

SEERAH QUIZ COMPETITION
ON

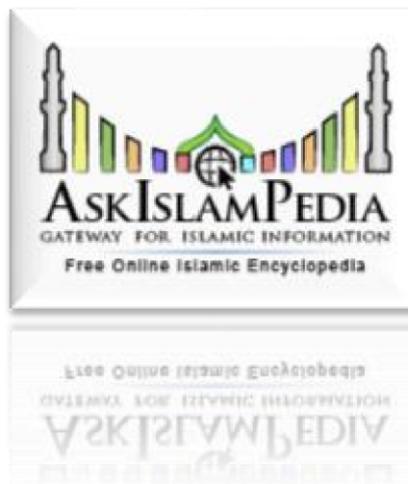


The Greatest Man to Ever Live!

*"And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad],
except as a mercy to the worlds."*

LEVEL 1

Ages: 8 Years to 10 Years



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Seerah – The Life and Times of the Prophet ﷺ

Introduction

All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, the [One Who] Sustains the Heavens and Earths, Director of all that is created, who sent the Messengers (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them) to rational beings, to guide them and explain the religious laws to them with clear proofs and undeniable arguments. I praise Him for all His bounties.

I ask Him to increase His Grace and Generosity. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah alone, who has no partner, the One, Who Subdues, the Generous, the Forgiving. I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger, His beloved and dear one, the best of all creation. He was honored with the Glorious Qur'an that has been an enduring miracle throughout the years. He was also sent with his guiding Sunnah that shows the way for those who seek guidance. Our leader Muhammad ﷺ has been particularized with the characteristic of eloquent and pithy speech, and simplicity and ease in the religion. May the ﷺ, the other Prophets and Messengers, all their families and the rest of the righteous.

The following excerpt from the Life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has been extracted from two books and from the Online Islamic Encyclopedia, AskIslampedia. The Life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by Leila Azzam and Aisha Gouverneur is the first book. This book is quite beautiful in its approach especially for the children where the language is simple and conversational. The other book which has been used is "When the Moon split" by Safi ur Rehmaan Mubarakpuri which is a simpler version of the monumental book called "The Sealed Nectar". AskIslamPedia is an Islamic web portal which provides authentic Islamic knowledge in a simple, structured and an organized format so as to make the world know what pure Islam is, at a button's click. It is aimed to serve every user in their search of authentic knowledge irrespective of their religion, caste, creed, race or color.

Hence, the following are the extracts from these two books and the website for the purpose of the Seerah Quiz and are not an original work.

May Allah accept this work from us and add it to our deeds on the Day of Judgement.



“I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first intercessor and the first whose intercession will be accepted.”



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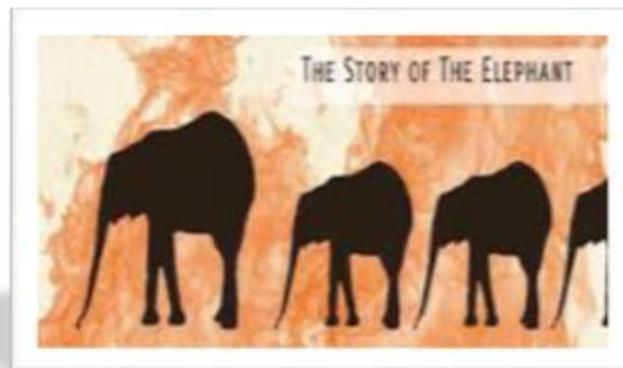
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The Elephant Refuses to Move!

A regent there. Later, he noticed that at a certain time of the year large numbers of people would travel from all over Yemen and the rest of Arabia to Makkah. He asked the reason for this and was told that they were going on pilgrimage to the Ka'bah. Abrahah hated the idea of Makkah being more important than his own country, so he decided to build a church of colored marble, with doors of gold and ornaments of silver, and ordered the people to visit it instead of the Ka'bah.

But no one obeyed him.



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and

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Abrahah became angry and decided to destroy the Ka'bah. He prepared a large army led by an elephant and set off towards Makkah. When the Makkahns heard that he was coming they became very frightened. Abrahah's army was huge and they could not fight it. But how could they let him destroy the Holy Ka'bah? They went to ask the advice of their leader, 'Abd al-Muttalib. When Abrahah arrived outside Makkah, 'Abd al-Muttalib went to meet him. Abrahah said, 'What do you want?' Abrahah had taken Abd al-Muttalib's camels, which he had found grazing as he entered Makkah, so „Abd al-Muttalib replied, 'I want my camels back.' Abrahah was very surprised and said, 'I have come to destroy your Holy Ka'bah, the holy place of your fathers, and you ask me about some camels?' 'Abd al-Muttalib replied calmly, the camels belong to me; the Ka'bah belongs to Allah and He will protect it.' Then he left Abrahah and went back to Quraysh and ordered them to leave Makkah and wait for their enemies in the mountains.

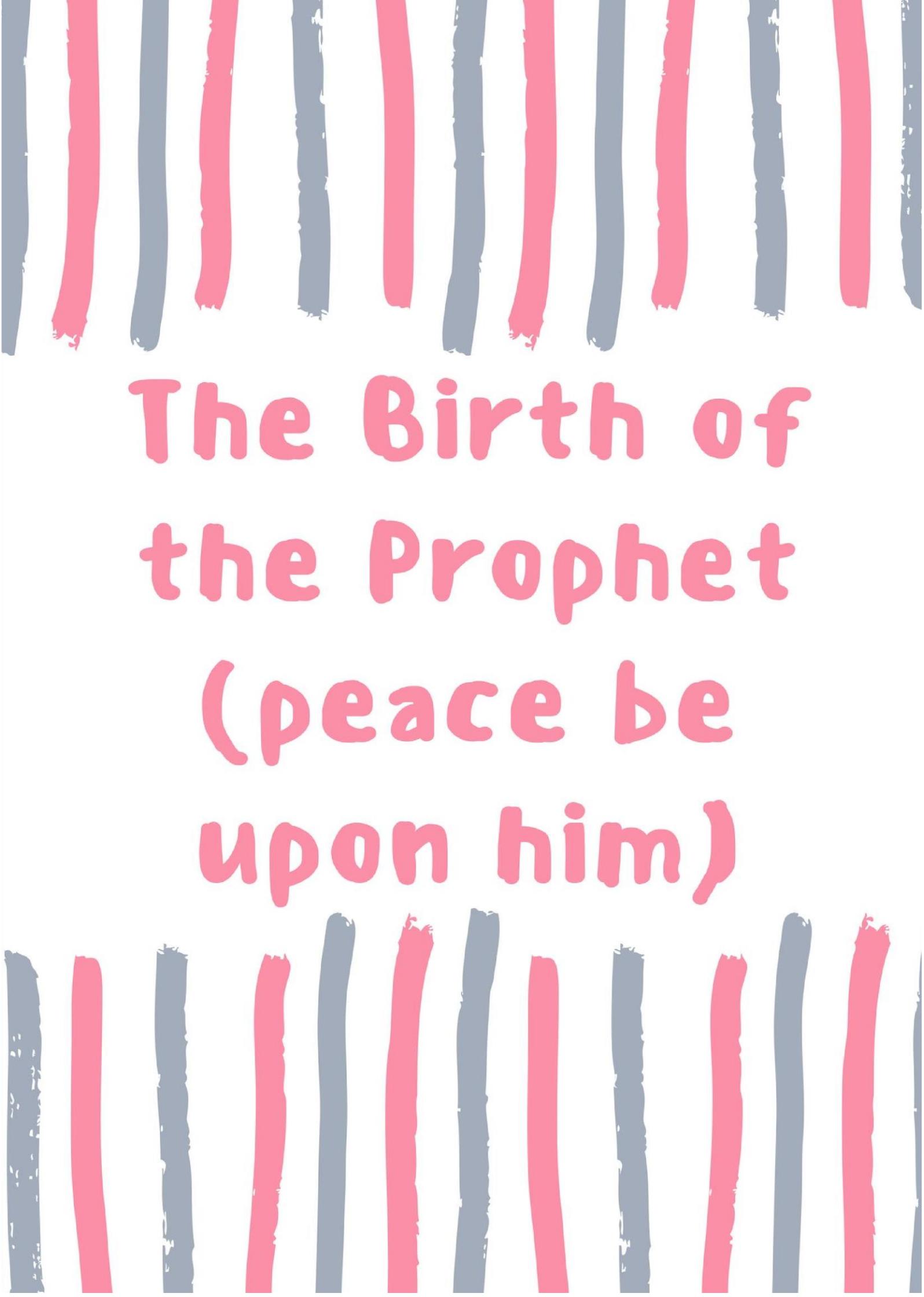
In the morning Abrahah prepared to enter the town. He put armor on his elephant and drew up his troops for battle. He intended to destroy the Ka'bah and then return to Yemen. At that moment, however, the elephant knelt and refused to get up, no matter how much the soldiers tried to get it to move by beating it. But when they turned its face in the direction of Yemen it immediately got up and started off. In fact, it did the same in any other direction, but as soon as they pointed it towards Makkah it knelt down again.

Suddenly, flocks of birds appeared from over the sea. Each bird carried three stones as small as peas and they dropped them on Abrahah's army. The soldiers suddenly fell ill. Even Abrahah was hit by the stones and fled in fear with the rest of his army back to Yemen, where he later died. On seeing their enemy flee the Arabs came down from the mountains to the Ka'bah and gave thanks to Allah.

