and ordained by the Creator to be a teacher of truth to mankind and be a complete model and pattern for their actions. He was a man with a noble and exalted Mission - and his unique Mission was to unite humanity under One God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living in accordance with the Command of God.

Today, after the lapse of some 1,400 years, the life and teachings of Muhammad have survived without the slightest loss, alteration or interpolation. Today they offer the same undying hope for treating mankind's many ills as they did when Prophet Muhammad was alive. This is our honest claim and this is the inescapable conclusion forced upon us by the critical and unbiased study of the dynamics of human history.

As thinking, sensitive, concerned human beings, we owe it to ourselves to stop for one brief moment and ask, "Could it be that these statements, extraordinary as they sound, are really true? Supposing they are really true and we did not know this man, Muhammad or hear about his teachings - Or

did not know him well enough to be able to benefit from his guidance and example. Is it not time we responded to this tremendous challenge and made some effort to know this man?" It will cost us nothing but it may well prove to be the beginning of a brand new vibrant era in our lives.

Come! Let us make a new discovery, know this wonderful man Muhammad, the like of whom never walked this earth, whose example can change our lives and our world for the better.

This is the appropriate time to study a brief biography of the incredible man called Muhammad of Arabia.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

570 CE	: Muhammad, the exalted, born in Makkah. His father, Abdullah dies before the Prophet is born.
576	: Mother Amena dies. Grandfather Abdul Muttalib becomes the guardian.
578	: Grandfather dies. Abu Talib, a paternal uncle, assumes guardianship.
582	: First trading journey to Syria with Abu Talib.
595	: Marriage to Khadijah r.a.
605	: Muhammad (S) helps rebuild Ka'bah after a flood.
610	: Angel Gabriel visits Muhammad (S) - The First Revelation
613	: The Message of Islam begins reaching the community. Persecution of Muslims begins.
615	: The Prophet orders some Muslims to migrate to Ethiopia-Abyssinia.
617	: Persecution increases. The Prophet (S) and his followers are boycotted by Makkans. Many people of the far away town (270 miles North) Madinah embrace Islam and invite the Prophet and his followers to live among them.
619	: Khadijah and Abu Talib die.
622	: The Prophet migrates to Madinah. Islamic State established. New Constitution declared.
623	: The Prophet (S) marries Ayesha r.a.
624	: The Battle of Badr - The Turning Point
626	: The Battle of Uhud
627	: The Battle of the Trench or Clans (Khandaq or Ahzab)
628	: The Treaty of Hudaibiyah
628	: Invitation to Emperors
630	: Conquest of Makkah
632	: Last pilgrimage to Makkah and the Farewell Address
632	: The greatest man departs

YEAR OF THE ELEPHANT 570 CE:

Muhammad (S), the greatest man ever to set foot on earth, was born in Makkah in the year 570 CE commonly referred to as '*Aam-il-Fil* (Year of the Elephant). He belonged to Quresh that were the most honored tribe of Arabia for being the custodians of Ka'bah, the holiest shrine in the land.

Note: Scholars have agreed that even after the most diligent research, it is almost impossible to determine the exact dates of events during Muhammad's (S) lifetime.

Muhammad (S), like all Arabs, belonged to the progeny of Ismail a.s. Ibrahim a.s. on Allah's Command, had settled his elder son, teenager Ismail a.s. (Ishmael) to reside permanently in Makkah along with his mother Haajirah. Contrary to the Biblical statement, Hagar was not a bondswoman. She was the daughter of the Egyptian/Syrian king. Abraham kept traveling between his second wife Haajirah (Hagar) in Makkah and first wife Sarah in Can'aan (Syria-Palestine). Ismail married a woman from the Qahtani Tribe of Jurham and became the ancestor of *Musta Ribah* (Arabianized Tribes or the Arabs.)

So the Arabs are, interestingly, descendants of a Hebrew father, Ishmael and a Qahtani Jurham mother, Wasiqa. They had twelve sons in their long and happy married life. The Qahtanis are still abundantly found in the Arabian Peninsula. They were a wandering tribe in Southern Arabia who had settled around Makkah before Ismail a. s.

The "Wilderness of Beer-Sheba" of Genesis 21:14, embraces Southern Palestine and Hijaz (roughly, the land between and around Makkah and Madinah). Therefore, the Bible and the Quran are in agreement concerning where Hazrat Ismail and his mother Haajirah had settled after moving from Can'aan.

This history also explains why the Quran repeatedly asserts that the Arabs had not received any Scripture before the Quran. Obviously, the Arabs became a community long after their ancestor, Ishmael had passed on.

THE KINGDOM OF SHEBA: In Yemen had collapsed in 115 B.C. They were overtaken by the Himairis who ruled until 300 CE when other tribes overtook the control of Yemen. They were in turn defeated by the Christian Kingdom of Ethipoia-Abyssinia when they invaded Yemen in 525 CE. The kingdom appointed Abrahah as the Viceroy of Yemen.

ABRAHAH PLANS TO DEMOLISH KA'BAH: The Roman and the Abyssinian Christians longed for converting the idolaters of Arabia to Christianity. They also sought control of the trade routes between Arabia, Syria, Persia

and the Western Roman Empire. They saw Ka'bah in Makkah as a hindrance to their imperialistic and religious designs. Abrahah, the Viceroy of Yemen, made a smart move. Between 550 and 555 CE he built a gorgeous cathedral *Ekklesia* in San'aa, Yemen and invited his people and neighboring nations to come for pilgrimage there instead of going to Makkah. But Ekklesia remained unpopular and Abrahah decided to invade Makkah to demolish the Ka'bah and its surroundings.

Anticipating the presence of hostile tribes en route, he came up with a 60,000 strong army aided by thousands of horses, camels and thirteen elephants.

I agree with the research of Hamiduddin Farahi, 'Maulana' Amin Ahsan Islahi and Allama G.A. Parwez on what eventually happened. As Abrahah's army approached Makkah, the Makkans who had been alerted by some travelers beforehand, saw flocks of birds that normally fly over caravans in search for food. The Makkans mounted the hills around and threw stones on the troops. The elephants, and in turn, other rides panicked and trampled the soldiers. This incident took place in 570 CE, the year when the exalted Messenger was born. The event carried such significance that the Arabs marked "Year of the Elephant" ('Aam-il-Fil) as a point of reference in history.

CHAPTER 02

THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

WHAT MUHAMMAD (S) SAW IN HIS FORMATIVE YEARS

As a little bright youngster, he observed with dismay many wrongs in the society. All of Arabia was divided into warring tribes and there was no rule of law. In the absence of organized government and courts of law, total chaos in political, social, economic and moral arenas was the obvious consequence.

SOCIAL INEQUITY: A few elite were extremely wealthy while the vast majority lived in abject poverty and humiliation. These rich people were ruthless in their behavior to the poor. Slavery was rampant therefore, those in power owned slaves and concubines. The laboring slaves were beaten with whips for little or no reason. No one cared for their welfare or emancipation.

