

The Prophet Muhammad

Wilson: The history of the Prophet informs us that at the age of forty, while he was worshipping on Mount Hira, the light of God shone upon him and he heard the voice of the Truth. At that moment his commission as a messenger of God to mankind commenced. What did the message of Hira reveal to Muhammad?

Chirri: The message of Hira revealed to the new prophet the facts that belong to the true concept of the True God: The power of creation, the power of transforming clay into a human being, and the power of making the matter conscious of itself and of the world. The power of making the matter conscious is clearly demonstrated by the human knowledge and the human capability of writing, which is the foundation of the world civilization. From the Holy Qur'an:

“Read in the name of thy Lord Who creates, Who created man out of clay. Read and thy Lord is the Most Generous, – Who taught by the pen. Who taught man what he knew not.” 96: 1-5

Wilson: How does Muhammad stand among the prophets?

Chirri: He stands in the record of the major prophets with clear distinctions:

1. He is a part of both world and religious histories. His message was an important factor in changing the history of the world, and no historian doubts his existence and his role in world events.
2. He is the only prophet who witnessed with his eyes the growth of his religion until it was adopted by a whole nation during his lifetime.
3. He is the universal prophet who was sent, not to a particular nation, such as the Arabs or the Hebrews, but to all mankind. From the Qur'an:

“Say, O mankind, I am the Messenger of God to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the Earth....” 7: 158

4. His message clearly opposed all sorts of racial discrimination. Removal of all social barriers is an

essential part of his message. White, black, red, and yellow are equal.

No race is superior to another race, and no nation is inferior to another nation. Man is to be praised or blamed only for what he does by his own choice. Being related to a particular nation or race is not our choice, nor is it of our own making. Our distinction can come only through our good deeds.

From the Holy Qur'an:

“Certainly, the noblest among you in the eyes of God is the most righteous of you.” 49:13

5. He founded and established, during his lifetime, a powerful state, based on high ideals. The Muslim state was born in an age in which the government was conceived as a ruling body, superior to the people and imposed on its subjects without their choice. The people themselves never conceived their equality to their rulers, nor believed their equality to one another. In the teaching of Islam, the opposite is true. The government is a fruit of people's belief in one set of guiding principles. It is the legitimate child of their spontaneous cooperation for promotion of such principles. Thus, the promoters of such principles are related to each other and considered to be one brotherhood.

6. He defeated all his opponents, and no party was able to defeat him.

7. He is the prophet who declared the religious freedom when he was powerful enough to deprive many people of such a freedom. He and his followers were persecuted for thirteen years. He never spoke of religious freedom when they were subject of persecution. When he defeated all his opponents and was able to penalize the oppressors, he announced the following declaration:

“There shall be no compulsion in religion; the right direction is, henceforth, distinct from error.” 2:256

8. He is the only prophet who declared himself as the Final Prophet whose death concludes the long history of prophethood. Prophethood was claimed by many individuals after Muhammad, but none of them was able to substantiate his claim. And now, after so many centuries since his death, Muhammad is still standing in the history as the Final of the prophets.

9. He is the only Prophet who introduced to the world a book that does not contain any human word. The Qur'an is not a dialogue between God and man, as the rest of the holy books; it is only the words of God which He put in the mouth of Muhammad to be transmitted through him to mankind.

Wilson: It is puzzling that the prophets who preceded Muhammad such as Moses and Jesus had been empowered to perform remarkable and supernatural works, while Muhammad did not show, or rather did not rely on miraculous actions. He only relied, in proving his prophethood, on the Qur'an. Why didn't he perform miracles similar to those of Jesus and Moses?

Chirri: There are two reasons for the difference between the type of Muhammad's miracle and the types

of miracles of those prophets who preceded him:

1. The miracles of Jesus and Moses, it is true, were very remarkable; but the fact remains that in spite of their remarkability, they did not induce the people of their times to believe in those prophets or to adhere to their teachings. History informs us that the Israelites did not follow the Prophet Moses after he showed them all his wonders. After they crossed the sea on their feet, they showed no true adherence to his teaching. After he went to the mountain to receive the commandments, he came back to find them straying from the Divine road. Jesus was followed by multitudes, but when the crisis came, he was deserted even by his own disciples.

People, in general, never were induced by those wonders to adhere to the heavenly teachings. When they witnessed supernatural performances, the majority of them called their performers magicians and impostors.

Had the same kind of miracles been repeated at the time of Muhammad, it would not have produced better results than it did before. For this, the type of miracles had to be changed .

2. Suppose that those miracles of Moses and Jesus were very productive, causing their witnesses to believe in the truthfulness of their performers. The fact remains that they were not permanent but only temporary miracles. No action can be seen twice. No action would last long. Making a blind see his way or bringing a dead back to life is a remarkable action, but such an action disappears as soon as it is done. As soon as the action is finished, it becomes history. Those who did not see it have to rely on the testimony of those who had seen it.

A prophet that will be followed by another prophet may rely on a remarkable performance in convincing his contemporaries. He does not have to worry about the future generations who will not see his miracles, because he can rely on the prophet who will come after him at a different period. The subsequent prophet will perform his own miracles, and he will endorse the prophet who preceded him.

With Muhammad, the case is different. He was the Final of the prophets. He could not rely on any miraculous action, because no action can last long enough to be seen by other generations. Nor could he rely on the endorsement of a subsequent prophet, because he is the Final of the prophets. He had to rely on some miracle, but his miracle must be from a different type. It has to be a lasting miracle to be witnessed and tested by the future generations as well as by his contemporaries.

In a time when there was neither camera nor film to make one action witnessable at various times, we cannot conceive any kind of lasting miracles except the type of speech. When a speech is superb and recorded in a book, its superiority can be witnessed and tested at any time by any generation. If it is unmatchable, it will stay so forever, and its superiority can be judged by all generations. This is the type of miracle which is fitting for a final prophet, and this was the reason why Muhammad was equipped with the Holy Qur'an as evidence of his truthfulness.

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