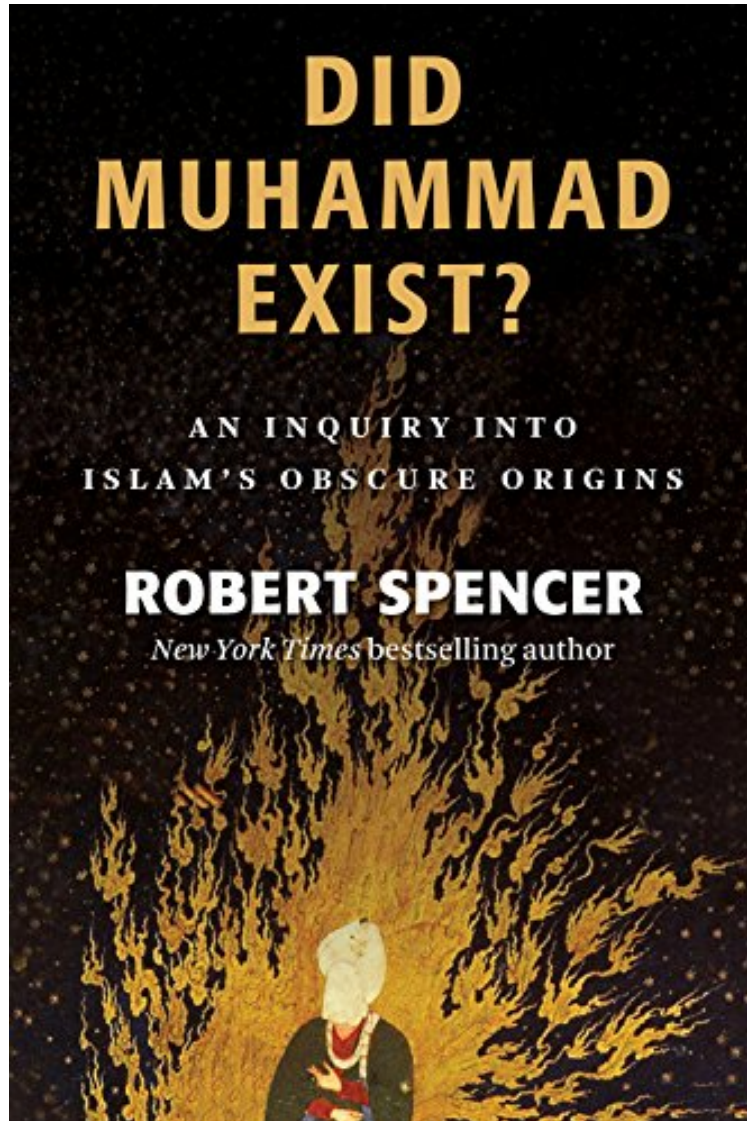


(Read ebook) Did Muhammad Exist?: An Inquiry Into Islam's Obscure Origins

# Did Muhammad Exist?: An Inquiry Into Islam's Obscure Origins

*Robert Spencer*

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**Robert Spencer : Did Muhammad Exist?: An Inquiry Into Islam's Obscure Origins** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Did Muhammad Exist?: An Inquiry Into Islam's Obscure Origins:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. popularization of recent scholarshipBy Charles R. WilliamsThis is a popularization of recent scholarly research. It does presuppose more knowledge of the Islamic religion, the Arabic language and the story of the Arab conquests in the Middle East than the typical reader may have. Some parts of the

book are a little tedious because Spencer gets very detailed. The book is excellent for what it attempts to do. 50 years ago I took the 3 quarter course in Islamic civilization at the University of Chicago and I remain interested in the origins of Islam. I do not think more than a tiny fraction of Muslims will be swayed by this scholarship. A larger but still tiny fraction of Muslims will become outraged. Personally, I think it is no longer possible for an objective observer to take the Muslim account of the origins of Islam at face value. The alternatives remain a matter of speculation.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Higher Criticism By P. Weiser An interesting, thought-provoking book In essence, the work examines the Koran (and essential accompanying traditions) in the spirit (?) of "higher criticism" to which Christianity has already been subjected. As with that earlier enterprise, the results are unlikely to be pleasant reading for believers and are open to objections that the researchers were motivated by hostility toward the religion they investigated. In the case of Christianity, "higher criticism" may have partly arisen from annoyance with its prevalence and self-satisfaction; in that of Islam, with recent violence and disruption committed in its name. (Spolilers ahead, though this is not a work of fiction.) The conclusion that Islam arose from a monophysite Christian sect and invented Mohammed as a role model some time later seems more plausible (to me) in the first part than the second. The evidence of the first - crosses on early coinage, verses within the Dome of the Rock - are certainly suggestive but not conclusive. More suggestive is the very absence of documentation in which Christianity is so rich as to its Councils, etc., defining points of doctrine. This may be explained by Christianity's growing up in a secure, law-ridden late empire while Islam had to make hurried notes in the intervals of killing people and breaking things as it assembled a new one. One is forced to suspect that, though it may be nothing more damaging than what went on at the Council of Nicea, Islam has something to hide about its origins. Coming clean - promoting objective research - might strengthen the faith, or it might not. It is a question of whether Muslims today feel as secure in their faith as did the Christians who carried on the original higher criticism.

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. More fair than I predicted By C. D. Varn Spencer is not known for being fair to Islam, generally finding real but extreme elements of Islam and painting it as representative of the core of the religion while not doing that with the other two Abrahamic religions. That said, he does not do much of that in this book. Here he talks about inconsistencies in the Hadith and Islamic tradition, the clarifying reading of Syriac and Aramiac Christian texts on obscure portions of the Koran, and the lack of contemporary reference to Mohammad until the end of the first Caliphate. While not without bias and largely based on the work of others, people familiar with higher criticism and the arguments about a historical Jesus will find comparison after comparison to scholarly studies around Mohammad. Interesting introduction to the critical study of the Koran and early Islamic origins.

Everything you thought you knew about Islam is about to change This stunning book uncovers provocative evidence that forces us to ask: Did Muhammad, Islams founding prophet, even exist? It is a question that few have thought or dared to ask. But the widely accepted story of Islams origins begins to crumble on close examination. In Did Muhammad Exist? bestselling author Robert Spencer brings to early Islam the same level of probing historical criticism scholars have long applied to Christianity and Judaism. Meticulously examining historical records, archaeological findings, and pioneering new scholarship, Spencer challenges the most fundamental assumptions about Islams origins raising questions with profound implications for our world today.

Concerted detective work of a scholarly nature. [Spencers] book is no polemic. It is a serious quest for facts. Washington Times