STATUS OF WOMEN: Women were primarily the objects of pleasure and subservience and they were exempted from all human rights. The concubines served their masters and were sexually molested frequently. The free women were expected to obey men, be objects of sensual pleasure for them and pour wine in their company, labor within and outside

the home and bear children. Some Arabs respected women especially those who had born children, and possessed knitting, weaving and cooking skills. Some women were hired or forced to sing and dance in public and in social gatherings. The birth of a girl was considered a matter of disgrace so much so that some Arabs buried their daughters alive. Men and women both were immodest. Disrobing in public was considered fashionable and they circled around the Ka'bah naked. As an exception, the wives of tribal leaders enjoyed a high status in the society and their jewelry, garment design, hairstyle, and mode of conduct became a fashion only to be dreamed by the poor majority. These "noble wives" wielded significant influence on their husbands, families and their own tribe. A tribe would be proud of a beautiful, smart, fashionable and artistic woman and she was seen as a prized potential booty by the adversary tribes.

ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING: Alcohol was rampant and quality drinks were considered as a status symbol. People got drunk, lost self-control and misbehaved; as a result, bloody feuds were a daily occurrence. Gambling was a part of everyday life. One who avoided alcohol and gambling was labeled a *berm*, meaning outcast. No person would befriend a *berm*. Men would put their wives as stakes in gambling and betting. If a person lost in gambling or could not pay his debt, he became a slave often along with the women of his family.

THAAR (CHAIN REVENGE):- Tribes fought endless wars in chain revenge on menial issues such as a goat or camel having grazed at someone else's field. Aggression was considered to grant dignity and superiority to a tribe and its leader. Looting and raiding other tribes was considered honorable. There was total disregard for other people's life, honor and property. Seeking revenge was a sacred duty and people took revenge even for their remote ancestors.

SUPERSTITIONS: A vast majority of the Arabs were pagans. The society as a whole was ridden with superstition. They believed in good and bad omens, wild interpretation of dreams, magic, clairvoyance, evil spirits, demons and witches, evil eye, arrows of good and bad luck, lucky and ominous stars, stones, days and numbers. Each family and tribe had their own special "gods". The fear of unseen creatures was common. Poets, fortune-tellers, soothsayers, diviners, and religious leaders easily exploited them.

MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD: Raising herds of livestock, camels, goats, sheep, cows, owning date palm trees and orchards, vineyards, parts of oasis, and

looting were the common ways of making a living. Barter and trade were popular but honesty was unknown. Usury was rampant making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Big businessmen sent trade caravans to distant lands. The trade caravans were frequently looted. The proud rich wasted a lot of resources. They would kill their camels in competition. If one killed some camels the other would slay twice as many just to impress others.

DIVERSITY OF RELIGIONS: Although most inhabitants were pagans, it was a diverse, albeit peaceful, society. Jews and Christians in the Arabian Peninsula numbered quite a few thousands. There were among them Sabians (Nature worshipers), those who believed only in Yahya a. s. (John the Baptist), Agnostics, and followers of *Deen-e-Hanif* (Strict Monotheists that followed the remnants of Hazraat Ibrahim and Ismail's teachings).

This society was devoid of a government and any rules or standards of conduct. Immorality and corruption was an accepted part of life. "Might is Right", was the order of the day to solve all disputes. These were the circumstances when the exalted Prophet would herald the greatest Mission ever.

EARLY LIFE

CHAPTER 03

Muhammad, the great Prophet, was born in Makkah on 20th April 570 CE. Makkah is a town in today's western Saudi Arabia. Bani Hashim, a branch of the Quresh tribe, were a noble and honored people among whom he was born. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, was the chief of his tribe and the chief of Makkah as well. Abdul Muttalib was in charge of the Ka'bah which is the symbolic First House of Monotheism. It was built by Prophet Ibrahim and his son Ismail, about 2000 BC.

THE PARENTS, THE GRAND OLD MAN OF MAKKAH AND THE LITTLE ORPHAN:

The chief, Abdul Muttalib had 10 sons. Abdullah was the youngest. The family arranged his marriage to a beautiful, gentle, and intelligent young lady. Her name was Amena bint Wahab. Abdullah means the servant of Allah and Amena means someone who is at peace and provides peace. Both were about 20 years old at the time of their marriage. Soon after, Abdullah went to a business trip to Syria. While returning home, he became ill and died in Madinah at the home of his maternal grandparents. Amena was devastated, but she had excellent support from her illustrious husband's family.

Muhammad was born after his father's untimely death. His mother and family members took very good care of him. But another misfortune struck when he was only 6 years old. His loving mother died of a brief febrile illness, possibly sun-stroke. She was in the middle of Madinah and Makkah returning with Abdul Muttalib after visiting her deceased husband's grave in Madinah. Prophet Muhammad was at a great disadvantage from the beginning. Fortunately, his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, was a very kind and caring personality.

NO EDUCATION: In Makkah, there were no schools in those days. The young boy had no siblings and few like-minded youngsters. We may wonder how such a smart child spent his time! The summers were too hot with outdoors temperature in the desert rising as high as 116, and it got freezing cold in winters. Mud and wood houses and big shady trees afforded the only respite from harsh weather. There was no library, no mode of learning or teaching. Only 23 people in Makkah knew how to read or write.

NO VEHICLES, NO LAMPS: Older nations had wheel-carts three to four thousand years before the Prophet's time. The people of Egypt and the Indus Valley (now in Pakistan) used wheelbarrows, bullock carts, chariots and horse carriages. In Arabia, however, no one had a vehicle. People used donkeys, ponies, horses, mules and camels for traveling. Of course, there were no media. Poetry, stories, and gossip were the sole means of communication. It is hard to conceive, but people of Arabia did not use any sort of lamps at night.

THE LITTLE BRIGHT MUHAMMAD IN THE DARK ENVIRONMENT:

It was in this environment that the Prophet (S) was learning about life. The smart, peaceful child created his own resources and never wasted his time. Some may wonder why the little boy Muhammad is called Prophet. The reason is that all prophets were born as such although commissioned to the Divine Office later. The Quran states that they were chosen individuals, hence, none can become a prophet by striving to do so. Muhammad (S) was commissioned to prophethood and received the first Message from Allah in his 40th year but he was a prophet by birth.

The young, bright, orphan boy was raised in Makkah and in the desert around the town. Very early in his life, he learned to ride the bareback ponies, mules, horses and camels. There were no swimming pools in those days but rainwater did collect in natural ponds. So the little boy learned how to swim. He also kept busy by taking the sheep and goats of his family and neighbors out for grazing. He also liked to play with his bow and arrow

in the safety of the desert. Running after the arrows, herding animals, riding and swimming, all kept him very fit. Herding livestock made him feel very responsible. No one at that time had the faintest idea that this brilliant, lovely child would one day become the greatest leader of mankind.