After this, Quraysh gained great respect and became known as 'the people of Allah', and the year in which these events took place, 570 C.E, was named the 'Year of the Elephant'. In that year Allah had saved the Ka'bah and he would soon bring forth a Prophet from among Quraysh. In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful: "Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the owners of the Elephant? Did He not bring their stratagem to naught, and send against them swarms of flying creatures, which pelted them with stones

of baked clay, and made them like green crops devoured (by cattle)?¹

¹ (Qur'an 105.1-5)



The Birth of
the Prophet
(peace be
upon him)

The Prophet Is Born

M and strong as she awaited the birth of her baby. She never forgot that voice but she told no one meanwhile in Makkah, Aminah, although saddened by the loss of her husband, felt especially well about it.

On Monday, the twelfth day of Rabi al-Awwal in the Year of the Elephant, Aminah gave birth to a son. Allah sends man many signs when one of His chosen Prophets is born and on that ninth day of Rabi al-Awwal in the year 570 C.E. According to another famous opinion he was born on 12th of Rabi al Awwal.

Aminah sent news of the birth to her father-in-law, 'Abd al-Muttalib, who was sitting near the Ka'bah at the time. He was very happy and began at once to think of a name for the boy. An ordinary name would not do. Six days came and went and still he had not decided. But on the seventh day, as he lay asleep near the Ka'bah, 'Abd al-Muttalib dreamt that he should give the baby the unusual name of Muhammad, just as Aminah herself had dreamt. And the child was called Muhammad (ﷺ), which means 'the Praised One'.

When 'Abd al-Muttalib told the leaders of Quraysh what he had named his grandson, many of them asked, 'Why did you not The Life of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) choose the sort of name that is used by our people?' At once he replied, 'I want him to be praised by Allah in the heavens and praised by men on earth.'

A Time with Halimah!

L years to the desert where it was healthier. Women from the desert used to come to Makkah to collect like many other women in Makkah, Aminah decided to send her son away from the city for his early the new babies and they would then keep them until they developed into strong children, for which they were well paid by the parents.

Among the women who traveled to Makkah to fetch a new baby at the time Aminah's son was born, was a Bedouin woman called Halimah. With her was her husband and baby son. They had always been very poor but this year things were harder than ever because there had been famine.

The donkey that earned Halimah on the journey was so weak from hunger that he often stumbled. Halimah's own baby son cried all the time because his mother could not feed him properly. Even their she-camel did not give them one drop of milk. Halimah did not know what to do. She thought to herself, 'How can I possibly feed another baby when I haven't got enough milk even for my own son?'

At last they reached Makkah. All the other women of the tribe to which Halimah belonged, the Bani Sa'd, found a child to take back with them, but not Halimah. The only baby left was Muhammad (ﷺ). Usually the father paid the wet-nurse but Muhammad ﷺ's father was dead. So, no one wanted to take him, even though he was from one of the noblest families of Quraysh. Halimah did not want to take him either, but she did not want to be the only woman to go back to her tribe without a baby to bring up.

She asked her husband whether she should take Muhammad (ﷺ) or not. He advised her to do so, adding, 'Perhaps Allah will bless us because of him.' They started on the return journey and as soon as Halimah began to feed Muhammad (ﷺ) her milk suddenly increased, and she had enough for him as well as her baby son. When they were back home, everything began to change.

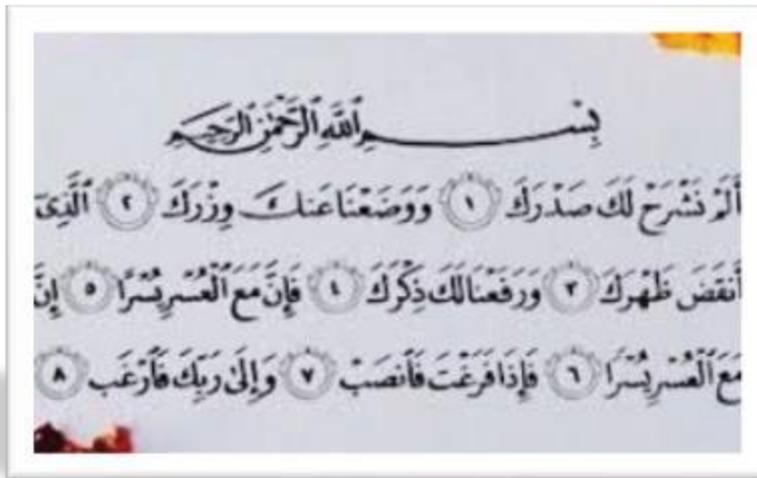
The land became green, and the date trees, one of their main sources of food, gave lots of fruit. Even the sheep and their old she-camel began to give plenty of milk.

Halimah and her husband knew that this good fortune had come because they had the new baby, Muhammad (ﷺ), whom they had come to love as if he were their own son.

When Muhammad (ﷺ) was two years old, Halimah took him back to his mother. She pleaded with Aminah, however, to let her keep him for a little longer, and to her great joy the mother agreed. During his time with Halimah's family in the desert, Muhammad (ﷺ) played with her children and together they would take the sheep out to graze. At other times, however, Halimah would often find him sitting alone. It is said that on one occasion, two angels came to Muhammad (ﷺ) and washed his heart with snow. In this way Allah made his heart pure for He intended Muhammad (ﷺ) to be greater than any man ever born and to become the Seal of the Prophets. Allah says in the Qur'an,

“Did We not expand thy breast for thee and eased thee of thy burden Which weighed down thy back; And exalted thy fame? So truly with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease. So, when thou art relieved, still toil and strive to please thy Lord.”²

When Halimah finally took Muhammad (ﷺ) back to Aminah, he was a healthy, strong boy. Later he would look back with joy on the time he had spent with Halimah, and he always thought of himself as one of the Bani Sa'd.



The Orphan's Childhood

Three years later Aminah decided to take her son to visit his uncles in Yathrib. She told her Muhammad (ﷺ) returned to live with his mother in Makkah when he was about three years old. maid, Barakah, to prepare everything they would need for the long journey, and then they joined one of the caravans going there. They stayed in Yathrib a month and Muhammad (ﷺ) enjoyed the visit with his cousins. The climate there was very pleasant, and he learned to swim and to fly a kite. On

² (Qur'an 94.1-8)

their way back to Makkah, however, Aminah became ill and died. She was buried in the village at al-Abwa not far from Yathrib.

Muhammad (ﷺ) returned sadly to Makkah with his mother's maid. He was now six years old and had lost both his father and mother. He was then adopted by his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, who loved him dearly and kept him by his side at all times. It was the custom of 'Abd al-Muttalib to sit on a blanket near the Ka'bah. There he was always surrounded by people who had come to speak to him. No one was allowed to sit on the blanket with him, however, except his grandson Muhammad (ﷺ), which shows how close they were to each other. Many times, 'Abd al-Muttalib was heard to say: 'This boy will be very important one day.'

Two years later 'Abd al-Muttalib became ill and Muhammad (ﷺ) stayed by him constantly. 'Abd al-Muttalib told his son, Abu Talib, to adopt Muhammad (ﷺ) after his death, which he did. Abu Talib had many children of his own, but Muhammad (ﷺ) immediately became part of his family and the favorite child. The time came for Quraysh to prepare a caravan to go to Syria. Abu Talib was going with them and he took Muhammad (ﷺ) along. It was his first journey to the north. After days of travel, the caravan arrived at a place near Syria where the Romans used to come to trade with the Arabs. Near this marketplace lived a monk called Bahira. His cell had been used by generations of monks before him and contained ancient manuscripts.

Bahira' saw the caravan in the distance and was amazed to see that over it was a large white cloud. It was the only cloud in a clear blue sky and it appeared to be shading one of the travelers. The monk was even more surprised to see that the cloud seemed to follow the caravan but disappeared when the person it was shading sat down under a tree.

Bahira knew from the scriptures that a prophet was expected to come after Jesus and it had been his wish to see this prophet before he died. Realizing that what he had just seen was a miracle, he began to think that his wish might, after all, come true.

The monk sent an invitation to the Makkahns to come and eat with him. The Arabs were surprised because they often passed by and Bahira had never invited them before. When the group was all together for the

meal, the monk said, 'Is this everyone? 'No', someone said, 'a boy was left watching the camels.' Bahira“ insisted that the boy should join them. The boy was Muhammad (ﷺ). When he arrived Bahira said nothing but watched him all through the meal. Bahira said that the boy was destined to be a prophet, and he ordered Abu Talib to watch over Muhammad (ﷺ) with great care.

There are many stories told about Muhammad ﷺ's youth. Some tell of how he used to take the family's sheep to graze and was always kind to them. While they grazed, he would sit thinking about the mysteries of nature. Unlike those around him he never worshipped the idols and never swore by them.

He also wondered why people were always struggling for power and money, and this saddened him and made him feel lonely, but he kept his feelings to himself. He was a quiet, thoughtful boy, and rarely played with other boys of his age.

On one occasion, however, Muhammad (ﷺ) went with some of the boys to a wedding in Makkah. When he reached the house, he heard the sounds of music and dancing but just as he was about to enter, he suddenly felt tired and, sitting down, fell asleep. He didn't wake up until late the next morning and thus missed the celebrations. In this way Allah prevented him from doing anything foolish for He was keeping Muhammad (ﷺ) for something much more important.

