

= Muhammad =

Muhammad ( Arabic : ﷺ ; c . 570 CE ? 8 June 632 CE ) is the central figure of Islam and widely regarded as its founder by non @-@ Muslims . He is known to Muslims as the " Holy Prophet " , almost all of whom consider him to be the last prophet sent by God to mankind to restore Islam , which they believe to be the unaltered original monotheistic faith of Adam , Abraham , Moses , Jesus , and other prophets . He united Arabia into a single Muslim polity and ensured that his teachings , practices , and the Quran , which Muslims believe was revealed to him by God , formed the basis of Islamic religious belief .

Born in the Arabian city of Mecca , in approximately 570 CE , Muhammad was orphaned at an early age ; he was raised under the care of his paternal uncle Abu Talib . After his childhood , Muhammad primarily worked as a merchant . Occasionally , he would retreat to a cave named Hira in the mountains for several nights of seclusion and prayer ; later , at age 40 , he reported being visited by Gabriel in the cave , where he stated he received his first revelation from God . Three years after this event Muhammad started preaching these revelations publicly , proclaiming that " God is One " , that complete " surrender " ( lit. islām ) to him is the only way ( dīn ) acceptable to God , and that he was a prophet and messenger of God , similar to the other prophets in Islam .

Muhammad gained few early followers , and met hostility from some Meccan tribes . To escape persecution , Muhammad sent some followers to Abyssinia before he and his followers migrated from Mecca to Medina ( then known as Yathrib ) in the year 622 . This event , the Hijra , marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar , also known as the Hijri Calendar . In Medina , Muhammad united the tribes under the Constitution of Medina . In December 629 , after eight years of intermittent conflict with Meccan tribes , Muhammad gathered an army of 10 @,@ 000 Muslim converts and marched on the city of Mecca . The attack went largely uncontested and Muhammad seized the city with little bloodshed . He destroyed 360 pagan idols at the Kaaba . In 632 , a few months after returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage , Muhammad fell ill and died . Before his death , most of the Arabian Peninsula had converted to Islam .

The revelations ( each known as Ayah , lit . " Sign [ of God ] " ) , which Muhammad reported receiving until his death , form the verses of the Quran , regarded by Muslims as the " Word of God " and around which the religion is based . Besides the Quran , Muhammad 's teachings and practices ( sunnah ) , found in the Hadith and sira literature , are also upheld by Muslims and used as sources of Islamic law ( see Sharia ) .

= = Names and appellations in the Quran = =

The name Muhammad ( / mʰæmʰd , -ʰmʰd / ) means " praiseworthy " and appears four times in the Quran . The Quran addresses Muhammad in the second person by various appellations ; prophet , messenger , servant of God ( ' abd ) , announcer ( bashir ) [ Quran 2 : 119 ] , witness ( shahid ) , [ Quran 33 : 45 ] bearer of good tidings ( mubashshir ) , warner ( nathir ) , [ Quran 11 : 2 ] reminder ( mudhakkir ) , [ Quran 88 : 21 ] one who calls [ unto God ] ( dʰ ? ? ) , [ Quran 12 : 108 ] light personified ( noor ) [ Quran 05 : 15 ] , and the lightgiving lamp ( siraj munir ) [ Quran 33 : 46 ] . Muhammad is sometimes addressed by designations deriving from his state at the time of the address : thus he is referred to as the enwrapped ( al @-@ muzzammil ) in Quran 73 : 1 and the shrouded ( al @-@ muddaththir ) in Quran 74 : 1 . In Sura Al @-@ Ahzab 33 : 40 God singles out Muhammad as the " Seal of the Prophets " , or the last of the prophets . The Quran also refers to Muhammad as Aʿmad " more praiseworthy " ( Arabic : ﷺ , Sura As @-@ Saff 61 : 6 ) .

= = Quran = =

The Quran is the central religious text of Islam . Muslims believe it represents the words of God revealed by the archangel Gabriel to Muhammad .

Although it mentions Muhammad directly only four times , [ Quran 3 : 144 ] [ Quran 33 : 40 ] [ Quran 47 : 2 ] [ Quran 48 : 29 ] there are verses which can be interpreted as allusions to Muhammad 's life

. The Quran , however , provides minimal assistance for Muhammad 's chronological biography ; most Quranic verses do not provide significant historical context .

