

## Chapter 7

---

### PROPHET OF ISLAM REVOLUTIONARY PAR EXCELLENCE

---

Prophet Muhammad brought about the most lasting and effective revolution in the annals of mankind. The beauty is that such a wide ranging revolution in thought and action was brought about at minimum human cost, i.e. a few hundred lives. Although any loss of life is unacceptable, this was without doubt, the least costly of the major revolutions in terms of human life and suffering and the most productive in terms of mankind's development.

In his book, *Historie de la Turquie, Paris, 1854*, historian Alphonse de La Martaine sums up his assessment of the uniqueness of the Prophet in the following 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?*

## PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

### BEARER OF THE QUR'AN

- Revolutionary *par excellence*
- His life story and achievements
- Societal changes
- What non-Muslims think of him
- Exposed to the full limelight of history, as no other prophet
- Last of the illustrious line, seal of the Prophets

Prophet Muhammad was born in a very rough and depraved society which was not known for having made any worthwhile contributions to human society except perhaps the development of the Arabic language. The Arabic at the time had been developed to such a high degree of perfection that it had been dubbed, by linguistic scholars, as the most well-developed language of its time.

Prophet Muhammad had a very difficult childhood, having lost his father before his birth, his mother at the tender age of three, his grandfather (a man of considerable standing in his community) at the age of six, and finally his uncle, who provided him essential protection and support, indispensable in a hardy tribal society that Arabia was at the time.

He grew up in the full limelight of history. He was well-regarded in the community as an upright, truthful and caring young man who developed a reputation as an honest trader, such that he attracted the notice of an exceptionally talented and successful widow, Khadija, who had made her mark in a male dominated society of the period, so much so that she proposed marriage at the age of forty to him, a much younger man of 25 years. They had a most successful marriage by all accounts until Khadija too passed after a partnership extending over almost 25 years.

He had an enquiring, searching mind and would often retreat to caves for contemplation and solitude. At the age of forty, he had the shattering experience of a visit by the Angel Gabriel who informed him that he had been chosen as a prophet by the Almighty and he was now expected to warn his community and the world, and convey

the guidance of the Almighty revealed to him in stages over the next 23 years in the form of the holy book named Al Qur'an.

Until the age of 40, Muhammad was a quiet, unassuming man well respected and liked in society without a single enemy. He was widely known as Al Amin - the Trustworthy. Common people used to deposit their valuables with him for safe keeping. These were the same qualities for which he caught Khadija's eye.

Until that time Muhammad had been a searcher, a shy, quiet contemplative, private individual who kept mostly to himself and had never been known to indulge in any idle pursuits or poetry, which was a favorite past time of the Quraish, nor was he known to have expressed any strong political or social views.

Then all of a sudden, one day, at the ripe age of about 40, Muhammad, then an illiterate man by all accounts, started a stream of philosophical, mystical, poetical outpourings in "singing prose" (a style unique to Qur'an and quite different from Arabic poetry) and started talking about the creation and orderliness of the universe, the majesty and glory of its Creator, the purpose and objective of Man's existence, and the mysteries of the afterlife.

Just what happened to trigger this change?

What could be the motives of this erstwhile quiet and humble man? What force compelled him to embark on this hazardous journey? He had a good life, a rich resourceful and doting wife, children, good reputation and status in society. All that a person normally wishes for!

And yet Prophet Muhammad takes on this uncharacteristic, socially and politically active and most unpopular, almost rebellious course of action which divides and rips apart his ancestral tribal fabric of Mecca.

It is significant to note that all those who knew him intimately at once believed in him and his cause, not for a moment doubting his sincerity, his conduct or his motives. They included:

- His astute, successful and respected wife Khadija
- His socially well-regarded and successful trader friend Abu Bakr
- His young cousin Ali
- And his slave Zaid, given to him by Khadija

It is very instructive to note the behavior displayed by Muhammad on getting this unexpected news from Gabriel; there was no triumphal shout on being nominated as a prophet, nor any display of exultation on getting “nirwana or seeing the light”. Muhammad’s reaction was that of a true searcher, one of wonder, almost doubt and incredulity at what was apparently being thrust upon him. In an agitated, almost frightened state, he dashed straight to his wife Khadija who consoled and comforted him saying that he was an upright person and his Creator would surely not put him to false trials.

With succeeding revelations, Muhammad gained the confidence and the certainty of his mission and then resolutely and firmly proclaimed the message to all, despite severe opposition and pressures by his community leaders.

#### **MECCAN PERIOD OF TRAINING AND STRICT NON-VIOLENCE DESPITE ALL PROVOCATIONS AND PRESSURES**

Gentle but firm persuasion, appealing to reason, study of the universe, pondering over the history of the peoples of old to learn lessons from there and an invitation to look within, i.e. study of human nature and psychology were the pillars used to propagate the message in an attractive and appealing form.

