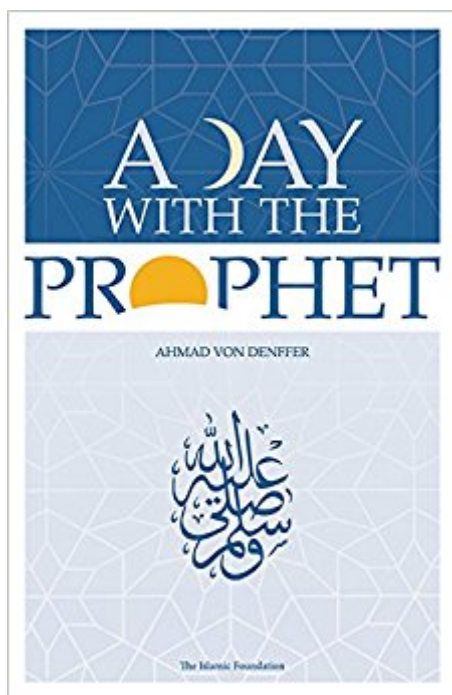


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A Day With The Prophet



Synopsis

This book invites Muslims and non-Muslims to acquaint themselves with the prophet's practice and teachings, his Sunnah, first hand. Relying exclusively upon the sayings and actions of the prophet, which have been selected and translated from authenticated and well-known collections of hadith literature, this book presents a close-up and composite picture of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, described in the Qur'an as the best model for humanity. Ahmad Von Denffer was born in Germany in 1949. He studied Islamics and Social Anthropology at the University of Mainz. He works at the Islamic Centre, Munich, and has translated the Qur'an into German.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ahmad Von Denffer was born in Germany in 1949. He studied Islamics and Social Anthropology at the University of Mainz, where he also attended additional courses in the Department of Missiology. His special interests include Christian-Muslim relations. He has made a number of contributions to scholarly journals and has several publications to his credit. He joined the Islamic Foundation as Research Fellow in 1978 and is presently working with the Islamic Centre, Munich.

Although not literally sequenced like a single day, Ahmad von Deffner has carefully and wisely chosen epigrammatic accounts (*hadith*) of the life and sayings of the Prophet in a way that effectively demonstrates his wisdom and compassion, his eloquence, and brevity. The selected hadith include in addition to ethical and spiritual matters, guidance on awakening, ablution, prayers, reading Qur'an, eating and drinking, relieving one's self, entering and leaving houses, manners of speech,

charity, hospitality, visiting the sick, family, and sleep as well as other everyday topics. Many of the selections are beautiful proverbs. During and after reading this book, one is left with a sense of having sat at the foot of a very wise and compassionate man, as well as gaining insights and guidance on important issues of life. There is wisdom here for Muslims and non-Muslims. Although it is shorter than the collections by Gai Le Eaton, Hamza Yusuf, and Tayeb Chourief, I find von Deffner's selections more delightful and appreciate that all of his selections are from the six canonical collections of hadith, with a great number from the two most treasured collections of Bukhari and Muslim ibn Hajjaj. Unlike the other collections I mentioned (all of which are excellent and highly recommended) it takes much less of a day to experience this "day" with the Prophet. This collection presents the sunna (*exemplary model*) of the prophet as a way of kindness, caring, peace, and compassion.

I have used this text many times over the years in my courses on Islam. It is a useful introductory text on the genre of the hadith literature, long enough to give students a taste of what sorts of subject matter are included therein, short enough so as not to be tedious, inexpensive enough for even the tight budget. The parallel Arabic text, with vowelization, is a great resource for more advanced students, as is the attribution to the original narrator as well as the compiler. The book lacks an index, but it does have a table of contents. Altogether a good place to start for someone who wants to have some sense of the hadith literature but is daunted by the primary texts. The one shortcoming is the lack of contextualization. The book would have been well-served by an introduction to the genre of hadith, as well as some biographical details about the narrators and compilers. I attribute such omissions to the fact that the book is meant for Muslims who would already be familiar with these basics. Nevertheless, even the average Muslim would benefit from some historical and biographical background.

When a friend of mine told me about her recent "coveted" new purchase - being this book, my first thought was "wow, that would be something!" After all, what could possibly be better for us Muslims than to follow Prophet Muhammad (SAW) throughout a day in his life. I guess the fault lies with me, since I was expecting a mirror image in reading this book, where I could maybe be a guest at the Prophet's house; thus taking part in regular activities, such as getting up in the morning for prayers, share meals, and generally "spend" the day in what would have been his household. That would have given me the true insight as to what the Prophet's life might have been. Instead, the book is a condensed collection of Hadith, which can obviously be found somewhere else in a more organized,

explanatory way. Why, then, would I bother to read a pamphlet like this one is my next question. To me, this book has no purpose besides having a misleading title. Perhaps some good historian can actually write something that can be categorized as a true day with the Prophet that we can all follow and enrich our lives with.

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