= = = Early biographies = = =

An important source may be found in the historic works by writers of the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Muslim era ( AH ? 8th and 9th century CE ) . These include the traditional Muslim biographies of Muhammad ( the sira literature ) , which provide additional information about Muhammad 's life .

The earliest surviving written sira ( biographies of Muhammad and quotes attributed to him ) is Ibn Ishaq 's Life of God 's Messenger written c . 767 CE ( 150 AH ) . Although the work was lost , this sira was used verbatim at great length by Ibn Hisham and Al @-@ Tabari . Another early history source is the history of Muhammad 's campaigns by al @-@ Waqidi ( death 207 of Muslim era ) , and the work of his secretary Ibn Sa 'd al @-@ Baghdadi ( death 230 of Muslim era ) .

Many scholars accept the earliest biographies as accurate , though their accuracy is unascertainable . Recent studies have led scholars to distinguish between the traditions touching legal matters and purely historical ones . In the former sphere , traditions could have been subject to invention while in the latter sphere , aside from exceptional cases , the material may have been only subject to " tendential shaping " .

= = = Hadith = = =

Another important source may be found in hadith collections , accounts of the verbal and physical teachings and traditions of Muhammad . Hadiths were compiled several generations after his death by notable individuals such as Muhammad al @-@ Bukhari , Muslim ibn al @-@ Hajjaj , Muhammad ibn Isa al @-@ Tirmidhi , Abd ar @-@ Rahman al @-@ Nasai , Abu Dawood , Ibn Majah , Malik bin Anas , al @-@ Daraquṭni etc .

Some Western academics cautiously view the hadith collections as accurate historical sources . Scholars such as Madelung do not reject the narrations which have been compiled in later periods , but judge them in the context of history and on the basis of their compatibility with the events and figures .

= = Pre @-@ Islamic Arabia = =

The Arabian Peninsula was largely arid and volcanic , making agriculture difficult except near oases or springs . The landscape was dotted with towns and cities ; two of the most prominent being Mecca and Medina . Medina was a large flourishing agricultural settlement , while Mecca was an important financial center for many surrounding tribes . Communal life was essential for survival in the desert conditions , supporting indigenous tribes against the harsh environment and lifestyle . Tribal grouping was encouraged with unity being based on blood relations . Indigenous Arabs were either nomadic or sedentary , the former constantly travelling from one place to another seeking water and pasture for their flocks , while the latter settled and focused on trade and agriculture . Nomadic survival also depended on raiding caravans or oases ; nomads did not view this as a crime .

Byzantine and Sassanian empires dominated the pre @-@ Islamic Middle East region . The Roman @-@ Persian Wars between the two had devastated the region , making the empires unpopular amongst local tribes . Politically Arabia at the time was divided between two tribal confederations , the Banu Qais , loosely allied with Byzantium and who were originally powerful in Northern and Western Arabia , and the Banu Kalb , who had originally come from Yemen , and were loosely allied with Sassanid Persia .

In pre @-@ Islamic Arabia , gods or goddesses were viewed as protectors of individual tribes , their spirits being associated with sacred trees , stones , springs and wells . As well as being the site of an annual pilgrimage , the Kaaba shrine in Mecca housed 360 idols of tribal patron deities . Three goddesses were associated with Allah as his daughters : All?t , Man?t and al- ? Uzzá . Monotheistic

communities existed in Arabia , including Christians and Jews . Hanifs ? native pre @-@ Islamic Arabs who " professed a rigid monotheism " ? are also sometimes listed alongside Jews and Christians in pre @-@ Islamic Arabia , although their historicity is disputed among scholars . According to Muslim tradition , Muhammad himself was a Hanif and one of the descendants of Ishmael , son of Abraham .

= = Life = =

= = = In Mecca = = =

Muhammad was born in Mecca and lived there for roughly the first 52 years of his life ( c . 570 ? 622 ) . This period is generally divided into two phases , before and after declaring his prophetic visions .

= = = = Childhood and early life = = = =

Muhammad was born about the year 570 and his birthday is believed to be in the month of Rabi ' al @-@ awwal . He belonged to the Banu Hashim clan , part of the Quraysh tribe , and was one of Mecca 's prominent families , although it appears less prosperous during Muhammad 's early lifetime . Tradition places the year of Muhammad 's birth as corresponding with the Year of the Elephant , which is named after the failed destruction of Mecca that year by the Abraha , Yemen 's king , who supplemented his army with elephants . Alternatively some 20th century scholars have suggested different years , such as 568 or 569 .