As he grew, the clear days and nights of the desert offered a vast view of Nature. Allah teaches us through the Quran but we also learn from His other Book, the Universe around us. Muhammad closely observed the wonders of Nature around him. He understood that there is great discipline in the Universe. The sun rose in the East and set in the West everyday. The moon and the stars appeared at night. Seasons changed in regular sequence. Seeds grew into plants. He knew in his heart that there could be only One Creator and Sustainer to keep such remarkable order and discipline in the Universe. He was surrounded by adults and children who worshipped the sun, the moon, the stars, rocks, idols and trees. There were hundreds of idols in the Ka'bah. They thought that the angels were the daughters of God. Jews and Christians in Arabia assigned children to God such as Osiris and Jesus, respectively. Even as a child, Muhammad never worshipped any of these false gods.

THE FANCY DRESS SHOW: One day, when he was a teenager, youngsters promised to take him to a nice place. In fact, it was an immodest fancy dress and dancing show on stage. Muhammad did not waste any time. He turned back home alone and never went to any shows again.

When others wasted their time in vain talk and senseless play, Muhammad the exalted, was helping people. He helped the elderly, the sick and the widows with their needs. He even milked their cows and goats and fed any hungry animals. He always did his own chores and even repaired his own shoes. Everyone in town loved him. They called him Ameen (Trustworthy) and Sadiq (Truthful).

GRANDFATHER AND UNCLE: The grand old man of Makkah, Abdul Muttalib died at the age of 82. Muhammad (S) was about 8 years old at that time. A son of Abdul Muttalib, Abu Talib raised Muhammad (S) from then on.

When the exalted Prophet was born, he was named Muhammad by his celebrated grandfather. This was a very special name since no one ever had this name before. People asked Abdul Muttalib, "Why a brand new name?" He responded, "I want this child to be praiseworthy." Muhammad means the praised one.

When Muhammad (S) was 12 years old his uncle Abu Talib, started taking him with trade caravans to Syria. Makkah was an important business center

in those days. Camel and horse caravans frequented between Yemen, Makkah, Madinah and Syria.

EARLY QUALITIES: Even when the exalted Prophet was very young, he had exceptional qualities. He respected elders and was very kind to children. He realized that time made up life, so he never wasted it. Rather, he was learning new skills everyday. Later on he would remark, "One whose two successive days go in an identical state has lost worthy opportunities." Unlike other youngsters, he did not indulge in vain sport or talk. He would rather serve the community day and night. There were no banks or safe deposits in those days. People of Makkah deposited their valuables with the teenager Muhammad because he was trustworthy. They knew him as a young man of life upright. He shunned intoxicants, gambling, violence, and bad company.

NOT A "BERM": But no one thought of him as a *berm*, because: He had a decent sense of humor and enjoyed good poetry. He was an extremely good listener and spoke softly, slowly, and clearly. He was a man of word and people could depend on him. He used to draw great lessons from history and shared them with others. Muhammad (S) took deep and sincere interest in human, animal and plant life. He was extremely environment conscious and did exemplary community service. No one ever saw Muhammad (S) losing his temper. Overall, he had a matchless nobility of character. The Prophet would later tell the people of Makkah, "I have spent a lifetime in your midst. Don't you reflect?" It is amazing to note that even his enemies could find no fault in him throughout his life.

THE PEACE DEAL: When he was about 25 years old, Muhammad, the exalted, helped formulate a very important document. He sat down with the influential leaders of the town. Keeping in mind the insecurity of that society, they reached the following conclusions:-

01. Travel must be made safe.
02. Tribal raids must be halted.
03. The poor must be helped.
04. The weak must be protected. Most tribes of Makkah agreed with the idea.

Their leaders signed this historical document, *Halaf-il-Fudhool* (The Vow of Bounty, also named as such since three of those tribal leaders were named Fadhl) and hung it on the door of Ka'bah.

BRITISH KNIGHTS FOLLOW SUIT IN THE 16TH CENTURY: It is interesting to note that 1000 years later the United Kingdom adopted this historical document. In the 16th century Britain, any person becoming a knight had to pledge his allegiance to the above mentioned four rules.

AN IMPORTANT TRUCE: During Muhammad's (S) youth, the Ka'bah was damaged by a flood. The local chiefs helped repair it. Now, the 'sacred' black stone had to be placed in its corner. Traditionally, this black stone is a meteorite. It had been used as a mark for pilgrims to walk around the Ka'bah. Every tribe wanted the honor of fixing it. Heated arguments took place and violence was about to break out. Then one of the leaders suggested finding a judge to resolve the matter. It was decided that whoever entered the Ka'bah first thing in the morning would be the judge. The next morning, the first man to enter happened to be none else but Muhammad (S). The leaders screamed with joy, "Here is Ameen, here is Sadiq!" Muhammad (S) peacefully obviated a sure bloody feud. He laid his shawl on the floor, placed the black stone in the middle, and then he asked the chief of each tribe to hold the shawl at and between each corner. They walked together to the assigned corner thus. Muhammad (S) then lifted the black stone and placed it where it belonged. A bloody and highly destructive battle had been avoided to the joy of all.

MARRIAGE: There was a noble widow, a highly successful businesswoman in Makkah. Her name was Khadijah bint Khawailid. She used to send trade caravans to Syria and her business was flourishing. She heard of a man in Makkah, whose name was Muhammad. What a wonderful name -'The praised one!' And the Makkans seldom called him by his first name. They referred to him by his titles "As-Sadiq" and "Al-Ameen." Khadijah requested this trustworthy and truthful man to lead her caravan. She sent her servant Maiysarah, to accompany him. The long trip turned out to be very successful and profitable. Maiysarah was incessantly showering laurels on Muhammad (S). He told Khadijah r. a. how intelligent, patient, hard working, and honest Muhammad (S) was. The prosperous, noble and honored lady of Makkah was very impressed. She sent in a proposal for marriage through a lady friend. The young Prophet and his uncle Abu Talib gladly accepted. Khadijah was 40 and Muhammad (S) 25 at the time of their marriage.

THE CALL TO PROPHETHOOD: Like other prophets, Muhammad, the
CHAPTER 04 y God. The time was right. The place was perfect.

TIME: Human beings had advanced in learning through the ages, and civilizations had developed with time. The earlier prophets were given messages for their times and their nations. Then, humanity grew up

enough to receive the Final Message - The Final Word of God, for all, for all times. The time was so right that it could not have been more suitable. The Message to the Last Prophet could now be preserved, every word of it. This Word would remain modern for all times. Books and writings could be easily saved on parchment and widely published in the 7th century.