A close-up photograph of a bouquet of flowers. The bouquet includes several red roses, a large orange-red spiky flower (possibly a Protea or similar), and several purple anemones. The background is dark and out of focus, showing more flowers and greenery. The text "THE PROPHET'S MARRIAGE!" is overlaid in a white, stylized, handwritten font across the middle of the image.

THE PROPHET'S
MARRIAGE!

The Prophet's Marriage

By the time Muhammad (ﷺ) was twenty-five he was famous for his honesty. He was respected by everyone, even the elders of Makkah. The purity of his nature increased with the years. It seemed he had an inner knowledge that other people did not have. He believed in one God- Creator of the world-and he worshipped Him with all his heart and with all his soul. Muhammad (ﷺ) was the finest of his people, the most kind, truthful and reliable person in Makkah. He was known among Quraysh as 'the trustworthy' (al-Amin) because of the good qualities Allah had given him. He spent many quiet hours in a cave in Mount Hira, not far from Makkah, thinking about Allah.

Among Quraysh was a respected and wealthy woman named Khadijah. She was involved in trade and on hearing of Muhammad ﷺ's reputation, sent for him and asked him to take her goods and trade with them in Syria. Muhammad (ﷺ) agreed and left for Syria with one of Khadijah's caravans. With him went her slave, Maysarah, and they spent a great deal of time talking together. Maysarah soon came to admire Muhammad (ﷺ). He thought he was quite different from all the other men of Quraysh. Two unusual events took place during this journey which puzzled Maysarah very much. The first happened when they stopped to rest near the lonely home of a monk. Muhammad (ﷺ) sat under a tree while Maysarah was busy with some work.

The monk came up to Maysarah and asked, 'Who is the man resting under the tree?' 'One of Quraysh, the people who guard the Ka'bah', said Maysarah. 'No one but a Prophet is sitting beneath this tree', replied the monk. The second event occurred on the journey back to Makkah. It happened at noon, when the sun is at its hottest. Maysarah was riding behind Muhammad (ﷺ) and as the sun grew hotter he saw two angels appear above Muhammad (ﷺ) and shield him from the sun's harmful rays. The trading was very successful and Muhammad (ﷺ) made more profit for Khadijah than she had ever received before.

When they arrived back in Makkah Maysarah told Khadijah everything about the trip and what he had noticed about Muhammad ﷺ's character and behavior.

Khadijah was a widow in her forties and as well as being rich and highly respected she was also very beautiful. Many men wanted to marry her but none of them suited her. When she met Muhammad (ﷺ), however, she thought he was very special. She sent a friend to ask Muhammad (ﷺ) why he was not married. Muhammad (ﷺ) said that it was because he had no money, to which the friend replied: 'Supposing a rich, beautiful and noble lady agreed to marry you?' Muhammad (ﷺ) wanted to know who that could be.

The friend told him it was Khadijah. Muhammad (ﷺ) was very happy, because he greatly respected Khadijah. He went with his uncles, Abu Talib and Hamzah, to Khadijah's uncle, and asked his permission to marry her. The uncle gave his permission and soon after, Muhammad (ﷺ) and Khadijah were married.

Their marriage was a joyful one and Muhammad (ﷺ) and Khadijah were well suited. Their life together, however, was not without some sadness. They were blessed with six children, two sons and four daughters. Sadly, their first born, a son called Qasim, died shortly before his second birthday, and their last child, also a son, only lived for a short time. Happily, their four daughters-Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum, and Fatimah-all survived.

A cosmic background featuring a large, glowing blue sphere on the right side, surrounded by various nebulae in shades of orange, yellow, and green. The text is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**THE REVELATION
BEGINS**

The Coming of The Archangel Jibreel

M the sky, and of all living things, and that all people should worship only Him. Muhammad (ﷺ) believed that there was only one Allah, Creator of the sun, the moon, the earth, would often leave the crowded city and go to the cave in Mount Hira'. He liked to be alone there, away from all thoughts of the world and daily life, eating and drinking little. In his fortieth year, Muhammad (ﷺ) left Makkah to spend Ramadan, the traditional month of retreat, in the cave. In the second half of Ramadan, Allah began to reveal His message for mankind through Muhammad (ﷺ). This first Revelation occurred as follows. The Archangel Jibreel came to Muhammad (ﷺ) in the cave and commanded him to 'Read'. Muhammad (ﷺ) replied 'I cannot read.' At this the Archangel took Muhammad (ﷺ) in his arms and pressed him to him until it was almost too much to bear. He then released him and said again 'Read.' 'I cannot', replied Muhammad (ﷺ), at which the Archangel embraced him again. For the third time the Archangel commanded Muhammad (ﷺ) to read, but still he said he could not and was again embraced. On releasing him this time, however, the Archangel

Jibreel said:

“Read: In the Name of your Lord who creates, Created man from a clot. Read: And your Lord is the Most Generous Who teaches by the pen, teaches man that which he knew not.”³

Muhammad (ﷺ) repeated these verses, just as the Archangel had said them. When the Archangel was sure Muhammad (ﷺ) knew them by heart, he went away. Now that he was alone Muhammad (ﷺ) could not understand what had happened to him. He was terribly afraid and rushed out of the cave. Perhaps the cave was haunted? Perhaps the devil had taken a hold of his mind? But he was stopped by a voice from heaven which said; 'O Muhammad (ﷺ) you are the Messenger of Allah, and I am Jibreel.' He looked up at the sky and wherever he turned he saw the Archangel Jibreel. In a state of confusion, he returned home to Khadijah.

When his wife saw him, she became very worried as he began to shiver, as though in a fever. He asked her to wrap him in blankets, which she did. After a while he recovered sufficiently to tell her what had happened at Hira'. Khadijah believed all that he told her and with great respect said: 'Be happy, O son of my uncle and be confident. Truly I swear by Allah who has my soul in His hands, that you will be our people's Prophet.'

³ (Qur'an 96.1-5)

Muhammad (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah, was eased by her faith in him, but after all that had happened, he was exhausted and felt fast asleep.

Khadijah left the Prophet (ﷺ) sleeping and went to see her cousin, Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, to ask him what he thought about all that had happened. Waraqah was a very wise man who had read many books and had become a Christian after studying the Bible. He told Khadijah that Muhammad (ﷺ) had been chosen by Allah to be His Messenger. Just as the Archangel Jibreel had come to Moses before and had ordered him to guide his people, so, too, would Muhammad (ﷺ) be the Prophet of his people. But Waraqah warned that all the people would not listen to the Prophet and some would mistreat his followers. He must, however, be patient because he had a great message for all the world. From that day on, the Archangel Jibreel came often to the Prophet (ﷺ) and the verses he taught him, the message from Allah to man, were later written down, and are known to us as the Holy Qur'an.

The Mission Begins

Muhammad ﷺ accepted his duties as prophet and messenger with resolute obedience. He answered his Lord's call by inviting members of his household to worship Allah in keeping with His commandments. They were to be Muslims, those who had surrendered to Allah, and their religion was Islam, the religion of peace.

However, the Prophet's compatriots were a rough people accustomed to settling their disputes with swords. They clung to idol worship because it had been the practice of their ancestors who had strayed far from the pure monotheism of Ibraheem and Isma'eel. Sensing their antagonism, the Prophet ﷺ began to quietly teach those closest to him, those whose hearts he felt would be open to the truth.

The Troubles Begin

Three years passed and one day the Archangel Jibreel came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and ordered him to start preaching openly to everyone. So, the Prophet (ﷺ) told the people of Makkah that he had something very important to tell them. He stood on a hillside in Makkah, called Safa, and they gathered around to hear what he had to say. He started by asking them, if they would believe him were, he to say that an army was about to attack them. They answered that indeed they would, because he never lied. He then told them that he was the Messenger of Allah, sent to show them the right way, and

to warn them of terrible punishments if they did not follow him in worshipping only Allah and none other. Abu Lahab, one of the Prophet's uncles who was among the listeners, suddenly stood up and said, 'May you perish! Did you call us here just to tell us this?' At this, Allah sent to the Prophet (ﷺ) the following Surah:

In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

“The Power of Abu Lahab will perish, and he will perish. His wealth and gains will not save him. He shall roast at a flaming fire, And his wife, the carrier of firewood Will have upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre”.⁴

Then the crowd dispersed and the Prophet (ﷺ) was left alone. A few days later the Prophet (ﷺ) tried again. A feast was prepared in his house for all of his uncles. After the meal he spoke to them and said, 'O sons of 'Abd al-Muttalib! I know of no Arab who has come to his people with a better message than mine. I have brought you the best news for this life and the next. Allah has ordered me to call you to Him. So, which of you will help me?' All the men kept silent. Then 'Ali, his cousin, jumped up and said: 'O Prophet of Allah! I will help you.' Then the men all got up and left, laughing as they went because only one young boy had agreed to help the Prophet (ﷺ).

His message ignored by most of the people and his uncles, the Prophet (ﷺ) continued to meet his friends secretly in a house near the hill of Safa. There they prayed together, and he taught them about the religion of Islam. But even though they kept to themselves, they were sometimes abused by those who would not believe.