Muhammads ' father , Abdullah , died almost six months before he was born . According to Islamic tradition , soon after birth he was sent to live with a Bedouin family in the desert , as desert life was considered healthier for infants ; some western scholars reject this tradition 's historicity . Muhammad stayed with his foster @-@ mother , Halimah bint Abi Dhuayb , and her husband until he was two years old . At the age of six , Muhammad lost his biological mother Amina to illness and became an orphan . For the next two years , he was under the guardianship of his paternal grandfather Abd al @-@ Muttalib , of the Banu Hashim clan until his death ; Muhammad was eight years old . He then came under the care of his uncle Abu Talib , the new leader of Banu Hashim . According to Islamic historian William Montgomery Watt there was a general disregard by guardians in taking care of weaker members of the tribes in Mecca during the 6th century , " Muhammad 's guardians saw that he did not starve to death , but it was hard for them to do more for him , especially as the fortunes of the clan of Hashim seem to have been declining at that time . "

In his teens , Muhammad accompanied his uncle on Syrian trading journeys to gain experience in commercial trade . Islamic tradition states that when Muhammad was either nine or twelve while accompanying the Meccans ' caravan to Syria , he met a Christian monk or hermit named Bahira who is said to have foreseen Muhammad 's career as a prophet of God .

Little is known of Muhammad during his later youth , available information is fragmented , causing difficulty to separate history from legend . It is known that he became a merchant and " was involved in trade between the Indian ocean and the Mediterranean Sea . " Due to his upright character he acquired the nickname " al @-@ Amin " ( Arabic : ??????? ) , meaning " faithful , trustworthy " and " al @-@ Sadiq " meaning " truthful " and was sought out as an impartial arbitrator . His reputation attracted a proposal in 595 from Khadijah , a 40 @-@ year @-@ old widow . Muhammad consented to the marriage , which by all accounts was a happy one .

Several years later , according to a narration collected by historian Ibn Ishaq , Muhammad was involved with a well @-@ known story about setting the Black Stone in place in the wall of the Kaaba in 605 CE . The Black Stone , a sacred object , was removed to facilitate renovations to the Kaaba . The Meccan leaders could not agree which clan should return the Black Stone to its place . They decided to ask the next man who comes through the gate to make that decision . That man was the 35 @-@ year @-@ old Muhammad ; this event happened five years before the first

revelation by Gabriel to him . He asked for a cloth and laid the Black Stone in its center . The clan leaders held the corners of the cloth and together carried the Black Stone to the right spot , then Muhammad laid the stone , satisfying the honour of all .

= = = Beginnings of the Quran = = =

Muhammad began to pray alone in a cave named Hira on Mount Jabal al @-@ Nour , near Mecca for several weeks every year . Islamic tradition holds that during one of his visits to that cave , in the year 610 the angel Gabriel appeared to him and commanded Muhammad to recite verses that would be included in the Quran . Consensus exists that the first Quranic words revealed were the beginning of Surah 96 : 1 . Muhammad was deeply distressed upon receiving his first revelations . After returning home , Muhammad was consoled and reassured by Khadijah and her Christian cousin , Waraqah ibn Nawfal . Waraqah is variously described as an Ebionite priest ( possibly of Mecca ) or Nestorian . He also feared that others would dismiss his claims as being possessed . Shi'a tradition states Muhammad was not surprised or frightened at Gabriel 's appearance ; rather he welcomed the angel , as if he was expected . The initial revelation was followed by a three @-@ year pause ( a period known as fatra ) during which Muhammad felt depressed and further gave himself to prayers and spiritual practices . When the revelations resumed he was reassured and commanded to begin preaching : " Thy Guardian @-@ Lord hath not forsaken thee , nor is He displeased . "

Sahih Bukhari narrates Muhammad describing his revelations as " sometimes it is ( revealed ) like the ringing of a bell " . Aisha reported , " I saw the Prophet being inspired Divinely on a very cold day and noticed the sweat dropping from his forehead ( as the Inspiration was over ) " . According to Welch these descriptions may be considered genuine , since they are unlikely to have been forged by later Muslims . Muhammad was confident that he could distinguish his own thoughts from these messages . According to the Quran , one of the main roles of Muhammad is to warn the unbelievers of their eschatological punishment ( Quran 38 : 70 , Quran 6 : 19 ) . Occasionally the Quran did not explicitly refer to Judgment day but provided examples from the history of extinct communities and warns Muhammad 's contemporaries of similar calamities ( Quran 41 : 13 ? 16 ) . Muhammad did not only warn those who rejected God 's revelation , but also dispensed good news for those who abandoned evil , listening to the divine words and serving God . Muhammad 's mission also involves preaching monotheism : The Quran commands Muhammad to proclaim and praise the name of his Lord and instructs him not to worship idols or associate other deities with God .