PLACE: No place could be better than Makkah to receive the Last Word of God. The city of Makkah was a center of trade caravans. It already had the widely revered First Symbolic House of Monotheism. The Ka'bah had been built by Prophet Ibrahim 2,500 years before. Being the loftiest and earliest Symbol of True Monotheism, it is a constant reminder to people that all humankind is One Community just as their Creator is One. The people of Makkah were respected in Arabia because they took care of the Sacred House. Makkah in the vast desert expanse was far removed from other civilizations. The people of the town were rugged and shrewd since they had to survive in very formidable natural and lawless environment. Very importantly, they had never been ruled by foreign powers, and therefore, they had all the qualities of a free nation. They were bold, strong and straightforward. They always kept their word and would lay down their lives for it. If a tribe violated the amnesty given to someone by the other, one shout could fetch them to the battlefield. Dying in bed was a matter of shame for them while giving life in battle was highly regarded.

Only a few people in Makkah knew how to read and write. So, they relied on their memory for history and knowledge. Consequently, they had very sharp memories. It appears that according to Divine Plan, they had been grooming and perfecting their Arabic language making it fit to receive Allah's Final Revelation. Poets, story-tellers, genealogists, and good narrators enjoyed special distinction in the Arab society. Many of these qualities made Makkah the best place in the world to receive the Final Message.

We have briefly examined the good and the bad in Arabian society. Prophet Muhammad (S) knew that his society needed a drastic change. He used to do a lot of thinking about it never knowing until the Day of Revelation that the Noble Task would be eventually assigned to him.

29:48 For, (O Prophet) you were never able to read a book or Scripture before this (Quran), nor could you write anything with your own hand. Or else, they who try to disprove the Truth might have some cause to doubt it.

Sometimes, he went out of the town to find solitude. Until this day, there exists the Mountain of Light (*Jabl-in-Noor*), a few miles from Makkah. This mountain has a little cave called *Hira*. It is about 12 feet long and 6 feet wide. The Prophet (S) used to spend an occasional day there, contemplated and prayed for guidance. He would then come back to town, and continue business as usual. He helped his community more than ever. The Quran

keeps the legend in proper perspective by stating that Allah found him searching for Guidance and He granted it.

93:7 And He found you looking for guidance, and showed you the way.

WHEN MUHAMMAD (S) IS COMMISSIONED, 4/16/610: It can be stated without exaggeration that April 16th, 610 CE was the most significant day in all human history. He was still under 40 on that epoch making day of 25th Ramadhan, April 16th, 610 CE. On this day, the unseen Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet with the first Message from Allah. As soon as he shared his experience with his noble wife, Khadijah, she immediately accepted the Revelation. She said from her heart, "You are loyal to your family, truthful and trustworthy. You always help the poor and needy, take care of the widows and orphans, are hospitable to your guest and comfort the grieved. Allah will never let you be unsuccessful."

THE QURAN: It is worth noting here that, contrary to popular reports, the Quran was revealed to the exalted Prophet in the exact order as we see it today. The entire Book was, so to speak, down-loaded on his heart but came to his tongue and was conveyed to people in stages over a period of 22 plus years. It was written down by honored scribes on well-scored parchment complete with vowels and punctuation. All reports that a particular Surah (Chapter) or verse was revealed as demanded by a certain situation (*Shaan-e-Nuzool*) are totally false. All claims that the Book was arranged in the currently available order by the Prophet (S) are unsupported by the internal evidence. Similar is the situation with conspiracies that the Quran was initially written on stones, waste leather, bones, tree-barks and leaves, and that it was compiled by the third Caliph, Hazrat Uthman. The Quran was indeed very much present, written on parchment and in book form right in the lifetime of the exalted Prophet. The Quran states, "*Zaalik-al-Kitaab*" (This is the Book), in the very beginning.

(From "The Quran As It Explains Itself" by Shabbir Ahmed, understanding, not translation) 2:2 This Book is the Guidance you asked for! There is absolutely no doubt concerning its authority and authenticity. This Divine Writ, Al-Quran, is a Monograph that finds its own way from your mind to your heart. And you will soon notice, as you proceed, that this Scripture leaves no lingering doubts in a sincere, seeking heart. If you remember that this is a Book of Guidance, and hence, consult with it as such, the glittering reality will dawn upon you that this is a Beacon of Light! It is a Guide for all those who wish to journey through life in true honor and security. [Recorded on parchment by honorable scribes appointed by the Messenger - The Almighty Himself guarantees the Truth of this Revelation, its explanation and its preservation. And you will find it free of contradictions.

'Al-Quran' = The Lecture or Monograph that finds its own way to sincere hearts, becoming 'Az-Zikr' = The Reminder. 4:82, 10:37, 15:9, 29:48-49, 32:2, 52:2-3, 75:17-19, 80:13-16]

THE NOBLEST MISSION STATEMENT EVER: At the outset of the call to the prophetic office, the exalted Muhammad announced the highest and the noblest possible Mission Statement ever, "We will establish a State wherein a beautiful young woman laden with jewelry will be able to travel alone from Yemen to Busra (in Syria, about 2000 miles). Yet, she will have no fear but the fear of Allah."

This meant that in the Muslim Empire, the life, honor and property of all citizens would be safe. It promised peace and rule of law in the society beginning with discipline in the hearts. The exalted Prophet achieved this lofty mission in his lifetime! *Sall-Allahu-'Alaiyhe-Wasallam*

THE FIRST BELIEVERS: Family and friends know us best. The first ones to accept the message were his family and friends:-

01. Khadijah, his wife, instantly believed.
02. Abu Bakr, his closest friend accepted right away.
03. Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's young first cousin, immediately said yes.
04. Zaid bin Haritha, the Prophet's adopted son, showed no hesitation.

Others to soon follow suit were: Hazraat Uthman bin Affan, Zubair bin Awam, Abdur Rahman bin Awf, Sa'd bin Abi Waqas, Talha bin Ubaidullah, Abu Ubaida bin Jarrah, Abu Salma, Arqam Mahzoomi, Ubaida bin Harith, Sa'eed bin Zayd along with his wife Fatima bint Khattab.

THE OPPOSITION: In Makkah there were men of great power and wealth. An average leader had about 7 wives, 10 concubines and 15 slaves. On the average, there were five slaves to one free man.

The Makkan leadership and people under their control vehemently opposed the exalted Prophet. It is easily conceivable why they opposed him. Well, he proclaimed strict Monotheism dismissing their pagan gods. But for the highly intelligent leaders, there was another much bigger consequential reason as well that struck at their vested interests. He taught that just as God is One, humans are one. Every human being is born honorable (*Laqad Karramna Bani Adam*). Honor is a birthright of every person regardless of any man-made distinctions, and thus all men and women are equal. The only criterion of superiority would be one's conduct. Color, job, lineage, ethnicity, national affiliations, wealth, power, family and tribe would impart

distinction to none. There is no master and no slave. The only True Master is Allah, the One True God.

Among the enemy leaders, the most prominent were: Abu Lahab (the Prophet's paternal uncle who was the chief priest of Ka'bah), Abu Lahab's wife Umm Jamil, Abu Sufiyan, Umar bin Hasham (Abu Jahl), Umayya bin Khalaf, Waleed bin Mugheera, Atbah bin Rabee', Suhail bin Umro, Aqaba bin Mu'eet and Aas bin Wael. People like these tried their best to block the Noble Mission. They threatened the Prophet, mocked him, and severely persecuted him and his companions in every possible way.