#### **HIJRAH TO MEDINA UNDER SEVERE DISTRESS AND HELPLESSNESS**

At Medina, the Prophet established a state where through an agreed charter (known as the *Mithaq-al-Medina*, which is a notable document) with the local inhabitants of Medina, known as *Ansars* (the Helpers) and the Christians and Jews who lived there under powerful tribes, he built a state established on the principals of Qur’anic guidance.

This was not acceptable to his opponents, the Qurashite Meccans, who launched attacks upon attacks to destroy this nascent Medinian state in the bud. Despite being outnumbered and totally deficient in resources, Muhammad not only successfully defended Medina but went on to subjugate and conquer his opponents at Mecca without any bloodshed. Muhammad’s treatment of Meccans is unique. Not only was there no bloodshed, but Quraish who were his mortal enemies joined the message of Islam and became its major proponents.

### UNIQUE ABILITY TO INFLUENCE OPPONENTS

This ability to make his opponents join his cause is one of the hallmarks of the prophet's style and was followed successfully by his followers and companions well after the prophet left them. A well known case would be the Berber General Tariq-bin-Ziad. The Berber people were conquered by the Arab armies advancing into North Africa towards the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It resulted in a bitter struggle in which the Berbers were beaten, then rose in revolt under a queen, but were re-subjugated shortly and most of them accepted Islam.

Then came the most unexpected development, of which there is no comparison in the world. An Arab/Berber army, including a number of notable Arab nobles of the Prophets clan of Quraish ably led by the young Berber General Tariq, advanced into Spain around 712 AD. They landed at a place later named the Rock of Tariq (nowadays known as Gibraltar) where Tariq burnt all his boats, and went on to conquer Spain in a lightning campaign to give birth to the shining civilization of Moorish Spain for almost 800 years, which later resulted in lighting the torch of the modern age in Europe.

Muhammad set about achieving a change in the fortunes of the people of Arabia within a short span of 23 years of his prophethood from 610-632 AD which is absolutely unique and unmatched in the history of mankind. Within his lifetime, the perpetually warring and ignorant Arab Bedouin tribes, who for centuries had been kept under the thumb of the rival Byzantine Roman Empire centered at Constantinople and the antagonist Persian Empire of the Sassanids centred at Ctesiphon, were united into a civilized and expanding force which Hitti said:

*If someone in the first third of the seventh Christian centuries had had the audacity to prophesize that within a decade some unheralded, some unforeseen power from the hitherto barbarous and little known land of Arabia was to make its appearance, hurl itself against the only two world powers of the age, fall heir to the one- the Sassanid - and strip the other- the Byzantine- of its fairest provinces, he would have undoubtedly been declared a lunatic. Yet that is exactly what happened. **After the death of the prophet sterile Arabia seems to have been converted as if by magic into a nursery of heroes the like of whom both in number and quality is hard to find anywhere.** The military campaigns of*

*Khalid ibn-al-Walid and Amr ibn-al-As which ensued in al Iraq, Persia, Syria and Egypt are among the most brilliantly executed in the history of warfare and bear favorable comparison with those of Napoleon, Hannibal or Alexander.*

*History of the Arabs by Phillip Hitti, p142*

In less than 80 years, the Arabs simultaneously took on and defeated both the Byzantines and the Persians, the two super powers of the day and also launched them on an intellectual enterprise which opened the age of reason and science.

During the course of his 10 years at Medina, the Prophet personally engaged in 27 battles and 55 battles/skirmishes were fought by his companions during which the entire Arabian Peninsula came under the fold of Islam. It has been said by many critics, especially Westerners, that Islam was spread by the sword and through the use of force. Against that misstatement is the fact that it was the most lasting of revolutions of the world brought about with the least spilling of blood as will be graphically illustrated by the following facts:

	Killed	Wounded	Captured
Muslims	459	127	11
Opponents	459	Not available	6524

The above brings out the amazing fact that the total loss of human life, on both sides was no more than 918 lives.

To put it in its correct perspective, we need to note the havoc and misery created by other world revolutions and wars:

- The French revolution in the end of Eighteenth century saw the death of almost 6.6 million people and the invention of the guillotine to facilitate such mass scale slaughter
- The Communist Russian revolution resulted in the death of around 10 million people and its followers have voluntarily abandoned Marxism-Leninism within 75 years
- In WWI, the Axis and Allies combined lost about 7.34 million people

- And WW2 topped the scale with a loss in human lives of 10.6 million souls, which again failed to solve the basic problems and led to a protracted cold war

See, *Methodology of Prophet Muhammad's Islamic Revolution* by Syed Asad Gilani, Ferozsons Private Ltd, Lahore - 1989. ISBN 969 0 00742 4.