The key themes of the early Quranic verses included the responsibility of man towards his creator ; the resurrection of the dead , God 's final judgment followed by vivid descriptions of the tortures in Hell and pleasures in Paradise , and the signs of God in all aspects of life . Religious duties required of the believers at this time were few : belief in God , asking for forgiveness of sins , offering frequent prayers , assisting others particularly those in need , rejecting cheating and the love of wealth ( considered to be significant in the commercial life of Mecca ) , being chaste and not killing newborn girls .

= = = Opposition = = =

According to Muslim tradition , Muhammad 's wife Khadija was the first to believe he was a prophet . She was followed by Muhammad 's ten @-@ year @-@ old cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib , close friend Abu Bakr , and adopted son Zaid . Around 613 , Muhammad began to preach to the public ( Quran 26 : 214 ) . Most Meccans ignored him and mocked him , though a few became his followers . There were three main groups of early converts to Islam : younger brothers and sons of great merchants ; people who had fallen out of the first rank in their tribe or failed to attain it ; and the weak , mostly unprotected foreigners .

According to Ibn Saad , opposition in Mecca started when Muhammad delivered verses that condemned idol worship and the polytheism practiced by the Meccan forefathers . However , the Quranic exegesis maintains that it began as Muhammad started public preaching . As his followers

increased , Muhammad became a threat to the local tribes and rulers of the city , whose wealth rested upon the Ka 'aba , the focal point of Meccan religious life that Muhammad threatened to overthrow . Muhammad 's denunciation of the Meccan traditional religion was especially offensive to his own tribe , the Quraysh , as they were the guardians of the Ka 'aba . Powerful merchants attempted to convince Muhammad to abandon his preaching ; he was offered admission to the inner circle of merchants , as well as an advantageous marriage . He refused both of these offers .

Tradition records at great length the persecution and ill @-@ treatment towards Muhammad and his followers . Sumayyah bint Khabbab , a slave of a prominent Meccan leader Abu Jahl , is famous as the first martyr of Islam ; killed with a spear by her master when she refused to give up her faith . Bilal , another Muslim slave , was tortured by Umayyah ibn Khalaf who placed a heavy rock on his chest to force his conversion .

In 615 , some of Muhammad 's followers emigrated to the Ethiopian Aksumite Empire and founded a small colony under the protection of the Christian Ethiopian emperor A??ama ibn Abjar . Ibn Sa 'ad mentions two separate migrations . According to him , most of the Muslims returned to Mecca prior to Hijra , while a second group rejoined them in Medina . Ibn Hisham and Tabari , however , only talk about one migration to Ethiopia . These accounts agree that Meccan persecution played a major role in Mu?ammad 's decision to suggest that a number of his followers seek refuge among the Christians in Abyssinia . According to the famous letter of ?Urwa preserved in al @-@ Tabari , the majority of Muslims returned to their native town as Islam gained strength and high ranking Meccans , such as Umar and Hamzah converted .

However , there is a completely different story on the reason why the Muslims returned from Ethiopia to Mecca . According to this account ? initially mentioned by Al @-@ Waqidi then rehashed by Ibn Sa 'ad and Tabari , but not by Ibn Hisham and not by Ibn Ishaq ? Muhammad , desperately hoping for an accommodation with his tribe , pronounced a verse acknowledging the existence of three Meccan goddesses considered to be the daughters of Allah . Muhammad retracted the verses the next day at the behest of Gabriel , claiming that the verses were whispered by the devil himself . Instead , a ridicule of these gods was offered . This episode known as " The Story of the Cranes " ( translation : ??? ??????? , transliteration : Qissat al Gharaneeq ) is also known as " Satanic Verses " . According to the story this led to a general reconciliation between Mu?ammad and the Meccans , and the Abyssinia Muslims began to return home . When they arrived Gabriel had informed Mu?ammad the two verses were not part of the revelation , but had been inserted by Satan . Notable scholars at the time argued against the historic authenticity of these verses and the story itself on various grounds . Later , the incident received some acceptance , though strong objections to it arose from the 10th century onwards , on theological grounds . The objections continued until rejection of these verses and the story itself eventually became the only acceptable orthodox Muslim position .

