

Book Review by Dr. Umair Mahmood Siddiqui

Muhammad ﷺ : The Glory of the Ages

by Dr. Muhammad Fazlur Rahman Ansari

(This book is edited by Dr. Umair Mahmood Siddiqui in 2017 and it was first published in 1936 by 'Anjuman Himayat Islam' Nairobi, Kenya Colony. Pages: 165. The second edition recently published in 2017 by DBF Seerat Research Centre, DHA Phase II, EXT. Karachi, Pakistan.)

Maulana Ansari planned to write a series of three books about the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for western authorities to meet the unfulfilled need. He wrote in the preface of the book:

"I am writing a series of three books on the life of the Holy Prophet. This book is the first of the series and concerns itself particularly with depicting the birth and the struggle of Islam during the life-time of Muhammad (peace be upon him !). In the second book I propose to deal with the Holy Prophet as an ideal man proving conclusively that every conceivable virtue found its most glorious manifestation in his person and character. In the third book I propose to prove that Muhammad was the ideal and the greatest reformer that the world has known."

We have no information about the two other books of the series about the greatness of our beloved Prophet ﷺ it seems very doubtful whether he could accomplish his desire or not. All that can be deduced is that over the course of 20 years, young Fazlur Rahman authored the books that captured the attention of the intelligentsia of that period.

Enormous levels of enmity and hatred for the Last Prophet can be estimated in the Edward's article published in Time Magazine Monday, Apr. 16, 1979. He wrote:

"Early Christian polemicists against Islam used the Prophet's human person as their butt, accusing him of whoring, sedition, charlatanry. As writing about Islam and the Orient burgeoned—60,000 books between 1800 and 1950."

Having read the above passage the reader can approximate the momentousness of this book produced in 1936 by Maulana Ansari. The book establishes the fact from the writings by the opponents of Islam that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ must be called the savior of humanity. George Bernard Shaw (26 July 1856 – 2 November 1950) well known Irish polymath was quoted on Islam by Maulana Ansari in this book, he said:

“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 capability to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. The world must doubtless attach high value to the predictions of great men like me. I have prophecies about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of to-morrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of to-day. The mediaeval ecclesiastics, either through ignorance or bigotry, painted Muhammedanism in the darkest colours. They were in fact trained both to hate the man Muhammad and his religion. To them Muhammad was Anti-Christ. I have studied him – the wonderful man, and in my opinion far from being an Anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour 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. But to proceed, it was in the 19th century that honest thinkers like Carlyle, Goethe and Gibbon perceived intrinsic worth in the religion of Muhammad, and thus there was some change for the better in the European attitude towards Islam. But the Europe of the present century is far advanced. It is beginning to be enamoured of the creed of Muhammad.”

The companionship of Maulana’s revered spiritual mentor Maulana Shah Abdul Aleem Siddiqui for 22 years was powerful catalyst for his personal, professional and spiritual growth. The manuscript of this book was also perused by Maulana Siddiqui. ‘Muhammad the Glory of the Ages’ contains 165 pages and six chapters that are as follows;

- Chapter 1:** Christian References to Muhammad and his religion ﷺ.
- Chapter 2:** Pen picture of the Holy Prophet ﷺ
- Chapter 3:** Condition of the world before the Advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.
- Chapter 4:** The birth of Muhammad; The Meccan period of his life or the period of Passive Resistance.
- Chapter 5:** The Medinite Period; The Establishment of the Republic and the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Chapter 6:** Muhammad’s character and achievements in the eyes of his opponents.

The book was dedicated by him to his revered ancestor of blessed memory ‘Hazrat Khalid Aboo Ayyob Ansari’ companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). This is the new edition of the book published by Dilshad Begum Foundation (DBF) Research Centre, Karachi to preserve this masterpiece about the Seerah of the last Prophet ﷺ. May Allah confer His choicest blessings on the grave of Maulana Ansari and his guide. Ameen!