About 12 years of preaching in Makkah had brought only 300 converts to Islam in the entire Peninsula, including only 21 from Makkah. This should give plenty of strength and motivation to the *Da'ee* (caller to Islam) of today.

THE PROPHET'S DETERMINATION: The leaders of Makkah contrived a plan. They went to Muhammad (S) and said, "O Muhammad! We will accept you as the King of Arabia. We will grant you all the wealth you desire. We will find the most charming, honorable, and beautiful queen for you. Just stop conveying your message to people." But, the exalted Prophet knew the Way of Life that makes everyone feel like a king or queen. He said, "No, thank you!" to them. He was conveying the Message of God following His Command. So, how could he stop!

Leaders of the tribes now decided on another tactic. They went to the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, with threats. The old man feared that the powerful leaders might harm his beloved nephew. The exalted Prophet responded, "My dear uncle! Even if they place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left hand, I will not give up my Mission. By Allah! Either I will succeed or lose my life in pursuing my Mission." Abu Talib got struck with his determination and promised undaunting support.

An Important Note On Abu Talib: Most of the Sunni historians biased against Shias remain adamant that Hazrat Abu Talib never embraced Islam and even refused to recite the KALEMAH at his death-bed. How could that be the attitude of this great benefactor of Islam who consistently put his life in line to defend the prophet (S) and his Call?

A GREAT ANALOGY: One day, the exalted Prophet climbed *Mount Safa* and called people. When they assembled, he asked, "My dear fellows, I am standing on the peak of this mountain. If I tell you that an army is on the way to attack you, will you believe me?" The people replied, "Of course, you are truthful and trustworthy." The Prophet (S) then said, "You know (from where I am standing) I can see what you don't. Similarly, by the

Revelation of Allah I see what you do not - The Way of Life that can grant you Paradise in this life and in the next." Upon the instigation of Abu Lahab, people dispersed murmuring.

DEATH OF KHADIJAH AND ABU TALIB, 619 CE: The grand lady of Makkah, Khadijah bint Khuwailid r. a. passed away 3 years before *Hijrah* (Migration) in 619 CE. She was 65 then while the exalted Prophet was 50 years old. Their family life had been exemplary since their relationship was based on mutual trust, kindness, equity, love and understanding. Khadijah took care of the home while Muhammad (S) ran the business. Together they did a great deal of community service and strove to make Makkah a better place to live. On their way they would pick up thorns and nails and would not mind clearing the streets of trash. The comfort and welfare of people was always their top priority. The whole town knew that Muhammad (S) was always there to help and Khadijah r. a. was always the ideal companion to her husband.

HIJRAH (MIGRATION TO MADINAH – JUL 16, 622 CE)

CHAPTER 05

Madinah is a town about 270 miles north of Makkah on the western coast of today's Saudi Arabia. The Prophet (S) had advised some Makkans to migrate to Ethiopia (615 CE) and later to Madinah. Ethiopia's Christian King Negus (*Najashi*) was a kind-hearted man. He saw the common grounds, sheltered Muslims and soon embraced Islam. During the past 12 plus years, some people of Madinah also had embraced Islam. The Muslims of Madinah had been inviting the exalted Prophet to move to their town. It was in the year 622 CE when Muhammad (S) made his move to Madinah. This was the most influential migration in history since it was to change the future of humanity. Traveling 270 miles on camel back usually took about 2 weeks. The exalted Prophet rode to Madinah on camel back with Hazrat Abu Bakr as his companion. The people of Madinah welcomed the Prophet with great joy. Men, women and children all were extremely delighted. The Day of Hijrah or Migration marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. The exalted Prophet brought peace to Madinah. He ended tribal warfare and signed peace treaties with the local tribes, the Jews and other groups. The previous name of this blessed township was *Yathrib*. From this point on, it came to be known as Madinah-tun-Nabi (Town of the Prophet).

OTHER WIVES? The exalted Prophet was now also Head of the State. Quite a few Muslims had been killed in battles and by persecution. There were women who accepted Islam while their husbands did not. The Quran does not allow a Muslim woman to remain wedded to a Non-Muslim. In these circumstances, there were many women and their children who needed shelter. The Prophet (S) and his companions accommodated them

in their homes. To prevent slander, these widows and divorcees simply signed marriage contracts in their new households.

To emphasize the point again, the exalted Messenger married only Hazrat Khadija when he was 25, and she was 40. They lived an ideal married life for 25 years. Hazrat Khadija died in Makkah at 65. Three years after her death and soon after migration to Madinah in AH 1, Muhammad (S) married Hazrat Ayesha, a sister of Hazrat Abu Bakr. She was then 48.

During the blessed times, the Central Government run with *Shura* used to issue a deed of marriage to all women seeking asylum with Rasool (S) and Sahaba Kiraam in order to prevent slander. This is the reason why the Quran mentions the exalted Prophet's wives in plural. Please reflect on the many shades of the meaning of *Nikah*. Also consider why NONE BUT Hazrat Khadijah bore any children to the exalted Prophet.

Maria, the bondwoman reportedly "gifted" to the exalted prophet by the Egyptian ruler, is nothing but a malicious fabrication. How could the exalted prophet accept bondwomen and slaves when the Quran was emancipating them? One might assume well and think, "Well, in order to grant them freedom." But our brilliant historians insist that Maria always remained a concubine!

These concealed books are scarcely available in Arabic only under strict protection of the Muslim clergy, under custody of the autocratic Arab world.

Their stray copies are found in the Istanbul Museum, the library of Madinah University, Tashqand (Tashkent) Muslim Library in the former Soviet Union, Jame'ah Al-Azhar of Cairo, Maktaba Adnan in Beirut and in some cases they have been personally inherited by the progeny of the ancient scholars. These books are so well-guarded that only a few scholars have been able to partially photograph these precious documents. They are closely guarded since they demolish our mythical, but 'canonized' histories such as by Tabari, Ibn Atheer, and Ibn Khaldun and the conjecture based Biographies (Seera-tun-Nabi) of the Prophet (S) by Ibn Ishaq? - and Ibn Hisham.

I am extremely grateful to my respected readers who, at the risk of life and imprisonment, have been mailing me these photographed excerpts.

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I do not know if Maktaba Adnan in Beirut and Darul Afaq Publishing Company of Beirut are still surviving after the 2004-5 bombing of the city by Isreal.

CHAPTER 06

BATTLES: It must be noted that all battles during the lifetime of the exalted Prophet took place within a radius of 80 miles of Madinah. Makkah, the center of the arch-enemies was 270 miles away. This fact proves beyond doubt that they were fought in self-defense. *Ghazwah Hunain* is the only exception in that it was fought in the *Valley of Hunain* between Taaif and Makkah (Feb 630). The peaceful Muslims were attacked by opponents when the Prophet (S) and the *Sahaba Kiraam* were returning from the conquest of Makkah.