In 617 , the leaders of Makhzum and Banu Abd @-@ Shams , two important Quraysh clans , declared a public boycott against Banu Hashim , their commercial rival , to pressure it into withdrawing its protection of Muhammad . The boycott lasted three years but eventually collapsed as it failed in its objective . During this , Muhammad was only able to preach during the holy pilgrimage months in which all hostilities between Arabs was suspended .

= = = Isra and Mi 'raj = = =

Islamic tradition states that in 620 , Muhammad experienced the Isra and Mi 'raj , a miraculous night @-@ long journey said to have occurred with the angel Gabriel . At the journey 's beginning , the Isra , he is said to have travelled from Mecca on a winged steed ( Buraq ) to " the farthest mosque " ( in Arabic : masjid al @-@ aqsa ) . Later , during the Mi 'raj , Muhammad is said to have toured heaven and hell , and spoke with earlier prophets , such as Abraham , Moses , and Jesus . Ibn Ishaq , author of the first biography of Muhammad , presents the event as a spiritual experience ; later historians , such as Al @-@ Tabari and Ibn Kathir , present it as a physical journey .

Some western scholars hold that the Isra and Mi 'raj journey traveled through the heavens from the sacred enclosure at Mecca to the celestial al @-@ Baytu l @-@ Ma?mur ( heavenly prototype of the

Kaaba ) ; later traditions indicate Muhammad 's journey as having been from Mecca to Jerusalem .

= = = Last years in Mecca before Hijra = = =

Muhammad 's wife Khadijah and uncle Abu Talib both died in 619 , the year thus being known as the " year of sorrow " . With the death of Abu Talib , leadership of the Banu Hashim clan passed to Abu Lahab , a tenacious enemy of Muhammad . Soon afterwards , Abu Lahab withdrew the clan 's protection over Muhammad . This placed Muhammad in danger ; the withdrawal of clan protection implied that blood revenge for his killing would not be exacted . Muhammad then visited Ta 'if , another important city in Arabia , and tried to find a protector , but his effort failed and further brought him into physical danger . Muhammad was forced to return to Mecca . A Meccan man named Mut 'im ibn Adi ( and the protection of the tribe of Banu Nawfal ) made it possible for him to safely re -enter his native city .

Many people were visiting Mecca on business or as pilgrims to the Kaaba . Muhammad took this opportunity to look for a new home for himself and his followers . After several unsuccessful negotiations , he found hope with some men from Yathrib ( later called Medina ) . The Arab population of Yathrib were familiar with monotheism and were prepared for the appearance of a prophet because a Jewish community existed there . They also hoped , by the means of Muhammad and the new faith , to gain supremacy over Mecca ; the Yathrib were jealous of its importance as the place of pilgrimage . Converts to Islam came from nearly all Arab tribes in Medina ; by June of the subsequent year , seventy @-@ five Muslims came to Mecca for pilgrimage and to meet Muhammad . Meeting him secretly by night , the group made what is known as the " Second Pledge of al`Aqaba " , or , in Orientalists ' view , the " Pledge of War " . Following the pledges at Aqabah , Muhammad encouraged his followers to emigrate to Yathrib . As with the migration to Abyssinia , the Quraysh attempted to stop the emigration . However , almost all Muslims managed to leave .

= = = Hijra = = =

The Hijra is the migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE . In June 622 , warned of a plot to assassinate him , Muhammad secretly slipped out of Mecca and moved his followers to Medina , 450 kilometres ( 280 miles ) north of Mecca .

= = = Migration to Medina = = =

A delegation , consisting of the representatives of the twelve important clans of Medina , invited Muhammad to serve as chief arbitrator for the entire community ; due to his status as a neutral outsider . There was fighting in Yathrib : primarily the dispute involved its Arab and Jewish inhabitants , and was estimated to have lasted for around a hundred years before 620 . The recurring slaughters and disagreements over the resulting claims , especially after the Battle of Bu 'ath in which all clans were involved , made it obvious to them that the tribal concept of blood @-@ feud and an eye for an eye were no longer workable unless there was one man with authority to adjudicate in disputed cases . The delegation from Medina pledged themselves and their fellow @-@ citizens to accept Muhammad into their community and physically protect him as one of themselves .

