

Islam, a Profound Civilization (part 1 of 2): Introduction

Description: Statements of various non-Muslim scholars and intellectuals about the profoundness of the religion of Islam as a civilization. Part 1: Introduction.

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The Islam that was revealed to Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, is the continuation and culmination of all the preceding revealed religions, and hence it is for all times and all peoples. This status of Islam is sustained by glaring facts. Firstly, there is no other revealed book extant in the same form and content as it was revealed. Secondly, no other revealed religion has any convincing claim to provide guidance in all walks of human life for all times. But Islam addresses humanity at large and offers basic guidance regarding all human problems. Moreover, it has withstood the test of fourteen hundred years and has all the potentialities of establishing an ideal society as it did under the leadership of the last Prophet Muhammad.



It was a miracle that Prophet Muhammad could bring even his toughest enemies to the fold of Islam without adequate material resources. Worshippers of idols, blind followers of the ways of forefathers, promoters of tribal feuds, and abusers of human dignity and blood became the most disciplined nation under the guidance of Islam and its Prophet. Islam opened before them vistas of spiritual heights and human dignity by declaring righteousness as the sole criterion of merit and honor. Islam shaped their social, cultural, moral and commercial life with basic laws and principles which are in conformity with human nature and hence applicable in all times as human nature does not change.

It is so unfortunate that the Christian West instead of sincerely trying to understand the phenomenal success of Islam during its earlier time, considered it as a rival religion. During the centuries of the Crusades, this trend gained much force and impetus and huge amount of literature was produced to tarnish the image of Islam. But Islam has begun to unfold its genuineness to the modern scholars whose bold and objective observations on Islam belie all the charges leveled against it by the so-called unbiased orientalists.

Here we furnish some observations on Islam by acknowledged non-Muslim scholars of modern time. Truth needs no advocates to plead on its behalf, but the prolonged malicious propaganda against Islam has created great confusion even in the minds of free and objective thinkers.

We hope that the following observations would contribute to initiating an objective

evaluation of Islam.

Canon Taylor, Paper read before the Church Congress at Walverhamton, Oct. 7, 1887, Quoted by Armond in *The Preaching of Islam*, pp. 71-72:

"It (Islam) replaced monkishness by manliness. It gives hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature."

Sarojini Naidu, Lectures on "The Ideals of Islam", see *Speeches and Writings of Sarojini Naidu*, Madras, 1918, p. 167:

"Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read in the Qur'an I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world."

De Lacy O'Leary, *Islam at the Crossroads*, London, 1923, p.8:

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

H.A.R. Gibb, *Whither Islam*, London, 1932, p. 379:

"But Islam has a still further service to render to the cause of humanity. It stands after all nearer to the real East than Europe does, and it possesses a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and cooperation. No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavors so many and so various races of mankind... Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of East and West is to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition. In its hands lies very largely the solution of the problem with which Europe is faced in its relation with East. If they unite, the hope of a peaceful issue is immeasurably enhanced. But if Europe, by rejecting the cooperation of Islam, throws it into the arms of its rivals, the issue can only be disastrous for both."

G.B. Shaw, *The Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 81936:

"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."

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