In order to get rid of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers, his enemies started persecuting those Muslims who were poor or weak or had no powerful friends. One such person was Bilal, the slave of Umayyah ibn Khalaf. His master would take him out into the desert, tie him up, and leave him in the sun with a large stone on his chest. Fortunately, Abu Bakr was passing by one day and saw Umayyah torturing Bilal, so he bought him from his master for a large sum of money and then set him free. But not all persecuted Muslims were as fortunate as Bilal. Many suffered, but all of them endured it patiently, knowing that they were doing

⁴ (Qur'an 111.1-5)

the right thing and that their reward in the life to come would be greater' than any happiness they could find on earth.

Persecution begins

The persecution of the Muslims was a terrible phase in early Islam. There were numerous heart-rending incidents in which Muslims were tortured and often killed by the Quraysh. The collective memories of the early Muslim community catalogued the injuries and casualties suffered by its members, and in this biography of the Prophet of Islam it is fitting that we mention the lives and deaths of his most ardent followers, those who recognized the truth of his message and died believing in Allah and His Messenger.

Bilal bin Rabah was the slave of Umayya bin Khalaf. Incensed at his slave's assertion of spiritual independence, Umayya would hand him over to the street urchins after tying a rope around his neck. As they would drag him, Bilal would reiterate "One! One!" in reference to the Oneness of God. Umayya would also bring Bilal out at noon and throw him on his back on the burning sand or stone with a heavy rock on his chest. Then he would say to Bilal, "Now, by God, you will lie here till you either die or deny Muhammad and worship Lat and Uzza." Bilal endured the affliction, reaffirming his faith in Allah by calling out, "One! One!"

Finally, the torture ended when Abu Bakr saw Bilal as he was passing by. His wealth was now a tool with which to earn Allah's pleasure, and he purchased Bilal and freed him. Amir bin Fuhayrah was another early believer who endured beatings so merciless that he lost his senses and did not know what he was saying.

While some form of hostility from the community at large was only to be expected, it was strange that even the immediate families of the new Muslims joined in the persecution. Love vanished in the face of allegiance to their idols. When Mus'ab bin Umayr accepted Islam, his privileged lifestyle ended. His mother refused to give him food and drink and turned him out of her house. Defenseless and shunned by

the one who had given birth to him, he was brutally tortured, and his skin was peeled off like the slough of a snake by his tormentors.

Suhayb bin Sinan Rumi was another Muslim who was tortured to the extent that he lost control over what he said and babbled anything his tormentors had him utter.

In the eyes of the Quraysh, slaves who became Muslim were rebels to be tortured to death. Their low social status left them vulnerable to all kinds of abuse. Nevertheless, not even wealth and social standing guaranteed complete immunity to anyone who became Muslim. Uthman bin Affan was a well-to-do person in the community, but he too was tortured in various ways. Once his uncle wrapped him up tightly in a mat and burned incense from below.

Abu Bakr and Talha bin Ubaydullah were also harassed.

Because the Prophet ﷺ had enjoyed great prestige and belonged to a highly respected tribe, his opponents did not dare mistreat him the way they did the slave converts to Islam. In addition to being from a noble tribe, he also enjoyed the protection of his uncle, Abu Talib, who was venerated as a great chieftain. Abu Talib was a towering personality from Banu Abdu Munaf, a family that had gained the respect of not only the Quraysh, but also the whole of Arabia. The people of Makkah held him in high esteem and no one would even think of dishonoring him by harming his nephew. For these reasons, the pagans had to be quite careful in how they opposed the Prophet. They decided to hold talks with Abu Talib — talks in which they would hint at what might befall Muhammad if he continued opposing their religion.

The Year of Sorrow

Lhe Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers went back to a normal way of life after the 3 years boycott which the Quraish had imposed, but the years of hardship had made Khadijah very weak. She became ill and soon afterwards she died. Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) lost his beloved wife and friend, the first person to accept Islam and support him. She had been a refuge from all his troubles and, through her

goodheartedness, the best company in his suffering. He had loved her very much. This happened in 619 C.E., the year which became known as the 'Year of Sorrow'.

Soon after this, the Prophet Muhammad's uncle and protector, Abu Talib, also died. Abu Talib had been one of the most respected men in Makkah-one of the elders of Quraysh. Even though he had never been a follower of Islam, he had protected the Prophet (ﷺ) against his enemies. Not only was this a sad occasion for the Prophet (ﷺ) but also a dangerous one. According to Arab custom anyone who is under the protection of another is safe so long as his protector lives. Now, with the death of his uncle, the Prophet's protection was gone. The Prophet's enemies rejoiced to see him so sad, without a wife to console and comfort him, and without his uncle to protect him. They began to treat him worse than ever before. Even small children insulted him. One young man actually threw some filth on the Prophet's head, but the Prophet (ﷺ) went home without making anything of it. When one of his daughters rushed, weeping, to wash it away, he comforted her saying, 'Do not weep my little girl, for Allah will protect your father.'

Abu Talib had been the Prophet's last tie with Quraysh and the Prophet (ﷺ) now felt that Islam could make no further progress in Makkah because the hearts of Quraysh were closed against him. He decided, therefore, to travel to Ta'if where he hoped to find support. He walked all the way to the town, which was seventy kilometers away. There he spoke in all the places where people gathered, but no one listened to him. He met the leaders of the three most important tribes, but they would not listen either. Not only did they take no notice of what he said, but they laughed at him and ordered their slaves to insult him and pelt him with stones.

Sadly, the Prophet (ﷺ) left the city. The Prophet (ﷺ) walked back to Makkah. He was able to put up with everything patiently for he knew that Allah would never leave him. His journey to Ta'if had not been in vain and this was the beginning of great changes.



**WHEN
THE
MOON
SPLIT!**

The moon splits in half!

They had found Muhammad's weakness. Now they asked him to show them any sign. If he absence of any spectacular miracle such as they had demanded convinced the Quraysh that Muhammad couldn't produce even a small sign, the Quraysh believed that it would show everyone that he was a false prophet. Muhammad would be silenced at last.

The Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allah and asked Him to show the Quraysh a sign. Finally, Allah gave the Quraysh clear evidence: the moon split in half so that each half appeared on either side of Mount Hira.

"Be you all witnesses," the Prophet ﷺ said.

At first, the pagans could not believe what they saw. The moon had been split in two before their eyes. After the initial shock, however, they determined that it was nothing but the sorcery of the son of Abu Kabsha. "Maybe he has put a spell on us, so let's wait until some travelers arrive in Makkah and ask them if they also saw it." As soon as some travelers arrived in Makkah, the Makkans asked them if they had seen the strange sight. The travelers confirmed they too had seen the wondrous sight of the cleft moon. Now there was no doubt about what they had witnessed, but the Quraysh stubbornly clutched their disbelief.

A long-exposure photograph of a night sky filled with star trails, creating a sense of motion and time. The trails are curved and sweep across the frame. At the bottom, the dark silhouette of a landscape, including hills and trees, is visible against a faint orange and yellow glow from the setting or rising sun.

THE NIGHT JOURNEY

The Night Journey and The Ascent To Heaven

U

ne night as the Prophet (ﷺ) lay sleeping in the same spot where 'Abd al-Muttalib used to sleep, next

to the Ka'bah, he was woken by the Archangel Jibreel. Later the Prophet (ﷺ) described what happened: 'I sat up and he took hold of my arm. I stood beside him and he brought me to the door of the mosque where there was a white animal for me to ride.' The Prophet (ﷺ) told of how he mounted the animal and, with the Archangel Jibreel at his side, was transported from Makkah to the mosque called al-Aqsa, in far away Jerusalem. There the Prophet (ﷺ) found Ibrahim (peace be upon him), Moses, and Jesus among a group of Prophets. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) acted as their leader, or imam, in prayer.

Then he was brought two jugs, one containing wine and the other milk. He chose the milk and refused the wine. At this, the Archangel Jibreel said, 'You have been rightly guided to the fitrah, the true nature of man, and so will your people be, Muhammad. Wine is forbidden to you. The Prophet (ﷺ) also related how they passed through Heaven's gates and saw countless angels. Among them was Malik, the Keeper of Hell, who never smiles. Malik stepped forward and showed the Prophet (ﷺ) a view of Hell and the terrible plight of those who suffer in that place. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) was taken up by the angels, through the seven Heavens, one by one. Along the way he again saw Jesus, Moses, and Ibrahim (peace be upon him), and the Prophet (ﷺ) said that he had never seen a man more like himself than Ibrahim (peace be upon him).

He also saw John, called Yahya in Arabic, Joseph or Yusef, Enoch, that is Idris, and Aaron. At last he reached the Lote Tree of the Uttermost, the sidrat al-muntaha where no Prophet had been before. Here the Prophet (ﷺ) received Revelation of what Muslims believe. "The Messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers-We make no distinction between any of His messengers-and they say: We hear, and we obey. Grant us Thy forgiveness, our Lord. Unto Thee is the homecoming".⁵

Then he was taken into the Light of the Divine Presence of Allah and was instructed that Muslims should pray fifty times a day. The Prophet (ﷺ) recalled: "On my way back I passed by Moses and what a good

⁵ (Qur'an 2.285)

friend to you he was! He asked me how many prayers had I been ordained to perform. When I told him fifty, he said, 'Prayer is a serious matter and your people are weak, so go back to your Lord and ask Him to reduce the number for you and your community.' I did so, and He took away ten. Again, I passed by Moses and he said the same again; and so it went on until only five prayers for the whole day and night were left. Moses again gave me the same advice. I replied that I had been back to my Lord and asked him to reduce the number until I was ashamed, and I would not do it again. He of you who performs the five prayers faithfully, will have the reward of fifty prayers.