Muhammad instructed his followers to emigrate to Medina , until nearly all his followers left Mecca . Being alarmed at the departure , according to tradition , the Meccans plotted to assassinate Muhammad . With the help of Ali , Muhammad fooled the Meccans watching him , and secretly slipped away from the town with Abu Bakr . By 622 , Muhammad emigrated to Medina , a large agricultural oasis . Those who migrated from Mecca along with Muhammad became known as muhajirun ( emigrants ) .

= = = Establishment of a new polity = = =

Among the first things Muhammad did to ease the longstanding grievances among the tribes of Medina was to draft a document known as the Constitution of Medina , " establishing a kind of alliance or federation " among the eight Medinan tribes and Muslim emigrants from Mecca ; this specified rights and duties of all citizens , and the relationship of the different communities in Medina ( including the Muslim community to other communities , specifically the Jews and other " Peoples of the Book " ) . The community defined in the Constitution of Medina , Ummah , had a religious outlook , also shaped by practical considerations and substantially preserved the legal forms of the old Arab tribes .

Several ordinances were proclaimed to win over the numerous and wealthy Jewish population . These were soon rescinded as the Jews insisted on preserving the entire Mosaic law , and did not recognize him as a prophet because he was not of the race of David .

The first group of converts to Islam in Medina were the clans without great leaders ; these clans had been subjugated by hostile leaders from outside . This was followed by the general acceptance of Islam by the pagan population of Medina , with some exceptions . According to Ibn Ishaq , this was influenced by the conversion of Sa 'd ibn Mu 'adh ( a prominent Medinan leader ) to Islam . Medinans who converted to Islam and helped the Muslim emigrants find shelter became known as the ansar ( supporters ) . Then Muhammad instituted brotherhood between the emigrants and the supporters and he chose Ali as his own brother .

= = = = Beginning of armed conflict = = = =

Following the emigration , the people of Mecca seized property of Muslim emigrants to Medina . Armed conflict would later break out between the Meccan pagans and the Muslims . Muhammad delivered Quranic verses permitting Muslims to fight the Meccans ( see sura Al @-@ Hajj , Quran 22 : 39 ? 40 ) . According to the traditional account , on 11 February 624 , while praying in the Masjid al @-@ Qiblatayn in Medina , Muhammad received revelations from God that he should be facing Mecca rather than Jerusalem during prayer . Muhammad adjusted to the new direction , and his companions praying with him followed his lead , beginning the tradition of facing Mecca during prayer .

In March 624 , Muhammad led some three hundred warriors in a raid on a Meccan merchant caravan . The Muslims set an ambush for the caravan at Badr . Aware of the plan , the Meccan caravan eluded the Muslims . A Meccan force was sent to protect the caravan , and went on to confront the Muslims upon receiving word that the caravan was safe . The Battle of Badr commenced . Though outnumbered more than three to one , the Muslims won the battle , killing at least forty @-@ five Meccans with fourteen Muslims dead . They also succeeded in killing many Meccan leaders , including Abu Jahl . Seventy prisoners had been acquired , many of whom were ransomed in return for wealth or freed . Muhammad and his followers saw the victory as confirmation of their faith and Muhammad ascribed the victory as assisted from an invisible host of angels . The Quranic verses of this period , unlike the Meccan verses , dealt with practical problems of government and issues like the distribution of spoils .

The victory strengthened Muhammad 's position in Medina and dispelled earlier doubts among his followers . As a result , the opposition to him became less vocal . Pagans who had not yet converted were very bitter about the advance of Islam . Two pagans , Asma bint Marwan of the Aws Manat tribe and Abu ' Afak of the ' Amr b . ' Awf tribe , had composed verses taunting and insulting the Muslims . They were killed by people belonging to their own or related clans , and Muhammad did not disapprove of the killings . This report however is considered by some to be a fabrication . Most members of those tribes converted to Islam and there was hardly any opposition from the pagans left .

Muhammad expelled from Medina the Banu Qaynuqa , one of three main Jewish tribes , but some historians contend that the expulsion happened after Muhammad 's death . According to al @-@ Waqidi , after Abd @-@ Allah ibn Ubaiy spoke for them , Muhammad refrained from executing them and commanded that they be exiled from Medina . Following the Battle of Badr , Muhammad also

made mutual @-@ aid alliances with a number of Bedouin tribes to protect his community from attacks from the northern part of Hejaz .