#### **ORGANIZATION OF AN ISLAMIC STATE AND DEALINGS WITH JEWS AND CHRISTIANS**

- Fighting was prescribed against those who had persecuted the Muslims and driven them away from their home and hearths. Strict rules of war were laid down along with the rights of the enemy and captives which is unprecedented in human history
- Rights of women ordained
- The *Treaty of Hudaibiyah* and its significance as a great victory, which even surprised most Muslims
- Fall of Mecca and the unique magnanimity showed by Prophet Muhammad even to his bitterest of foes

#### **WHAT NON-MUSLIMS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE PROPHET**

Given below are samples of what a number of non-biased, non-Muslim scholars have said about the Prophet Muhammad, intellectuals who studied the life and practices of the Prophet objectively and wrote about him during the past two centuries. This should assist the readers in formulating their views:

- **William Draper in, *History of Intellectual Development of Europe*:**

*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 perhaps justify the title of a Messenger of God.*

- **Edward Montet in, *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 Qur'an 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.*

■ **Alphonse de La Martaine in, *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, because in less than two centuries after its appearance, Islam, in faith and in arms, reigned over the whole of Arabia, and conquered, in God's name, Persia Khorasan, Transoxania, Western India, Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, numerous islands of the Mediterranean Sea, Spain, and part of Gaul.*

*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 which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended 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 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 theogonies, 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 raveling's 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... 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?*

■ **Mahatma Gandhi's statement published in *Young India*, 1924:**

*I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today an undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind.... I became more than 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 of that great life.*

■ **Sir George Bernard Shaw – the celebrated Irish playwright, Nobel Laureate for literature in 1925, Academy Award winner in 1938, Fabian socialist and staunch pacifist, says in, *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 prophesized 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.*

■ **Michael Hart in, *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.*

■ **Reverend Bosworth Smith in, *Muhammad and Muhammadanism*, London, 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 Qur'an 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.*

- **Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), considered the greatest British historian of his time, mentions in, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, London, 1838, vol. 5, p. 335:**

*His (i.e., Muhammad's) memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid and decisive. He possessed the courage of both thought and action.*

- **Thomas Carlyle in, *Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*, 1840:**

*The lies (Western slander) which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only.*

*A silent great soul, one of that who cannot but be earnest. He was to kindle the world, the world's Maker had ordered so.*

- **S. Tritton in, *Islam*, 1951:**

*The picture of the Muslim soldier advancing with a sword in one hand and the Qur'an in the other is quite false.*

- **De Lacy O'Leary in, *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.*

- **Gibbon in, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1823:**

*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.*

- **Edward Gibbon and Simon Oakley in *History of the Saracen Empire*, London, 1870:**

*The greatest success of Mohammad's life was effected 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.*

■ **Reverend Bosworth Smith in, *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 Mohammadanism everything 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.*

■ **Arthur Glyn Leonard in, *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.*

■ **Philip K. Hitti in, *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 the then civilized world.*

■ **Rodwell in the Preface to his translation of the Holy Qur'an:**

*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 in, 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 in, 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 in, 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.*

■ **James Michener in, *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 modern scholar accepts this idea, and the Qur'an is explicit in the support of the freedom of conscience.*

*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 forever.*

■ **Lawrence E. Browne in, *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.*

■ **K. S. Ramakrishna Rao in, *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.*

#### SUMMARY

All of the above come from the pen of reputable non-Muslim scholars and thinkers. Need one say more? Should this not be enough to indicate, even to the critics, that this mighty benefactor of humanity does not deserve the cartoons and comments by the Danish newspapers about the Prophet of Islam.

The essential point is that the life and conduct of Prophet Muhammad adds up to an amazing piece of evidence in support of the Qur'an being an authentic message from on High.

Muhammad lived his life in the full limelight of history. No claimed Prophet, before or after his times has been observed and his smallest actions and sayings noted and recorded by both his followers and even opponents.

Had Muhammad been the author of the Qur'an, as maintained by some critics, would he have included passages in the text which are kind of critical of his own conduct, at places, to show him the correct path and way of becoming a beacon of light? Where could he have obtained knowledge about matters physical, historical, sociological mentioned in the Qur'an which were not to become known to even knowledgeable people, even more than a millennia after his times, except that they were to be revealed to him by the Creator?

One can now understand what must have led Karen Armstrong to write two biographies of the Prophet and to pointedly title the second *Muhammad: A Prophet For Our Times* even after a lapse of 1400 years.

Prophet Muhammad has been chosen by reputed authors as the best amongst the humans who ever lived. I can almost hear the critics say, then so what? Someone will always be at the head of such a list. All that proves is that Muhammad was an exceptionally gifted person. True enough! But is it just a coincidence that Muhammad also

happened to become the bearer of the Qur'an? Surely it is much more than a coincidence. It had to be so.