# His achievements

People usually consider their own occupations as more important, necessary, beneficial to social life, and harder than others. However, although every occupation has some degree of difficulty and social use, educating people is far more difficult and more necessary for a healthy social life.

Raising really educated people requires true educators who have clear goals. But if such people are to succeed, they must embody what they teach and advise to their students; intimately know their students' character and potential, as well as their desires and ambitions, shortcomings and strengths, and level of learning and understanding; and know how to treat them in all circumstances, approach their problems, and get them to replace their bad qualities with those that are good.

People may not live according to their asserted “strong” beliefs, have only superficial good moral qualities, or have weak spots (e.g., open to bribery, insensitivity, hoarding). How should we view educators who transform their students by completely replacing their bad qualities with that which is good, and then proceed to establish a community to serve as a model for future generations; who transform the base rock, copper, iron, and coal in their hands into silver, gold, precious stones, and diamonds? Would such an educator not be considered extraordinary? What Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, achieved in his 23 years as the educator of his people is far more than what such educators do.

The lack of force is another important dimension of a good education. Penal sanctions, coercion, and military and police forces can only succeed in “guiding” people for a short while. If a transformation is to be permanent, people must undergo it willingly, meaning that they must be convinced of its truth. No one has ever known people so comprehensively as Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, or has managed to transform such a pitiless, crude, warmongering, ignorant, and unyielding people into a community that provides a perfect—and complete—life and moral example for all future generations.

No one can guide people in every field of life. It is very difficult for anyone, however able and clever, to be an able statesman, commander, brilliant scientist, and successful educator simultaneously. However, Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, was the most perfect spiritual and intellectual master, the most able statesman and commander, the most efficient educator, and the greatest scholar history has ever seen.

Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, was the foremost practitioner all forms of Islamic worship, and the most God-conscious Muslim. He perfectly observed all details of worship, even when in danger. He never imitated anyone, and perfectly combined the beginning and end of spiritual evolution. He is unparalleled in prayer and knowledge of God. In his supplications and prayers, he describes his Lord with such a degree of Divine knowledge that all no Muslim has ever attained a similar degree of knowledge and description of God.

His faith was so extraordinarily strong, certain, miraculous, elevated, and enlightened that no contemporary prevalent (and opposed) idea, belief, philosophy, or teaching ever caused him to doubt or hesitate. Moreover, all saintly people of all times, primarily his Companions, benefited from his faith, which they admit to be of the highest degree. This fact proves that his faith is matchless.

Just as the Prophets' consensus is a very strong proof of God's Existence and Oneness, it also is a firm testimony of the truthfulness and Messengership of Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings. History confirms that all sacred attributes, miracles, and functions indicating the truthfulness and Messengership of Prophets, peace be upon them all, are found in Muhammad to the highest degree. Prophets predicted his coming by giving good tidings of him in the Torah, the Gospels, the Psalms, and other Scriptures (known as “Pages” in the Qur'an). Through their missions and miracles, they affirmed and “sealed” the mission of Muhammad, the foremost and most perfect Prophet.

Thousands of saints attained truth and perfection, performed miracles, gained insight into the reality of things, and made spiritual discoveries by following the Prophet's example, upon him be peace and blessings. All of them assert God's Oneness and the Prophet's truthfulness and Messengership, upon him be peace and blessings. Their testimony confirms his truthfulness, for they affirm the truth he proclaimed through the light of faith and certainty coming from knowledge, sight, or experience.

Thousands of exacting scholars of purity, meticulous scholars of truthfulness, and believing sages have reached the highest station of learning through the sacred truths brought by this unlettered man. The very number of those who attribute their success to the truth brought by him prove and affirm the Oneness of God, the foundation of his mission, and the truthfulness of the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, the greatest teacher and supreme master.

His family and Companions, whose insight, wisdom, and spiritual accomplishment make them the most renowned, respected, celebrated, pious, and intelligent people after the Prophets, declared that he was the most truthful, elevated, and honest person. This was their conclusion after having examined and scrutinized all of his thoughts and states, whether hidden or open, with the utmost attention to detail.