HOW MUCH BLOODSHED: - For the greatest Revolution in history? In the 19 *Ghazwaat* (Battles in which the exalted Prophet participated) and 63 *Sarayah* (skirmishes in which he did not personally participate) the total loss of life was minimal with 259 Muslims and 759 opponents getting slain, a total of 1,018. Not a single non-combatant was killed or harmed in these 82 battles.

Much detail, usually irrational, can be found in history books about these battles. Please recall Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal's confession: "Three kinds of books are absolutely unfounded, *Maghazi, Malaham and Tafseer*" (Battles in which the exalted Prophet was present, Skirmishes and Expositions of the Quran). The above well-researched paragraph on the Battles sums up the basics. Any reports contradicting these basics have been found to be non-Quranic and, therefore, fabricated. We can save much valuable time here by briefly describing only some of these important Battles.

THE BATTLE OF BADR: Apparently a minor event, the Battle of Badr, turned the tide of human history for all times to come. It was the second year after Hijrah (624 CE). The pagans in Makkah knew that Islam was conquering hearts and minds in the state of Madinah. They were afraid that the revolution would eventually reach them, so, they decided to nip it in the

bud and came to attack Madinah with over 1,000 well-equipped warriors aided by plenty of cavalry of horses and camels. The exalted Prophet decided to meet them at a small oasis, Al-Badr, south of Madinah. The mere 313 poorly equipped Muslims included the old and the young, most of them being foot soldiers. The "soldiers" were in fact civilians and their armoury was scant and clumsy. Within a few hours, the weak and out-numbered Muslims stunned the mighty enemy and won the battle decisively. Most of the powerful leaders of Makkah were slain. Muslims treated the captives with great care and kindness. They were fed and dressed better than the victors. Many of them accepted Islam. The rest were very soon set free to go back to their hometown.

THE BATTLE OF UHUD: Shortly after Badr, the people of Makkah raided Madinah with a much bigger army of 3,000 in 626 CE. The Battle took place just outside Madinah. *Uhud*, still standing, is the name of the famous mountain where the two forces met. The Muslims were greatly outnumbered, only 700, and under-equipped. Yet they were about to achieve another swift victory. Seeing this, 50 archers left their positions rather prematurely and there was a temporary setback for Muslims when the fleeing Makkans returned and counter-attacked. Finally, with nearly equal amount of casualties on both sides, the Makkans turned back.

THE BATTLE OF AL-AHZAAB (CLANS): In 627 CE, the Quraysh Tribe of Makkah amassed 24,000 strong troops. This force included Jews and several tribes and clans from Madinah and suburbs, the groups that had broken peace treaties with Muslims. After due consultation with his companions, the Prophet (S) decided to meet the enemy outside of the town. Women that were unfit for combat were secured in a guarded fort along with children. While the enemy laid siege around the Muslim army of about 2,000 for 25 days, the Muslims remained vigilant and resorted to patient waiting. The sandstorm season was fast approaching and soon the weather became very hostile with storm winds uprooting the enemy tents and overturning their utensils, water tanks and fire-places. The enemy got demoralized, packed up their tents, lifted the seige and turned back. The traitors of Madinah and the tribes around who had violated the peace treaties were exiled. Madinah was never again attacked!

CHAPTER 07 URY

HUDAIBIYAH:

In the 6th year of Hijrah (June 628 CE), a truce was signed between the Muslims of Madinah and the non-believers of Makkah. This truce was called the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. Although the treaty, in detail, was apparently unfavorable for the Muslims, the exalted Prophet accepted it. This truce proved to be a blessing for Muslims and Islam. The people of Makkah and Madinah started meeting freely. Everyone could see and experience the truth and beauty of Islam established as a System of Life. More and more people kept embracing Islam.

AMBASSADORS:

The Magians of Persia and Christians of Byzantium (the Eastern Roman Empire) were oppressed by their rulers. They constantly requested the blessed State of Madinah to help liberate them. The Quran says that Muhammad, the exalted is "A Mercy for the Worlds." Therefore, his message is for all times and all people. Seizing advantage of the relative peace, the Prophet (S) invited kings and rulers of that time to accept Islam. He sent special ambassadors with brief yet effective letters.

Kisra, (Khusro Parwaiz) the Magian King of Persia, was the most powerful emperor of the time. He became enraged and tore the sacred invitation apart. The letter from the Prophet contained a touchy quotation, "Mend your ways of tyranny. Learn about Islamic justice before the plight of your own people befalls you." The Prophet, with his God-given insight, predicted that Khusro's Empire would tear apart just as he tore apart the letter. Soon, the prediction came to pass as we shall see in a chapter to follow.

Heraclius, the Christian Emperor of Byzantium was very inclined to accept the blessed invitation. Unfortunately, his courtiers threatened to rebel if the King chose Islam. Even then, Heraclius could not hold back his emotions of reverence. With tears in his eyes he said, "If I were to meet with the Prophet, I would wash his feet with my own hands."

Muqooqus, the pagan ruler of Egypt, received the Islamic ambassador with great hospitality. He went into deep thought and deferred his decision. The reports of his sending two concubines to the exalted Prophet are obviously fabricated. Everyone knew that he was emancipating slaves in the State of Madinah. The King of Abyssinia/Ethiopia, *Najashi* (Negus), already impressed with the Muslim immigrants, upon hearing some verses of the Quran, burst into tears and entered the blessed fold of Islam.

THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH JAN 630 CE, RAMADHAN AH 8:

During the previous 2 years of relative peace, Quraysh, the pagans of Makkah, were closely watching the long strides Islam was making. Wilfully

and repeatedly they violated the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, attacked small bands of peaceful Muslims and ultimately revoked it in writing. As Head of the State of Madinah, the Prophet had no choice, but to attack Makkah. With 10,000 soldiers, he marched to Makkah in 630 CE. Please note that in that blessed era, every able-bodied Muslim man and woman used to serve as a soldier in the defense of the Islamic State. There was no standing army as such. The Makkans were taken aback! The city was captured without any bloodshed. The exalted Prophet rode on his camel through the gate of the city while his opponents trembled in fear. Instead of showing royal pride, he was very humble and kept his head bowed in humility. Then he immediately declared amnesty for all, "This day there is no blame on you. All of you are completely free." Upon hearing this, everyone was stunned in amazement! Almost instantly, all of Makkah embraced Islam.

Among those Makkans, there were people who had driven Muhammad (S) and his family and companions out of their homes. There were those who had looted their property and killed many Muslims. They had severely persecuted the Prophet and Muslim men and women. They had tried their utmost to destroy Islam and Muslims. Yet the merciful Prophet tells them, "This day there is no blame on you." All of human history will fail to cite one example of clemency like this.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:

In a few days, the Muslims led by Muhammad (S), returned to Madinah. The unexpected Battle of *Hunayn* on the way back has been mentioned earlier. However, in the following few months most of the tribes, clans, and people in the Arabian Peninsula had embraced Islam. Since "No Compulsion in Religion" is the Law, most of the Jews, Christians and some Idolaters stuck to their old ways. The State of Madinah became a peaceful pluralistic society with a beautiful example of unity in diversity. A young beautiful woman laden in jewelry could travel anywhere in the State and she had no fear but the fear of Allah. The Lord's Kingdom had been established on earth for the first time ever.