On the morning following these events and the Prophet's return to Makkah, he told Quraysh what had happened. Most of them said, 'By God! This is ridiculous! A caravan takes a month to go to Syria and a month to return! Can you do that long journey in a single night?' Even many Muslims were amazed by this and wanted the Prophet (ﷺ) to explain. Some ran with the news to Abu Bakr who said, 'By Allah, if Muhammad (ﷺ) himself has said so, then it is true. Remember, the Prophet tells us that the word of Allah comes to him directly from heaven to earth at any hour by day or night, and we believe him. Isn't that a greater miracle than what you are now doubting?'

Then Abu Bakr went to the mosque and listened to the Prophet's detailed description of Jerusalem. He commented, 'You tell the truth, O Prophet of Allah!' From then on, Abu Bakr was honored with the title 'al-Siddiq', which means 'he who gives his word to support the truth'. Others also began to believe the Prophet's story when he went on to describe two caravans, he had seen on his way back to Makkah. He told the doubters where he had seen the caravans, what they were carrying and when they would arrive in Makkah. All that the Prophet (ﷺ) had said was born out when the caravans arrived at the time, he said they would, carrying all that he had described.

“Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Far distant place of worship, the Neighborhood which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs, He, only He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing”.⁶

⁶ (Qur'an 17:1)

The Treaty of 'Aqabah

In Yathrib there were two main tribes, the Aws and the Khazraj. Both were very powerful, they were always at war with one another, and both worshipped idols. Also, in Yathrib were many Jews who, unlike the Arab at that time, knew that there was only One God, and worshipped Him. They had told the Arabs many times that a Prophet would be coming to them. The time came for the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, and several people from Yathrib were going, among them six men from the tribe of Khazraj. They had heard about the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's preaching and thought that must be the Prophet the Jews had told them about.

So, they decided to go speak to him during their stay in Makkah. They met the Prophet (ﷺ) at a spot known as Aqabah, near Makkah, and invited them to sit with him. He explained to them what Islam meant recited to them from the Qur'an. When they heard the Qur'an recited touched their hearts so deeply that they became Muslims and on leaving Makkah they promised to return the following year. When they reached Yathrib carrying Islam in their hearts, they told their relatives and friends what they had heard from the Prophet (ﷺ) and many more people became Muslims.

An aerial photograph of a vast, rugged mountain range under a twilight sky. The mountains are layered, with the foreground showing sharp ridges and deep valleys. The lighting is dramatic, with warm tones on the mountain peaks and a cool, blue-purple hue in the sky and distant valleys. The text is centered in a white, elegant serif font.

The Journey
towards Madinah!

Al-Hijrah

I

he breaking of All Connections with One's Home, for the Sake of Allah Alone. After his companions had left for Yathrib, the Prophet (ﷺ) stayed in Makkah, waiting for permission from Allah to leave the city. Abu Bakr and Ali stayed with him. There were also some Muslims whom Quraysh had not allowed to leave. Abu Bakr kept asking the Prophet (ﷺ) to allow him to go to Yathrib, but the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) kept saying, 'Do not be in a hurry; it might be that Allah will give you a travelling companion.' The leaders of Quraysh assembled in the house of their ancestor, Qusayy, as was customary when they had an important decision to make. They had to find a way of getting rid of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), before he was able to join his friends in Yathrib.

As they were busy arguing, the Devil appeared at the door in the form of a noble and handsome old man. When they saw this elderly gentleman standing there, they asked him who he was. He said he was a Shaikh from the mountains who had heard what they meant to do and thought he might be able to help or advise them. They thought he looked like a wise man, so they invited him in. Each leader then started to put forward ideas about what should be done, but none of them could agree about which was best, until AbuJahl told them his plan. This was that each clan should provide a strong, young warrior, each of whom would be given a sword. All the young warriors would then wait outside the Prophet's house and together attack him as he came out. In this way they would be rid of him but as the blame for killing him would fall on all the clans, the Prophet's family would not be able to seek revenge. When he heard this, the Devil in the disguise of the old man, said, 'That man is right; in my opinion it is the only thing to do!' The leaders of Quraysh then left to carry out their plan to murder the Prophet (ﷺ). "And when the unbelievers plot against thee, to confine thee, or kill thee, or to drive thee out, they were plotting, But Allah was (also) plotting; and Allah is the best of plotters".⁷

Before the night fell, on which Muhammad (ﷺ) was to be killed, the Archangel Jibreel came to him and said, 'Do not sleep tonight in your own bed.' The Prophet (ﷺ) understood what was going to happen, so he told Ali to lie in his bed and wrap himself in the blanket that the Prophet (ﷺ) normally used, promising that no harm would befall him. With the coming of darkness the young men of Quraysh had gathered outside

⁷ (Qur'an 8.30)

the Prophet's house, waiting for him to come out. After he had made sure that 'Ali was safe, the Prophet (ﷺ) left the house. At that very moment Allah took away the sight of the warriors so that they could not see the Prophet (ﷺ), who took a handful of dust, sprinkled it on their heads.

The young men waited the whole night and were furious when, in the morning, they saw Ali instead of the Prophet (ﷺ) coming out of the house. They realised that their plan had failed completely. In the meantime, the Prophet (ﷺ) went to Abu Bakr's house and told him, 'Allah has told me that now is the time for us to leave Makkah.' 'Together?' asked Abu Bakr. 'Together', the Prophet (ﷺ) replied. Abu Bakr wept for joy, because now he knew that the travelling companion, he had been promised was the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. Then he said, 'O Messenger of Allah, these are the two camels which I have kept ready for this.' And so, the two of them left for a cave in Thawr, a mountain to the south of Makkah where they intended to hide.

When they were out of the city the Prophet (ﷺ) looked back and said, 'Of all Allah's earth, you are the dearest place to Allah and to me and if my people had not driven me out I would never have left you.' When Quraysh found out that the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companion had gone, they set out after them, searching in every direction. Three days later they finally reached the cave where the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr were hiding, but a strange and wonderful thing had happened. A spider had woven its web right across the entrance to the cave and a dove was nesting with her mate nearby. As the Makkahns stood in front of the cave, with only the spider's web separating them from the fugitives, Abu Bakr began to fear for their safety. He whispered to the Prophet (ﷺ), they are very close. If one of them turns, we will be seen.' But he was comforted by the Prophet's reply: "What do you think of two who have with them Allah as their third? 'Grieve not, for verily Allah is with us".⁸

After a few moments the search party decided that no one could have entered the cave recently, or the spider's web would not have been complete, and the dove would not have nested there, and so they left without searching inside. Three days later the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr thought it safe to leave the cave. Abu Bakr's son, 'Amir, had arranged for three camels and a guide to help them continue their journey to Yathrib. 'Amir would ride behind his father. The leaders of Quraysh, meanwhile, returned to Makkah and offered a reward of one hundred camels to whoever captured the Prophet (ﷺ). Among those who went in

⁸ (Qur'an 9.40)

search of him was a famous warrior. He was, in fact, the only one to catch up with him, but whenever he came close, his horse would suddenly sink up to its knees in the sand.

When this had happened three times, he understood that the Prophet (ﷺ) was protected by a power stronger than anything he had known, and so he went back to Makkah. On arriving there he warned everyone against continuing the search, relating what had happened to him.

The Prophet's journey from Makkah is called the hijrah, or migration. It was really the first step towards the spread of Islam throughout the entire world, and Muslims begin their calendar from the year of the hijrah.

Arrival in Madina

When they reached their city, they anxiously awaited his arrival. Each morning they would go to the edge of the town to see if he were coming. One day the people of Madina heard that the Prophet (ﷺ) had left Makkah and was on his way to the city.

Finally, on Monday, September 27, in the year 622 A.D., someone saw him in the distance and shouted to everyone, 'Here is Muhammad! (ﷺ) the Messenger of Allah has arrived!' All the Muslims went out to greet him, shouting, "Allahu Akbar"! Allah is Great! Muhammad the Messenger of Allah has arrived!' The women and children sang songs to show how glad they were to see him. The Prophet (ﷺ) entered the city with his friend Abu Bakr. Most of the people there had not seen him before and as they gathered around they did not know which of the two was the Prophet (ﷺ), until Abu Bakr got up to shield him with his cloak from the burning sun. Yathrib would now be called al-Madinah, which means, The City.

The Messenger of God (ﷺ) stayed in Quba', which is a place at the entrance of Medina, for three days. On the first Friday after his arrival the Prophet led the congregation in prayer. After this many of the wealthiest men invited him to come and live with them and share their riches. But he refused and, pointing to his

shecamel, Qaswa', said, 'Let her go her way', because he knew that his camel was under Allah's command and would guide him to the spot where he should stay. They let the camel go until she finally knelt down beside a house belonging to the Bani an-Najjar, the tribe to whom the Prophet's mother was related. This house was used as a drying-place for dates and belonged to two young orphan boys named Sahl and Suhayl. They offered to give it to the Prophet (ﷺ) but he insisted on paying them for it, and so their guardian, As'ad the son of Zurarah, who was present, made the necessary arrangements.