He displayed such steadfastness, firmness, and courage while preaching and calling people to the truth that no hostility from the contemporary big powers and great religions, or of his own people, tribe, and uncle, ever caused him to hesitate or feel anxiety or fear. He successfully challenged the world, and made Islam triumphant over all other religions and systems.

Let us go to Arabia in the Time of Happiness. That unlettered man, who had never set foot in a school for military or civil affairs, or for the law or science, presented a religion and law that, when followed, ensure happiness in both worlds. People of all times listen to his words. He easily solves all social, political, and economic problems, and establishes such perfect rules that they leave permanent imprints everywhere. A great part of his life is spent on the battlefield, where he functions as the most able commander of all times. His behavior shows him as the best husband, the most eminent and yet most compassionate father, and the most amiable and loyal friend. He does all this in so short a time as 23 years.

A leader must know his people thoroughly to educate them and lead them to realize a great cause. Alexis Carrel, a great twentieth-century French scientist and philosopher, still describes human beings as unknown, as the most complex and intricate of creatures. However, Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, had such a comprehensive knowledge of his people that he could educate them in such a way that they transformed themselves willingly to realize his cause. Knowing how to act in every situation, his decisions never had to be changed or his appointments to office rescinded. He succeeded in bringing the most refined, well-mannered, and civilized society out of an extremely backward, uncivilized, and rough people.

Not only did he eradicate his people's savage customs and immoral qualities to which they were addicted, he also equipped and adorned these same desperate, wild, and unyielding peoples with all praiseworthy virtues and made them the world's teachers and masters, even of civilized nations. His domination was not outward; rather, he was the beloved of hearts, the teacher of minds, the trainer of souls, and the ruler of spirits.

Despite all the advanced techniques and methods, modern communities cannot remove permanently so small a vice as smoking. However, Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, quickly removed many ingrained bad habits with little effort, and replaced them with good habits in such a way that they became inherent in his people's very being. If people do not believe this, let them go there with hundreds of philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, pedagogues, and educators and see if they can achieve in 100 years even a small portion of what the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, achieved in a year.

The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, met all of his detractors with a smile. When the Qurayshi leaders told Abu Talib to make his nephew abandon his mission, the Prophet answered:

O uncle! Should they place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, so as to make me renounce this mission, I shall not do so. I will never give it up; either it will please God to make it triumph or I shall perish in the attempt.

On another occasion, a deputation of the Qurayshi elite offered him all the worldly glory they could imagine if he would abandon his mission:

If you want wealth, we will amass for you as much as you wish; if you aspire to win honor and power, we are prepared to swear allegiance to you as our overlord and king; if you have a fancy for beauty, you shall have the hand of the most beautiful maiden of your own choice.

The terms would be extremely tempting for anyone, but they had no significance in the eyes of the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings. He responded:

I want neither wealth nor power. God has commissioned me as a warner to humanity. I deliver His Message to you. Should you accept it, you shall have felicity in this life and eternal bliss in the life hereafter. Should you reject the Word of God, surely God will decide between you and me.

The faith, perseverance, and resolution with which he carried his mission to ultimate success prove the supreme truth of his cause. Had there been the slightest doubt or uncertainty in his heart, he could not have withstood the opposition that continued for 21 long years.

Great leaders have changed the course of history through their states, empires, or revolutions. However, almost none of them engendered so strong a unity of belief, thought, and ideal among their followers as Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings. After 40 years of a completely apolitical life, he suddenly appeared on the world stage as such a great political reformer and statesman that, without any media or mass communications, he united the scattered inhabitants of Arabia's deserts. From being tribes of warlike, ignorant, unruly, and uncultured people, he raised a nation under one banner, law, religion, culture, civilization, and form of government.

A leader must know people very well in order to win them over to his or her cause. Most leaders promise power, wealth, position, or a bright future; Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, conquered minds and hearts and promised his followers God's pleasure and Paradise. His followers sacrificed themselves willingly and preferred poverty and God's pleasure and Paradise. He set the example in his own family, always preparing them and his Companions for eternal peace and permanent bliss, and displaying it to them in his own life.