THE CHAPTER 08 S (THE LAST SERMON)

In the year 632 CE (tenth year of Hijrah), the exalted Prophet came back to Makkah for the Final Pilgrimage. People had kept joining the Noble Caravan on its way to Makkah and there was a congregation of 140,000 people whom the Prophet (S) addressed from a mountaintop:

"O mankind! I believe we will not meet in this Congregation again.

Remember, your blood (life), your property and your honor is sacred unto each other. Very soon you will have to explain your actions before Allah.

O People! Your Sustainer Lord is One and your ancestry is common. No black is superior to a white, and no white is superior to a black, and no Arab is better than a non-Arab and no non-Arab is better than an Arab. Honor is the birthright of every human being. The only criterion of superiority amongst you is nothing but good conduct.

Treat those under your care equitably. Be kind to your servants. Feed them what you eat and clothe them as you clothe.

This day, the ways of the *Jahiliyyah* (the Age of Ignorance) are trampled under my feet. All bloodshed of the *Jahiliyyah* is declared null and void. This day, I revoke all previous warfare, contention, bloodshed, and chain revenge. I am the first one to forgive the murder committed against my family, that of Rabee'ah bin Harith.

All usury (interest on money) of *Jahiliyyah* is null and void from this day on. First of all, I revoke the interest owed to my family on behalf of my uncle Abbas bin Muttalib.

O Men! Be fearful of Allah in all matters concerning women. They have rights upon you as you have rights upon them. Treat them well and be kind to them. Remember, they are your companions, colleagues, and partners in life.

Just as you honor this month, this day and this place, likewise your blood and property is inviolable unto one another. All believers are brothers and sisters unto another. Nothing from a believer is permissible unto another unless it is given with cheerful consent.

Remember that everyone is a shepherd. You will be questioned about those under your care. If a non-Muslim were wronged in our State, I would personally plead on his or her behalf. Avoid extremes in religion. Peace, O Mankind! Peace.

O People! I am leaving behind one thing among you. If you hold it fast, you will never go astray. What is that thing? - The Book of Allah.

Even if an Ethiopian slave is chosen among you as *Ameer* (Ruler) and he takes you along the Book of Allah, obey him and follow him. Serve your Sustainer Lord by serving His creation and you will enter Paradise.

O People! Sincerity in action, working for the betterment of fellow humans, and unity among the Ummah are three things that keep the hearts refreshed and clean.

O Mankind! No prophet will come after me. And there is no Ummah (an Ideology-based Community) after you.

It is incumbent upon you to convey this Message of mine unto those who are not present here. Allah will ask you about me on the Day of Resurrection. Tell me, what you will say. The noble companions and the congregation repeating after a *Sahabi's* voice proclaimed, "We witness that you have conveyed the Message of Allah and fulfilled your Trust."

On hearing this, the Prophet (S) raised his hands and said, "O Allah! Be witness. O Allah! Be witness. O Allah! Be witness."

At this point, Allah revealed again part of a verse to the exalted Prophet, 5:3 ---- This Day I have perfected your DEEN for you, completed My favor upon you, and chosen for you Al-Islam as the System of Life. ----.

CHAPTER 09

THE GREATEST MAN DEPARTS, JUNE 8, 632 CE, RA 12, 11 HIJRAH

The Prophet (S) returned home to Madinah. Only a few months later, he breathed his last, in peace. Chest pain and high fever in his last few days point to possible Pneumonia as the terminal illness. He had nominated Abu Bakr r. a. as his successor and the Caliph would get the vote of confidence from the masses.

THE TRULY REMARKABLE LAST WORDS:

"Allahumma Rafeeqil A'laa" (Allah is the Glorious Companion). Even in his last words, the Prophet (S) raised humanity to glorious heights. Thinking of Allah as our Companion confers tremendous dignity upon humankind. Thus, we become the lesser companions. When we live according to His Laws, we figuratively join hands with Him, thereby creating Paradise on the earth and inheriting it in the Hereafter.

HAS MUHAMMAD, THE EXALTED DIED? :

Physically yes, but his Noble Mission is marching on. In this sense, he is living. The Quran foretells more than once that its Noble Message will prevail over all religion and ways of life. Just as the Creator is One, mankind is One Community.

CHAPTER 10

THE STATE OF MADINAH - THE CONSTITUTION - THE GOVERNMENT

The first ever Islamic State had been established during the Prophet's (S) lifetime on greater than one million sq. miles of land. The Ideological State maintained that no human has the right to rule over another human.

12:40 "All ruling belongs to Allah alone. He has commanded that you serve none but Him. That is the Right Way of Life but most people know not."

Since Allah does not walk in our midst, His obedience will mean obeying His Laws enshrined in the Quran. This is the only way total freedom can be achieved.

18:26 "They have no guardian apart from Him and He allots no one a share in His Rule."

During the blessed life of the Prophet, following were, then, the basic principles of the government.

None has the right to govern people but Allah.

The Constitution of the State is nothing but the Quran.

Obedience of Allah's Commands means His obedience.

These Commands and Laws are preserved in the Quran.

Implementation of these Laws is the central duty of the government.

The Quran leaves minor details open for changing times.

The Central Authority works out these details suited to the time and place.

The *Shura* convenes every Friday to make the by-laws.

Rule of Law was the cardinal feature of the State of Madinah, the first ever Kingdom of the Lord on earth.

NOMINATION: Anyone could propose names for the office-bearers who must accept the nomination freely. They had to get a vote of confidence (allegiance) from the people of their respective townships. Candidacy, self-promotion or coveting an office would automatically debar an individual from government service. One possessing special skills that are unknown to public might propose one's own name. So, there was no such thing as campaigning for elections.

4:59 O You who have chosen to be graced with belief! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (the Central Authority of the Divine System) and those whom the System has appointed as office-bearers. If you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to the Central Authority. If you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day this is the best approach for you, and more seemly in the end.

THE CONSULTATIVE BODY: (*Shura*): The chosen office-bearers would elect the Consultative Body among themselves. The *Shura* members were required to get allegiance from the residents of the capital, Madinah.

Conducting all matters of public interest with mutual consultation is one of the basic qualities of the believers.

42:38 And who respond to their Lord, and establish the Divine System and who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation. ----.

