

Introduction

He did not speak or advocate the cause of some particular race or ethnic group, but stood up for all humanity irrespective of race, color, class, language or geographical barriers. The Message he preached was universal, transgressing all obstacles whether artificial or otherwise. A Message so complete and comprehensive that it not only revolutionized the era in which it was proclaimed, but even today its timeless beauty has lost none of the original charm and continues its profound appeal to the human intellect.

What was that unique Message and who was the Messenger? Is it capable of solving the modern world's myriad problem? Will it cater to the complicated aspects, characteristics and needs of human beings, especially those of contemporary man? Does it provide political or social answers? Can it stimulate the intellect for scientific and technical discoveries? And how about morals and spiritual aspects? Did the Messenger set any worthy example by practicing what he preached, or was he just one of those fanciful visionaries?

The answer to all the above questions and even many more is, yes, it does. If the principles of this immortal message are sincerely observed, and if we are ready to tread the footsteps of that fantastic man, not only does it guarantee us a harmonious co-existence on this earth but also a blissful life in the hereafter. The moment modern man is ready to cast aside his bunkered lenses of prejudice and vain pride, he will understand that the eternal truth called 'Islam' and the final Prophet named Muhammad were not something special or essential to the Arabia of 14 centuries ago, but are capable of remarkably solving the complex issues of our era, the Space Age.

Islam is a derivative of the word 'Salaam' (peace) and literally means submission. Submission to none except the One and only Allah, Who designed this vast universe, shaped the human race as the most excellent form of life, and moreover endowed them the power of intellect. Wonderful indeed! Because this unique submission frees mankind from all other forms of submission to idols, objects, ideas and the supposedly mysterious powers of nature.

As it is quite clear, Islam was not just some spontaneous burst or mirage on the burning sands of Arabia. In fact it marks the culmination and perfection of all previous divine messages ever revealed. And to

carry out the great task of proclaiming His final message, the Almighty chose Muhammad (the Admirable) as the last Prophet, who was prophesied in all earlier Scriptures and whose life-style serves as a perfect model for us.

What can we write about a man who changed the destiny of the world and saved the human race from sure disaster! The loss in words becomes more apparent when we consider that he was divinely chosen for this great task and carried out the mission entrusted, in a most impeccable and flawless manner. He was every inch a perfect man, so complete that even his detractors and enemies could not find the smallest fault in his glowing personality.

When the Qur'an describes him as the "Noblest Exemplar" for the human race including generations to come, it becomes all the more obvious that Prophet Muhammad (S) was something extraordinary and endowed with all fine qualities such as patience, courage, wisdom, generosity, intelligence, love and magnanimity – to cite a few – which show us how to mould our own lives.

This Foundation in its endeavours to enlighten mankind with the eternal truth of Islam, is pleased to present this booklet on the life and times of the greatest Prophet. We hope it will be of interest to our dear readers, whose great enthusiasm has encouraged us to carry on our mission. May Almighty Allah accept our humble work.

Al-Balagh Foundation

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