

The Truth About Muhammed | Robert Spencer

Reviewed by Max Frazier in the February 2007 Philogian

As you may have surmised by now, after nearly five years of writing this column for the Philogian, I enjoy reading good books. Oh, once in a while, I read something that I quickly discard into "file 13" as being irrelevant, but most of the time I profit greatly from what I read. Often my reading list is composed of books that others recommend to me that accords me a wider range of reading than I would probably develop myself. So, to those of you who have offered suggestions, I say thanks.

In this issue I would like to share with you two books that I highly recommend. Both books are as current as the morning newspaper or the evening television news programs. Both books take a strong look at what is going on in our world today and seek to offer some suggestions at resolutions of the difficulties.

The Truth About Muhammed

The Truth About Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion (Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2006) was written by Robert Spencer, the director of Jihad Watch, a program of the David Horowitz Freedom Center. Mr. Spencer has authored several books concerning Islam. I had heard Mr. Spencer interviewed on one of the many radio talk-shows I tune into from time to time, and I was intrigued by his understanding of who Muhammad really was. So, I decided to read the book. And I found it to be fascinating. The author uses predominately Islamic materials, including the Qur'an, the tafsir (a Muslim commentary on the Qur'an), and the Hadith (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad). It is this use of Islamic materials that makes this book different from the many other books I have read concerning Islam.

The portrait Mr. Spencer painted was of a person who was the antithesis of Jesus Christ. Muhammad was a man given to fits of anger that led to revenge and violence. He had an hostility toward Christians and Jews that led to his determination that they should be destroyed if they did not capitulate to the Muslim faith. Muhammad acted with treachery toward those who opposed him, often signing peace treaties that were nullified as soon as Muhammad and his followers became stronger. Mr. Spencer states that Muslim leaders still follow this policy, agreeing to peace negotiations in a time when they were weaker, then using that time of peace to regain strength, and breaking those peace treaties once that strength was re-established.

A central feature of the book is a discussion on the concept of jihad or holy war. The purpose of jihad is to advance the religion of Islam against those who would seek to oppose it. The ultimate goal of jihad is the conquest of the world for Islam. In America our introduction to jihad came on 9/11, and since that day, jihad has become part of our vocabulary. Mr. Spencer calls upon his reader to be awakened to that stated purpose of Islam. He calls upon American Muslim groups to work against jihad instead of promoting it. (The author cites a 2005 report by the Freedom House Center for Religious Freedom that found material in American mosques teaching hatred of non-Muslims and stating that apostates from Islam should be killed, in accord with Muhammad's directives).

I highly recommend this book to those of you who want to have a greater understanding of Islam and its founder. You will not be disappointed.