= = = = Conflict with Mecca = = = =

The Meccans were eager to avenge their defeat . To maintain economic prosperity , the Meccans needed to restore their prestige , which had been reduced at Badr . In the ensuing months , the Meccans sent ambush parties to Medina while Muhammad led expeditions against tribes allied with Mecca and sent raiders onto a Meccan caravan . Abu Sufyan gathered an army of three thousand men and set out for an attack on Medina .

A scout alerted Muhammad of the Meccan army 's presence and numbers a day later . The next morning , at the Muslim conference of war , dispute arose over how best to repel the Meccans . Muhammad and many senior figures suggested it would be safer to fight within Medina and take advantage of the heavily fortified strongholds . Younger Muslims argued that the Meccans were destroying crops , and huddling in the strongholds would destroy Muslim prestige . Muhammad eventually conceded to the younger Muslims and readied the Muslim force for battle . Muhammad led his force outside to the mountain of Uhud ( the location of the Meccans camp ) and fought the Battle of Uhud on 23 March 625 . Although the Muslim army had the advantage in early encounters , lack of discipline on the part of strategically placed archers led to a Muslim defeat ; 75 Muslims were killed including Hamza , Muhammad 's uncle who became one of the best known martyrs in the Muslim tradition . The Meccans did not pursue the Muslims , instead they marched back to Mecca declaring victory . The announcement is probably because Muhammad was wounded and thought dead . When they discovered that Muhammad lived , the Meccans did not return due to false information about new forces coming to his aid . The attack had failed to achieve their aim of completely destroying the Muslims . The Muslims buried the dead , and returned to Medina that evening . Questions accumulated about the reasons for the loss ; Muhammad delivered Quranic verses 3 : 152 indicating that the defeat was twofold : partly a punishment for disobedience , partly a test for steadfastness .

Abu Sufyan directed his effort towards another attack on Medina . He gained support from the nomadic tribes to the north and east of Medina ; using propaganda about Muhammad 's weakness , promises of booty , memories of Quraysh prestige and through bribery . Muhammad 's new policy was to prevent alliances against him . Whenever alliances against Medina were formed , he sent out expeditions to break them up . Muhammad heard of men massing with hostile intentions against Medina , and reacted in a severe manner . One example is the assassination of Ka 'b ibn al @-@ Ashraf , a chieftain of the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir . Al @-@ Ashraf went to Mecca and wrote poems that roused the Meccans ' grief , anger and desire for revenge after the Battle of Badr . Around a year later , Muhammad expelled the Banu Nadir from Medina forcing their emigration to Syria ; he allowed them to take some possessions , as he was unable to subdue the Banu Nadir in their strongholds . The rest of their property was claimed by Muhammad in the name of God as it was not gained with bloodshed . Muhammad surprised various Arab tribes , individually , with overwhelming force , causing his enemies to unite to annihilate him . Muhammad 's attempts to prevent a confederation against him were unsuccessful , though he was able to increase his own forces and stopped many potential tribes from joining his enemies .

= = = = Siege of Medina = = = =

With the help of the exiled Banu Nadir , the Quraysh military leader Abu Sufyan mustered a force of 10 @, @ 000 men . Muhammad prepared a force of about 3 @, @ 000 men and adopted a form of defense unknown in Arabia at that time ; the Muslims dug a trench wherever Medina lay open to cavalry attack . The idea is credited to a Persian convert to Islam , Salman the Persian . The siege of Medina began on 31 March 627 and lasted two weeks . Abu Sufyan 's troops were unprepared for the fortifications , and after an ineffectual siege , the coalition decided to return home . The Quran discusses this battle in sura Al @-@ Ahzab , in verses 33 : 9 ? 27 . During the battle , the Jewish



