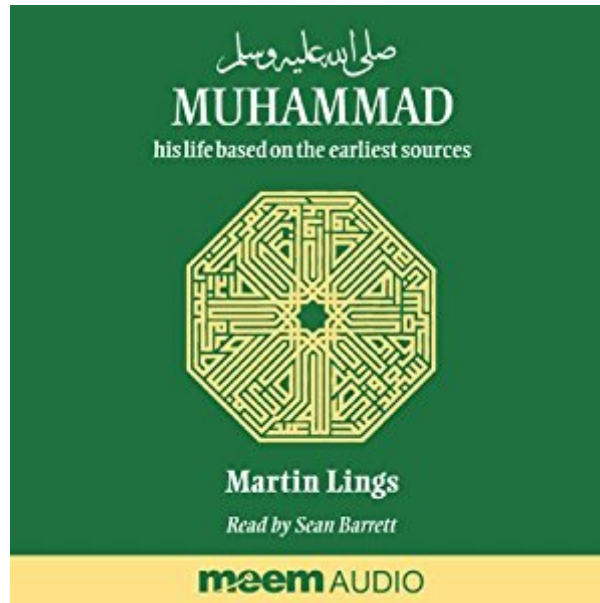


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Muhammad: His Life Based On The Earliest Sources



Synopsis

Widely recognized as the best biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in English, Dr. Martin Lings' award-winning book is now available in audio, read by well-known narrator Sean Barrett. This excellent audiobook is the first of its kind and has been selected by a number of organizations as a worthy introduction to the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), including Muslim Welfare House, London, and the Muslim Council of Britain.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 6 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

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Audible.com Release Date: November 19, 2007

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Customer Reviews

It would seem that Muhammad is gradually succumbing to the same fate as Jesus, in that each generation feels an urgent need to reinterpret him in light of their own understanding. Quite a few biographies of the prophet are already on the market, from such diverse writers as the military man John Glubb to the atheist Maxime Rodinson. This one is different. As the title indicates, it is a life of Muhammad based on the earliest sources. The "sources" in question here are the sirat, or biographies of the prophet, which were written a couple of centuries after his death. These original biographies were compiled based on the traditions handed down regarding what the prophet did, much the same as the hadith are a transmission of what the prophet said. The contents of these biographies are canonical; their position in Islam is somewhat analogous to works of the fathers of the church in Christianity. Which explains the air of piety about this book, which unfortunately may throw some readers off. What this book achieves, and achieves greatly in my opinion, is a reflection of how the Muslim world traditionally thinks of Muhammad. It does not attempt to break new ground

or provide new interpretations of Muhammad's life and mission; rather it assists the Western reader in understanding the traditional interpretation of his life and mission. I would recommend this book highly to anyone interested in understanding Islamic belief and the position that Muhammad occupies in traditional Islamic values; I have come across no other book in English that conveys it as well as this one does.

Martin Lings, scholar of both English and Arabic, has gone back to the original Arabic sources for this biography. It is fortunate for English speaking readers because he has been able to translate the Arabic himself including some writings not previously translated into English. The man knows his stuff. It is told in the form of a story that is nothing short of mesmerizing and there is an air that borders on myth that radiates through the book. This is not to say it is false; this is to say that there is a very high degree of reverence. Those unfamiliar with his life may not get this but at least the reader comes closer to understanding. This is not your typical scholarly biography though it quite obviously does not lack the credentials. Extensive footnotes tracing the sources can be found throughout. What is also remarkable is the way the verse from the Qur'an are woven into the story. If you've read the Qur'an and are baffled by its non-linear structure, this will help immensely. What is refreshing about this book is his life is presented for what it is. There is no apologetic, no 'modern' scholarship attempting to dismantle and dissect the sources and no attempt to ease a Western audience through this material. The Prophet is revered for who he is and what you find here is the traditional Muslim view and reverence of his life. It is what it is. Anyone genuinely seeking to understand Muhammad and how he is viewed by those who follow Islam must start here.

I have often found it difficult to find any good biographies regarding the Prophet of Islam, but this one is truly a gem. Martin Lings has done an amazing job of taking the life of this Man from the most earliest and reliable sources, then turning it into a narrative that is such a pleasure to read. It feels as though one as reading a novel, and it is difficult to put this book down once one has picked it up. The author shows real talent and i can only imagine how great and difficult a task it was to have done research to such a deep level, and then taking it all and writing it in story form. If i remember correctly i think Martin Lings is a Professor at the famous University of Cambridge, England. There are many strong points of this book, it will give one a thorough understanding of who Muhammed was, his beliefs, mindset and what he was attempting to achieve. The story is given in it's true context without any real interpretation, rather that is left to the reader. I found the begining chapter slightly confusing with all the arab names i was bombarded with. It was a little difficult trying to keep

up with who was who. But that problem fortunately was restricted to only the beginning of the book. I had no such problems with the rest of it. I feel this is the best work ever written in the English language regarding such a topic. It is thoroughly enjoyable. It is intelligent and extremely fascinating. I highly recommend it to all, both non-Muslims and Muslims alike. This is a must read. Another excellent source of information if one wishes to take another perspective via a reliable source is, the documentary made by PBS titled 'Islam the Empire of Faith'. This documentary was made drawing mostly from an orientalist approach (from non-Muslim scholars of Islam).

This book is great! Well, big deal, everyone says that! The actual reason why this book is so appreciated is because unlike some other writers who tend to "objectize" Muhammad (PBUH) life, Mr. Lings has immersed himself into the subject. At times, so close that the reader feels like a shadow of the Prophet (PBUH). I have read all the books on Mustafa (PBUH) written in English, but no one comes close to expressing in such an intense and personable manner, the life and times of the man (PBUH) that all Muslims want to emulate... I have bought 5 copies of this book over the course of the last two years but given them all away to close friends and family.....

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