The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered that a mosque and a place for him to live be built on the site. All the Muslims worked together to finish it quickly- even the Prophet (ﷺ) joined in. It was here that the Muslims would pray and meet to make important decisions and plans. The building was quite plain and simple. The floor was beaten earth and the roof of palm leaves was held up by tree trunks. Two Stones marked the direction of prayer. At first worshippers faced Jerusalem, but Soon after the direction of prayer was changed towards the Ka'bah in Makkah.

In the early days of Islam, the times for prayer were not announced and So the Muslims would come to the mosque and wait for the prayer so as not to miss it. The Prophet (ﷺ) wondered how to tell the people that it was time for prayers. He discussed it with his friends, and at first two ideas were put forward; that of blowing a horn as the Jews did, and that of using a wooden clapper



like the Christians. Then a man called Abd Allah ibn Zayd came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him he had had a dream in which he had seen a man dressed all in green, holding a wooden clapper. He had said to the man, 'Would you sell me your clapper in order to call the people to prayer?' The man had replied, 'A better

way to call the people to prayer is to Say: "Allahu Akbar, Allah is Most Great!" four times, followed by "I bear witness that there is no divinity but Allah, I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Come to prayer, come to prayer, Come to salvation, come to salvation. Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar! There is no divinity but Allah!" When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard this, he said it was a true vision from Allah. He sent for Bilal, who had a beautiful, strong voice, and ordered him to call the people to prayer in just this way.

Bilal did so and soon after 'Umar came out of his house and told the Prophet (ﷺ) that he had seen exactly the same vision himself. The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, 'Allah be praised for that.' The adhan, or call to prayer, which came to 'Abd Allah ibn Zayd in his dream and was performed by Bilal on the instruction of the Prophet (ﷺ), is the one we still hear today being called from the minarets of mosques all over the world.

The Treaty of Hdaybiyah

Quraysh had tried to destroy Islam but had failed in the several battles that took place which were Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. The number of Muslims grew, and their armies increased from three hundred at the battle of Badr, seven hundred at the battle of "Uhud, to three thousand at the battle of the Trench. After the annual fast of Ramadan, the Prophet (ﷺ) had a dream, which indicated that the Muslims should go to Makkah for the pilgrimage. One thousand and four hundred Muslims got ready to go with him on the Lesser Pilgrimage called 'the 'Umra'. They dressed in white and went unarmed to show Quraysh that they had come to make the pilgrimage and not to fight. When Quraysh heard that the Prophet (ﷺ) was on his way, they sent troops with Khalid Ibn al-Walid to stop the Muslims from entering the city. To avoid meeting this small army the Prophet (ﷺ) changed his route and led the men through rugged mountain passes.

When they reached easier ground, he told them, 'Say, we ask Allah's forgiveness and we repent towards Him 'At Hdaybiyah, south of Makkah, the Prophet's camel knelt down and refused to go any further. The Muslims thought she was either stubborn or tired, but the Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'The same power that once stopped the elephant from entering Makkah is now stopping us!' He then ordered them to make camp, which they did, although they all hoped they would travel on to the sacred Ka'bah the following day.

On setting up camp, the believers were dismayed to find that the springs were almost dry. When he heard this the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) instructed a man called Najiyah to take the bowl of water in which he had performed his ablutions, pour it into the hollows where the small amount of spring water lay, and stir it with his arrows. Najiyah did as he was told, and the fresh water gushed up so suddenly that he was hardly able to get out of the way in time.

Messengers were sent to Quraysh to tell them that the Muslims had come only for the pilgrimage, to worship Allah at the Holy Ka'bah, and that they wanted to enter the city peacefully. But Quraysh took no notice. Finally, the Prophet's son-in-law, 'Uthman Ibn Affan, a wise and respected man, was chosen to go, and the Muslims settled down to wait and see what news he would bring back.

After they had waited a long time, the Muslims became very worried. At last they decided that he must have been killed. A state similar to that of Revelation then came upon the Prophet (ﷺ). He gathered the Muslims around him under an acacia tree and asked them to swear their allegiance to him, which they did. This pact, which is mentioned in the Qur'an, became known as the Treaty of Radwan (which means Paradise).

Shortly after, 'Uthman Ibn Affan returned and the Muslims were relieved to see that no harm had come to him. Prophet (ﷺ) knew what was best and the Treaty of Hudaibiyah was signed.

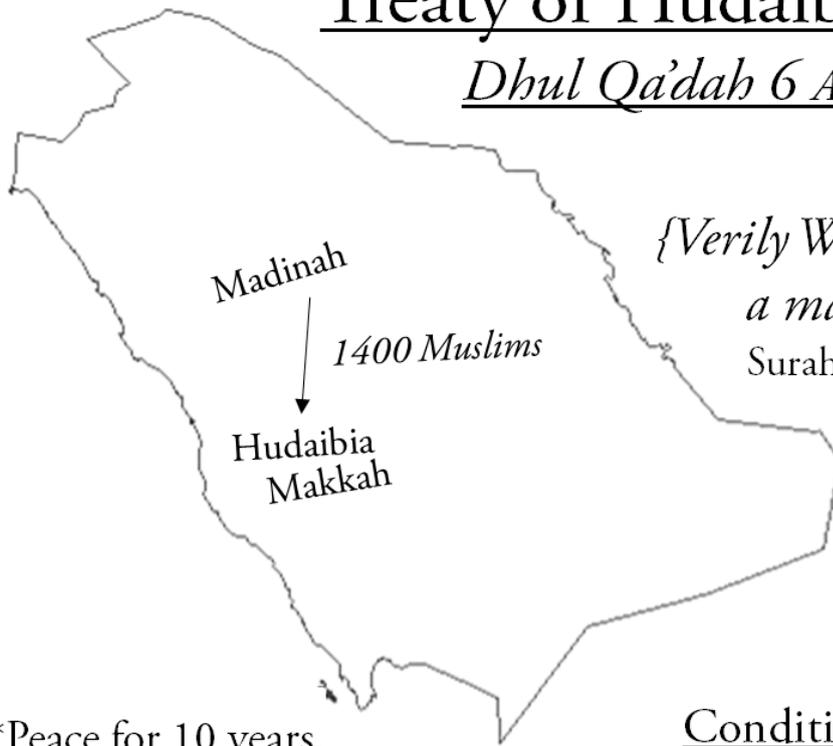
In this treaty the two sides agreed to stop fighting for a period of ten years. It was also agreed that the Muslims should go back to Madinah immediately but that they could return the following year for the pilgrimage. This pilgrimage would last three days. In addition, the treaty allowed Muslims wishing to leave Islam and return to Makkah to do so. It also permitted Makkahns to leave and become Muslims provided they had the permission of their guardians.

The Muslims agreed to send any Makkahn who did not have their guardian's permission back to Makkah. Suhayl's son had come with his father with the idea of joining the Prophet (ﷺ) but when the treaty was signed, he was, of course, forced to return to Makkah. He cried bitterly. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'O Abu Jandal, be patient and control yourself. Allah will provide relief and find a way out for you and others like you.'

Treaty of Hudaibiyah

Dhul Qa'dah 6 A.H.

15 kilometres
from Makkah



*{Verily We have granted thee
a manifest Victory}*
Surah Fatah, Verse One

*Peace for 10 years.

Conditions of Treaty

*One sided extradition: Makkans seeking refuge in Madinah will have to be returned but Madinans moving to Makkah will not be returned.

*Muslims will return to Madinah and perform Umrah the next year but can only remain in Makkah for 3 days.

*Any tribe wanting to be allied with Muslims or Quraish can do so.