HEAD OF THE STATE: Muhammad (S) was gleefully nominated and accepted by the masses as the Head of The State of Madinah. They used to come in throngs for taking the oath of allegiance at the Prophet's hand. He wasted no time in establishing a Benevolent Order and signing peace treaties with Jews, idolaters and other tribes of Madinah. He set up true brotherhood between the Immigrants (*Muhajireen*) and the Helping Locals (*Ansaar*). The exalted Prophet was the first ever Leader to establish the Divinely ordained Charter of Human Rights and Constitution.

THE FIRST CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE FIRST CONSTITUTION EVER:-

01. It guaranteed every citizen Freedom, Security, and Justice.
02. Security of Faith, Mind, Life, Honor and Property.
03. Freedom of Speech and Assembly.
04. Freedom of Worship for Muslims as well as non-Muslims.
05. Rule of Law. All people in the State were equal and had equal rights.
06. The Right to Trial. Everyone considered innocent unless proven guilty.
07. Protection against external threat or attack.
08. Economic Justice and Equity.
09. All slaves were emancipated since the only Master is Allah.
10. Very shortly, the following seven basic needs were guaranteed by the State to all citizens: *Food - Shelter - Clothing - Employment - Tools - Transportation to and back from work - Free Medical Care.*

DEMOCRACY OR NOT?

Whether a monarchy, communism, theocracy, any kind of despotism or democracy, all systems of government inevitably come up with two classes of people, the ruler and the ruled. The very term 'rule' necessitates a ruling class and a ruled class. *Democracy is government of the people, by the people, for the people* is quite an attractive statement but in a very subtle manner it conceals, 'over the people'. So, democracy essentially is the government of the majority over the minority. It may sound astonishing but, according to the Quran, the majority of mankind is wrongdoers and misguided. How about this? *Democracy is government of the people, by the people, for the people, over the people.* The majority in a democracy

can make any laws against the will of the minority. Even the constitution can be amended to authorize inappropriate moral conduct if the majority so wills. Since this is not a treatise on democracy, we need not go into countless other flaws of the system pointed out by some of the brightest minds.

The Islamic System of government is close to democracy in some ways like the public having a voice and leaders sitting in mutual consultation but there are differences of paramount importance. For example, no amount of majority can trespass the Quran and declare alcohol and gambling as permissible. Same goes for homosexuality and mutual cohabitation without marriage, unjust aggression, usury, pornography, prostitution etc.

THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS:

The State of Madinah during the Prophet's (S) life encompassed the entire Arabian Peninsula with its capital as Madinah. There were seven provinces each managed by a governor (*Waali*) nominated by the federation and accepted by the local population through the system of allegiance. Any dissension was addressed according to 4:59 quoted above. The exalted Prophet was the Head of the State, Commander-in-Chief and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Each province had its local governor who was also the commander of the forces. The governor would nominate officials and judges in consultation with the local *Shura*. The potential office-bearers would, in turn, seek vote of confidence.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN:

Nothing that was allowed for men was forbidden for women. However, they did have an extraordinary advantage. Working a job or doing business was entirely their choice. The bread-winners for the family had to be men.

4:34 Men are the protectors and maintainers of women. They shall take full care of women with what they spend of their wealth. Allah has made men to excel in some areas and women to excel in some areas. Men must see to it that women are provided for, and that they are able to stand on their feet in the society.

9:71 Believing men and believing women are colleagues of one another. They enjoin virtue and forbid vice. Together, they help establish the Divinely System of Life, and set up the Economic Order of Zakaat. This is how they obey God and His Messenger. These are the ones on whom God showers His grace of success. Certainly, God is Exalted in Power, Wise.

BAIT-UL-MAAL (THE TREASURY):

As total peace and security were being established, the government devised policies that encouraged and honored hard work and labor. Special attention was paid to agriculture, manufacturing, farming, setting up stables and dairy farms. Horses, oxen and camels were raised for transportation and defense. Farmers herded cows, goats and sheep. The agricultural land belonged to those who would work on it. There was no feudalism or land-lordship. Honey bee and poultry farming were developed in Arabia for the first time. Towns were soon overflowing with honey, milk, meat, vegetable, fruit and their byproducts. The Islamic State soon was making the best weaponry in the world. Women were primarily responsible for crafting the finest handicrafts and weaving carpets, blankets, tents, silk and cotton cloth. Blacksmiths and goldsmiths designed excellent utensils, warfare and jewelry. Agriculturists worked on improving water-supply and creating oases in the desert. The State and the individuals traded as far as Morocco, Turkey, Greece, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq and India. Economy in the government and private sectors flourished because the inhabitants of the empire were extremely loyal to the moral values inculcated in them by the Quran. Honesty and trustworthiness could be taken for granted. People turned over excess money to the treasury. A laborer, craftsman, soldier, official was provided housing and paid salary considering his or her responsibilities and the size of the household.

2:219 --- And they ask you what they should give. Say, "All that is surplus."

The Federation, through the *Bait-ul-Maal*, transformed the State where everyone worked according to his capacity and got paid according to the needs. Within the first century, it became impossible to find a person in the Muslim Empire who would accept charity!

THE ROLE OF THE MASJID:

One thing that instantly facilitated efficient governance in the Islamic State was a wide network of mosques serving as government centers. From the very first year of Hijrah, Muslims had been building mosques in their locales. The Federal, provincial and township governments oversaw that mosques were built in proper locations in every neighborhood. One call from the *Muezzin* (caller of *Azaan*), "*Ya Salaatil Jami'ah*" used to be sufficient to assemble the available men and women to the Masjid. There was no clergy or "Imams" to run and manage these Masjids or conduct congregations. The government official of each area was the leader of the area mosque. The Masjid was not a temple of worship. It was the School, the Assembly, the Municipality, the Parliament and the Government House.

The respective leader would discuss real issues about the community, entertain questions, present bills, announce decisions of the *Shura* (Counsel) and the Assembly would legislate. People came up with their ideas for betterment of the society and devised plans for social welfare. Every citizen remained informed of the condition of the needy, the orphans, the sick and the widows. People brought up news of any socio-economic problems facing any families and they were immediately addressed. What a cohesive System! Masjid was also the place where the leaders and officials were elected, ambassadors received, and defense matters decided. What a convenient and ready-made infrastructure for the government and public! Later on, a Hadith was invented that it was *Haraam* to discuss "wordly matters" in the mosque. Alas! With this single stroke of pen, by the third century *Hijrah*, the Masjid had been reduced to what we see today, a temple of worship!

NO TAXES:

Contrary to popular reports, there was no Zakaat tax or Jizyah tax in the State of Madinah. The truly Islamic government gives Zakaat and does not receive it from her people. Other than the product of labor and the produce of land, the only other means of income was the compensation of war from the aggressors.

22:41 Those who, if We give them power in the land, establish Salaat - the Divine System - set up the Just Economic Order of Zakaat (in which wealth circulates freely to nourish every member of the society, and the basic needs of all individuals are taken care of). Their rule ensures that the Divine Moral Values are promoted, and what the Quran forbids, is discouraged. And in their governance all affairs are decided according to Allah's decrees (in the Quran 5:44).