His daughter Fatima, his most beloved family member, once came to him wearing a necklace. The Prophet asked: *“Do you want people—here and in the heavens—to say that my daughter wears a chain from Hell?”* These words were enough for her, for they were coming from the mouth of one whose throne was established in people's hearts and who had conquered their minds. She continues:

I immediately sold the necklace, bought a slave and emancipated him, and then went to the Messenger of God. When I told him what I had done, he rejoiced. He opened his hands and thanked God, saying: *“All thanks to God, Who protected (my daughter) Fatima from Hell.”*

Suppose you are a school teacher or director who wants to raise your students and employees to your own ideal. You also are prepared to undergo any hardship to realize this goal. Now, what would you do if they spit in your face when you pass by, place an animal's abdomen over your head while you pray, slap you in the face, throw stones at you and scatter thorny plants where you walk, ambush you with daggers, mock you in front of others, slander your wife, kill your relatives and mutilate their bodies, attack you many times and even injure you, and expel you from your native land? Could you bear such cruelty and continue on your way without hesitation? More than that, could you forgive and even pray for them, saying: *“O God forgive them and guide them to truth, for they do not know.”* If you were taken to a Paradise-like place and could choose between living there or returning to resume your mission, would you choose to go back? The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, underwent all of this and still chose to return to his people and transform them into the best community known to history. Would you?

The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, sent envoys to the Adal and al-Qarah tribes to teach them Islam. However, members of the Hudhayl tribe attacked them half-way, killed some and gave the survivors to the Quraysh. Zayd ibn Dasina was among the envoys. Before the Qurayshi polytheists executed him, Abu Sufyan, who had not yet embraced Islam, asked him:

*“I adjure you by God, Zayd, don't you wish that Muhammad was with us now in your place so that we might cut off his head, and that you were with your family?*” *“By God,”* said Zayd, *“let alone wishing that Muhammad were here in my place so that I were with my family, I do not wish that even a thorn should hurt his feet in Madina.”*

Abu Sufyan remarked: *“I swear by God that I have never seen a man who was so loved by his Companions as Muhammad.”* This remains true even now, for history has never produced a person who was (and is) more loved by his or her followers than Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings.

Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, answered innumerable questions from the polytheists, Jews, and Christians of his time on such widely divergent issues as religion, history, metaphysics, astronomy, medicine, and so on. He answered without faltering, and his answers have never been proven wrong.

Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, brought a law, a religion, a way of life, a code of worship, a way of prayer, a message, and a faith that was (and remains) unique. The law this unlettered man brought is matchless in that it has administered, both justly and precisely, one-fifth of humanity for fourteen centuries. The daily practices of Islam, which originated in the Qur'an and his own sayings, precepts, and example, has served for centuries as a peerless guide and authority for billions of people. It has trained and refined their minds and souls, illumined and purified their hearts, and perfected their spirits.

After the Companions, who led humanity in all scientific, political, social, administrative, economic and other fields of life, many other worthy people appeared. I list only a few of countless such people: such saints and purified, meticulous scholars as Abu Hanifa, Shafi'i, Bayazid al-Bistami, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, Imam Ghazali, Imam Rabbani, and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi; such scientists as al-Biruni, al-Zahrawi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Ibn Haytham; and hundreds of thousands of literary geniuses, commanders, statesmen, and other stars of humanity. All of them followed in the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings.

In addition, such Western intellectuals and statesmen as Lamartine, William Muir, Edward Gibbon, John Davenport, L. A. Sedillot, Goethe, P. Bayle, Stanley Lane-Poole, A. J. Arberry, Thomas Carlyle, Rosenthal, Elisee Reclus, Andrew Miller, Bismarck, Leopold Weis, Marmaduke Pickthall, Martin Lings, and Roger Garaudy have admitted that he is the greatest person ever to have lived. Some of them even embraced Islam. This is another proof of his Prophethood.