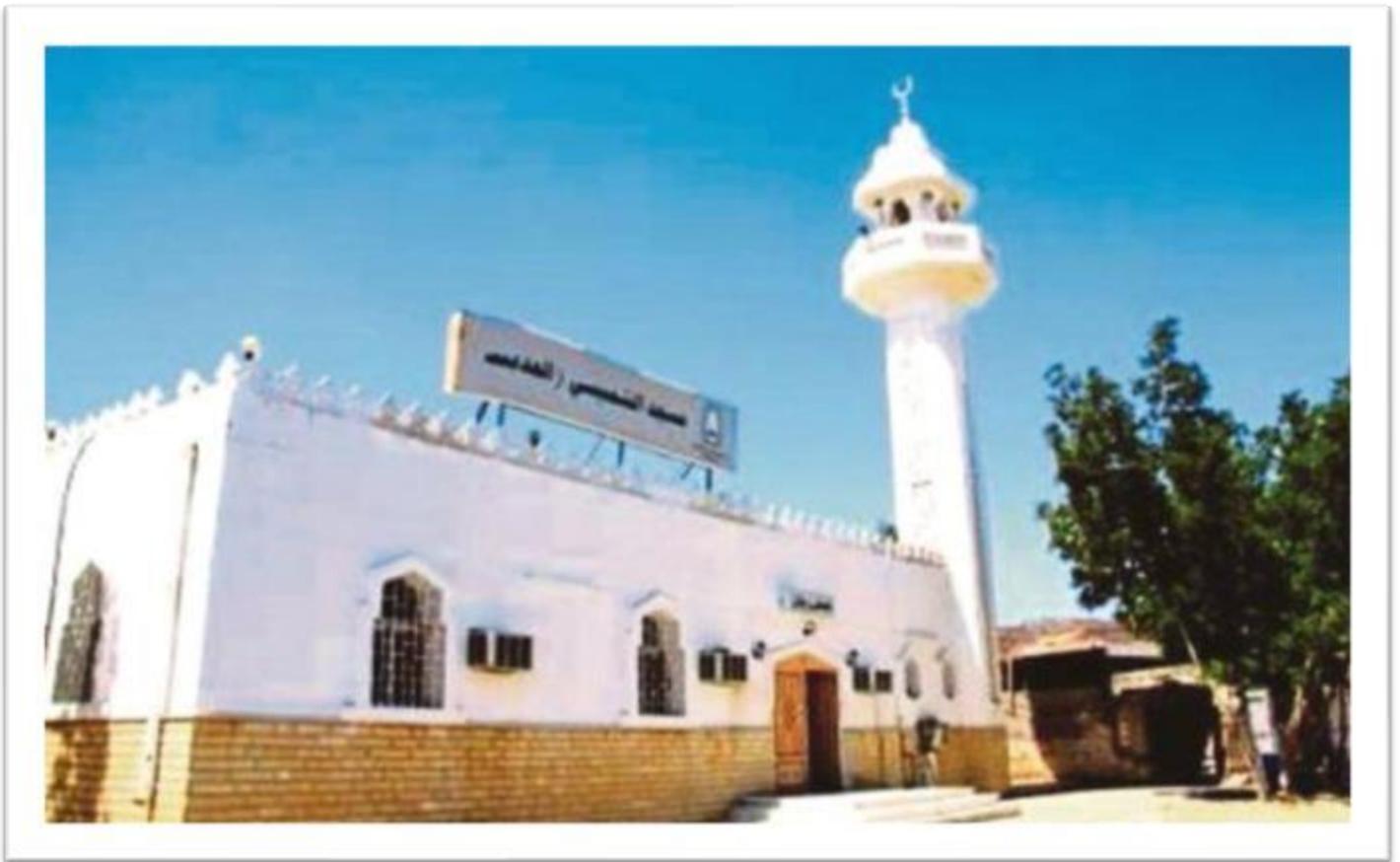
The majority of the Muslims were very disappointed when they heard the terms of the agreement and thought that it should not have been accepted. They did not realize that this was in fact a great victory for the Prophet (ﷺ), which Allah would later confirm in a Revelation. The agreement made sure that the following year they would enter Makkah peacefully, and in time would result in Muslims becoming stronger and more respected throughout Arabia. At the time the treaty was signed the Muslims could not have foreseen that the number of people who would travel to Madinah to become Muslims in following year would be greater than in all the years before.

Before the Muslims departed, they followed the Prophet's example of making sacrifice and either shaving or cutting their hair. Even though they were unable to visit the sacred mosque, their pilgrimage was accepted by Allah because it had been their true intention.

On the return journey to Madinah, the 'Victory' chapter of the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ). It begins: In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful “Surely We have given thee (O Muhammad) a clear victory, That Allah may forgive thee of thy sin That which is past and that which is to come, And may complete His blessings upon thee, And may guide thee on the right path, And that Allah may help thee with mighty help”.⁹

Now most of those who left Makkah to join the Prophet (ﷺ) without the consent of their guardians and were turned back by him as agreed, did not in fact return to Makkah, but lived instead in groups along the seashore. Then they were joined by others who had left Makkah, but these groups began to endanger Quraysh caravans which were passing by and disrupted their trade because of this, Quraysh told the Prophet (ﷺ) that if he wanted to take these new Muslims, they would not ask for them to be returned. The young men, therefore, joined the Prophet (ﷺ) and the people in Makkah and Madinah grew more at ease with one another. The young men from the seashore were shortly followed by those Muslims who were still living in Abyssinia, and soon the numbers of believers in Madinah had doubled.

⁹ (Qur'an 48.1-3)



Masjid al Hudaibiyah

Entry into Makkah

Despite the improved relations between Makkah and Madinah after the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, the ten-year peace was to be broken by Quraysh who, with their allies, the Bani Bakr, attacked the Khuza‘ah tribe. Now Khuza‘ah were allies of the Muslims and when the Prophet (ﷺ) heard of the attack he immediately ordered his men to prepare for war.

When they were ready, he told them that their destination was Makkah and, as he did not want any fighting within the walls of the city, he told them they must move quickly and take the enemy by surprise. In this way the Makkahns would not have time to prepare for war and, being surrounded would have to surrender. The Muslims would then be able to take the city without injury or loss of life to anyone. When the Muslim army, which numbered ten thousand, set out for Makkah it was the month of Ramadan in the eighth year of the Hijrah. Many of the men kept the fast, even though they were not obliged to because they were travelling. Everyone was jubilant because they were going to Makkah, especially as some of them had not seen their homes in the city for eight long years

Night fell, and the Muslims made fires to light their camp. The Prophet (ﷺ) took this advice, saying to Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Quraysh, who had just accepted Islam, 'Tell the people that when we enter, anyone seeking refuge in your house will be safe.' This was a great honor for Abu Sufyan. In addition, the Prophet (ﷺ) told him to assure the Makkahns that those who remained in their own homes or at the Ka'bah would also be protected.

Abu Sufyan returned quickly to the city. He made straight for the hill Hagar had climbed in her search for water and from which the Prophet (ﷺ) later spoke and called upon Quraysh to come to him. Abu Sufyan then spoke to the people, 'O people of Makkah, the fires we saw all around us were the camp fires of Muhammad and his men. He has come with a strong army and there are too many for us to fight. It is best, therefore, to surrender. Anyone who stays in my house, or in his own home, or at the Ka'bah will be safe.'

Early next day, the Muslims entered Makkah from all sides. They had been ordered to cause no harm unless anyone tried to stop them entering. When the Prophet (ﷺ) arrived, he got off his camel, bowed down on the ground and thanked Allah for this victory.

When the unbelievers saw this, they knew that the Prophet (ﷺ) had come in peace. People began leaving their homes and running towards the Ka'bah. When they arrived there, they found the Prophet (ﷺ) performing the ritual encircling of the Ka'bah, the tawaf on his camel, surrounded by the Muslims. When he had finished, he said, 'There no divinity except Allah and He has no partner. Men and women of Quraysh be not proud for all are equal; we are all the sons of Adam, and Adam was made of dust.' Then he recited this verse to them: "O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes, so you may know each another. Surely the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is All-knowing, All-aware".¹⁰

After this he said to them: 'O Quraysh, what do you think I am going to do to you?' The people thought carefully before answering because they knew that according to the laws of war, they could all be taken prisoner. They also knew, however, that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was generous, so they replied, 'You will treat us as a kind nephew and a generous brother would.'

¹⁰ (Qur'an 49.13)

To this he replied with the words used by the Prophet Joseph when his brothers came to Egypt: 'God forgives you and He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.' Later the Prophet (ﷺ) went to the hill of Safa and there the crowd followed him and surged forward, taking his hand one by one, to declare themselves Muslim. He then turned to the Ka'bah and, pointing his staff at the three hundred and sixty-five idols which were placed there, recited from the Qur'an: "... Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished away. Lo! Falsehood is ever bound to vanish". (Qur'an 17.81)

At this, each idol fell over onto its face. Together with his followers the Prophet (ﷺ) then proceeded to purify the Ka'bah, after which he ordered Bilal to climb on top of it and perform the call to prayer. Since then the call to prayer has been heard five times a day in Makkah. The Ka'bah, the House of Allah, has served the purpose for which it was built by Ibrahim (peace be upon him) thousands of years ago, as a sanctuary for the worship of Allah, our Creator, and Makkah continues to be the spiritual center of Islam.

The Farewell Pilgrimage

The Ka'bah had been smashed and Quraysh had become Muslim, most of the other tribes of the Prophet (ﷺ) had become the most powerful leader in the whole of Arabia. After the idols in Arabia came to declare their Islam. The year in which they came was later to be called the Year of Delegations. As each tribe joined Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) sent his men to teach them about their new religion. Many people also came to Madinah to question the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. One tribe sent a man called Dimam, who was large and strong.

On arriving in Madinah, he went straight to the mosque, where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was sitting with some of his companions and stood over the Prophet (ﷺ). In a loud, rough voice he asked, 'Which of you is the son of 'Abd al- Muttalib?' When the Prophet (ﷺ) answered him Dimam went on, 'I am going to ask you a hard question, so do not misunderstand me. I ask you to swear by Allah, your Allah, the Allah of those

before you and the Allah of those who will come after you, has He sent you to us as a messenger?' 'Yes, He has', replied the Prophet (ﷺ). 'Has Allah instructed you to order us to serve Him; to pray these five prayers; to pay alms; to fast; to make the pilgrimage and to follow the other laws of Islam?'" continued Dimam.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) answered that Allah had indeed instructed him in this way, Dimam became a Muslim and, as he left, added, 'Then I will do the things we are told to do and avoid the things we are forbidden-no more and no less.' As Dimam mounted his camel to leave, the Prophet(ﷺ) told the people around him, 'If this man is sincere, he will go to Paradise.' When Dimam reached his people they all thought he had gone mad but by nightfall, after he had finished speaking, there was not among them that had not accepted Islam. When the time came for the yearly pilgrimage, it was proclaimed that the prophet (ﷺ) would be going to Makkah. The Muslims flocked to Madinah from all over Arabia to join him on his journey to the Ka‘bah.

The Prophet (ﷺ) went out with his family and friends to pilgrimage, but before setting off, he led all the Muslims in prayer. After the prayers, the Prophet (ﷺ) got on his camel and headed towards Makkah followed by the pilgrims, all of whom, for the first time in centuries, worshipped Allah, the One God. The Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions were deeply moved by the sight of the huge number of Muslims accompanying them to Makkah, carrying no arms, and fearing no one. They could not help but remember their original flight from Makkah when they had been so few in number and were forced to leave in order to avoid the anger of Quraysh. Throughout the journey the Muslims repeated a prayer taught to them by the Prophet (ﷺ) which he in turn had received from the Archangel Jibreel. This prayer, the talbiyah, has been part of the Hajj ritual ever since. After ten days the pilgrims marched at sunset through the same pass by which they had entered on the Day of Conquest of Makkah.

When they reached the Ka‘bah, the Prophet (ﷺ) stood before it in prayer, then he and all the Muslims walked around it seven times saying their prayer aloud. Next, just as Ibrahim (peace be upon him) had done, they went towards the Mount of Mercy at 'Arafah, which the Prophet (ﷺ) ascended on a camel. From the mountain he led the people in prayer and then spoke to them as they stood assembled on the vast plain below. What the Prophet (ﷺ) said is known as the “Farewell Sermon”.

“...This day those who disbelieve are in despair of (ever harming) your religion; so, do not fear them, but fear Me! This day I have perfected your religion, for you, and I have completed My favor unto you, and

have chosen for you as a religion AL-ISLAM". (Qur'an 5.3) Many Muslims started to shed tears after listening to sermon, knowing that if the Prophet (ﷺ) had completed his message, his life must be near its end. After spending the rest of the day of 'Arafah in prayer and contemplation, the Muslims began to complete the pilgrimage by returning to Makkah with the talbiyah prayer still on their lips.

The first night of the return journey was spent at Muzdalifah. Here they gathered pebbles, which they carried with them the next day to Mina. There they stood before a huge rock and stoned it in remembrance of Ibrahim (peace be upon him)'s meeting with the Devil in that very place.

After throwing the stones, the pilgrims sacrificed sheep and camels and gave the meat to the poor. In this way the great faith of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was remembered, for when he had been ready to sacrifice Ismael (Peace be upon him), Allah had sent a sheep in his place. The Muslims then completed the pilgrimage by again circling the Ka'bah seven times. They then cut their hair and nails and changed out of their white clothes to show they had returned to their daily lives. Before returning to Madinah, the Muslims spent three nights in the valley at Madinah where the final preparations were made for the journey home.



Jabal ur Rahmah during Hajj!

As for the Prophet (ﷺ), he made one final visit before leaving Makkah. This was to the grave of his devoted wife, Khadijah, who had been the first person to believe in Allah's Revelation through him. The Prophet (ﷺ) knew that this would be the last time he would see the grave, or Makkah, because during the pilgrimage he had received the chapter of the Qur'an called 'Help', from which he knew that his death was not far away.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful "When Allah's help and triumph comes and you see, mankind entering the religion of Allah in troops, Then hymn the praises of your Lord, and seek forgiveness of Him. Lo! He is ever ready to show mercy".¹¹

¹¹ (Qur'an 110.1-3)

The Prophet's Death

One Night, shortly after his return to Madinah, the Prophet (ﷺ) woke up at midnight and asked his servant“ Abd Allah to saddle his mule. They then left the house and went to the Baqi alGharqad, the burial ground of the Muslims. There the Prophet (ﷺ) stood in the front of the graves and, as though he could see the Muslims buried in them, spoke to them and prayed over them. Later, “Abd Allah reported, “The Prophet (ﷺ) told me that he was ordered to pray for the dead and that I was to go with him”.

After the Prophet (ﷺ) had prayed he turned to Abd Allah and said, “I can choose between all the riches of this world, a long life and then Paradise, or meeting my Lord and entering Paradise now.” Abd Allah begged him to choose a long, rich life, followed by Paradise, but the Prophet (ﷺ) told him that he had already chosen to meet his Lord now rather than remain in the world.

The following morning the Prophet (ﷺ) awoke with a terrible headache, but despite this he had led the prayers at the mosque. From what he said afterwards to the people assembled there, they understood that his death was near. The Prophet (ﷺ) praised his best friend, Abu Bakr, who had begun to weep, and told everyone that he knew they would all meet again at a pool in Paradise. He added, however that although he was sure they would always worship Allah alone, he feared that the pleasures of the world would attract them, and they would begin to compete with one another for material possessions, forgetting spiritual things. Soon after the Prophet (ﷺ) requested that he be moved to the room of A'isha, one of his wives.

As the days passed his fever grew worse, until one day he was so ill that he could not even get to the mosque, which was next to where A'isha lived. The Prophet (ﷺ) told A'isha to tell the Muslims to let Abu Bakr, her father, lead the prayer, which made them very sad for this was the first time anyone had taken the Prophet's place. Later, on the 12th day of Rabi al-Awwal, in the 11th year of Islam, the Prophet (ﷺ) heard the voices of the people in prayer.

With great effort he got up and looked from his door at all the Muslims who were assembled in rows behind Abu bakr; he smiled with great satisfaction. Abu Bakr saw him and stepped back to give the Prophet (ﷺ) his place. The Muslims were happy, thinking he was going to pray with them as before, but the Prophet

Muhammad (ﷺ), who looked radiantly beautiful that day signaled to them to continue on their own. He prayed in a sitting position at the right of Abu Bakr, after which he went back inside and lay his head on A'ishah's lap. He was in such pain that his daughter Fatimah cried out in pity. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'There is no pain for your father after this day; truly, death has appeared to me. We must all suffer it till the Day of Judgement.' As he lay there, A'ishah remembered that he had once said, Allah never takes a Prophet to Himself without giving him the choice.' Then she heard the Prophet (ﷺ) speak. His last words were, 'Nay, rather the Exalted Communion of Paradise.'

A'ishah then said to herself, 'So, by Allah, he is not choosing us!' When the people in the mosque heard that the Prophet (ﷺ) was dead, they were filled with grief.

After this the people pledged their loyalty to Abu Bakr, whom the Prophet (ﷺ) had chosen to lead the prayer. Abu Bakr accepted and concluded what he had to say with these words: 'Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. But if I disobey Allah and His Messenger, you owe me no obedience. Arise for your prayer, Allah have mercy upon you!' The people rose and asked him; 'Where will the Prophet (ﷺ) be buried?' Abu Bakr remembered that the Prophet (ﷺ) had said, 'No Prophet dies who is not buried on the spot where he died.'

And so, the Prophet (ﷺ) was buried in a grave dug in the floor of A'ishah's room, in the house next to the mosque. The spot became known as the Haram al-Nabawi and Muslims from all over the world go there to pray and to give their blessings and greetings of peace the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). And Lo! thine verily will be a reward unailing. And Lo! thou art of a tremendous nature. ¹²

The Prophet's children

All the Prophet's offspring, with the exception of Ibraheem, were born to Khadeejah. Below is a brief account of the Prophet's children.

¹² (Qur'an 67. 3-4)

1) Qasim

He was the eldest son of the Prophet ﷺ, and thus the Prophet was called "Abul Qasim" (the father of Qasim). He died when he was about two years old.

2) Zaynab

She was the eldest daughter of the Prophet. She was born after Qasim, and was married to Abul Aas bin Rabi'a, the son of her aunt Hala bint Khuwaylid. Zaynab had a son named Ali and a daughter, Umama, whom the Prophet ﷺ would place in his lap during prayer. Zaynab died in the earlier part of 8 A.H., in Madinah.

3) Ruqayyah

She was married to Uthman bin Affan and gave birth to a son, Abdullah, who died at the age of six when a rooster gouged his eye. The Prophet ﷺ was at the Battle of Badr when Ruqayyah passed away. She had already been buried when Zayd bin Haritha reached Madinah with the news of victory at Badr.

4) Umm Kulthoom

After the death of Ruqayyah, the Prophet ﷺ returned from Badr and gave Umm Kulthoom to Uthman bin Affan ﷺ in marriage. She had no children and died in 9 A.H. and was buried in Baqi.

5) Fatimah

The youngest daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, she was married to Ali bin Abi Talib after the Battle of Badr. She gave birth to two sons, Hasan and Husayn, and two daughters, Zaynab and Umm Kulthoom. Fatimah died six months after the death of the Prophet.

All five of the children mentioned above were born before the Prophet ﷺ was appointed Allah's messenger.

6) Abdullah

There is some difference of opinion about whether Abdullah was born before or after the advent of Islam. He was the last of the Prophet's sons born to Khadeejah and died during childhood.

7) Ibraheem

Ibraheem was born in Madinah in Jamad Al-Awwal or Jamad Al-Akhir, 9 A.H. His mother was the Prophet's maid, Mariya Qibtiya. On the day of his death, Shawwal 29, 10 A.H., a solar eclipse occurred in Madinah. The people believed that the eclipse was to commemorate Ibraheem 's death, but the Prophet H informed them that astronomical events were not affected by human affairs. Ibraheem was sixteen or eighteen months old when he died, and was buried in Baqi, and the Prophet H said, "He will be nursed by one of the maids in Paradise."

CONCLUSION

It is impossible to adequately describe the Prophet's life and its significance for all humanity. This book is merely a brief account of the most important and influential person in history.

I pray that Allah blesses this small work and forgives me for falling short of my lofty goal. And I pray that Allah blesses the Prophet, his family, and his righteous Companions. May Allah grant us a place under the Prophet's standard on the Day of Judgment. Ameen

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