tribe of Banu Qurayza , located to the south of Medina , entered into negotiations with Meccan forces to revolt against Muhammad . Although the Meccan forces were swayed by suggestions that Muhammad was sure to be overwhelmed , they desired reassurance in case the confederacy was unable to destroy him . No agreement was reached after prolonged negotiations , partly due to sabotage attempts by Muhammad 's scouts . After the coalition 's retreat , the Muslims accused the Banu Qurayza of treachery and besieged them in their forts for 25 days . The Banu Qurayza eventually surrendered ; according to Ibn Ishaq , all the men apart from a few converts to Islam were beheaded , while the women and children were enslaved . Walid N. Arafat and Barakat Ahmad have disputed the accuracy of Ibn Ishaq 's narrative . Arafat believes that Ibn Ishaq 's Jewish sources , speaking over 100 years after the event , conflated this account with memories of earlier massacres in Jewish history ; he notes that Ibn Ishaq was considered an unreliable historian by his contemporary Malik ibn Anas , and a transmitter of " odd tales " by the later Ibn Hajar . Ahmad argues that only some of the tribe was killed , while some of the fighters were merely enslaved . Watt finds Arafat 's arguments " not entirely convincing " , while Meir J. Kister has contradicted the arguments of Arafat and Ahmad .

In the siege of Medina , the Meccans exerted the available strength to destroy the Muslim community . The failure resulted in a significant loss of prestige ; their trade with Syria vanished . Following the Battle of the Trench , Muhammad made two expeditions to the north , both ended without any fighting . While returning from one of these journeys ( or some years earlier according to other early accounts ) , an accusation of adultery was made against Aisha , Muhammad 's wife . Aisha was exonerated from accusations when Muhammad announced he had received a revelation confirming Aisha 's innocence and directing that charges of adultery be supported by four eyewitnesses ( sura 24 , An @-@ Nur ) .

= = = Truce of Hudaibiyyah = = =

Although Muhammad had delivered Quranic verses commanding the Hajj , the Muslims had not performed it due to Quraysh enmity . In the month of Shawwal 628 , Muhammad ordered his followers to obtain sacrificial animals and to prepare for a pilgrimage ( umrah ) to Mecca , saying that God had promised him the fulfillment of this goal in a vision when he was shaving his head after completion of the Hajj . Upon hearing of the approaching 1 @,@ 400 Muslims , the Quraysh dispatched 200 cavalry to halt them . Muhammad evaded them by taking a more difficult route , enabling his followers to reach al @-@ Hudaibiyya just outside Mecca . According to Watt , although Muhammad 's decision to make the pilgrimage was based on his dream , he was also demonstrating to the pagan Meccans that Islam did not threaten the prestige of the sanctuaries , that Islam was an Arabian religion .

Negotiations commenced with emissaries travelling to and from Mecca . While these continued , rumors spread that one of the Muslim negotiators , Uthman bin al @-@ Affan , had been killed by the Quraysh . Muhammad called upon the pilgrims to make a pledge not to flee ( or to stick with Muhammad , whatever decision he made ) if the situation descended into war with Mecca . This pledge became known as the " Pledge of Acceptance " ( Arabic : ????? ??????? , bay 'at al @-@ ridhw?n ) or the " Pledge under the Tree " . News of Uthman 's safety allowed for negotiations to continue , and a treaty scheduled to last ten years was eventually signed between the Muslims and Quraysh . The main points of the treaty included : cessation of hostilities , the deferral of Muhammad 's pilgrimage to the following year , and agreement to send back any Meccan who emigrated to Medina without permission from their protector .

Many Muslims were not satisfied with the treaty . However , the Quranic sura " Al @-@ Fath " ( The Victory ) ( Quran 48 : 1 ? 29 ) assured them that the expedition must be considered a victorious one . It was later that Muhammad 's followers realized the benefit behind the treaty . These benefits included the requirement of the Meccans to identify Muhammad as an equal , cessation of military activity allowing Medina to gain strength , and the admiration of Meccans who were impressed by the pilgrimage rituals .

After signing the truce , Muhammad assembled an expedition against the Jewish oasis of Khaybar ,

known as the Battle of Khaybar . This was possibly due to housing the Banu Nadir who were inciting hostilities against Muhammad , or to regain prestige from what appeared as the inconclusive result of the truce of Hudaibiyya . According to Muslim tradition , Muhammad also sent letters to many rulers , asking them to convert to Islam ( the exact date is given variously in the sources ) . He sent messengers ( with letters ) to Heraclius of the Byzantine Empire ( the eastern Roman Empire ) , Khosrau of Persia , the chief of Yemen and to some others . In the years following the truce of Hudaibiyya , Muhammad directed his forces against the Arabs on Transjordanian Byzantine soil in the Battle of Mu 'tah .

= = = Final years = = =

= = = = Conquest of Mecca = = = =

The truce of Hudaibiyyah had been enforced for two years . The tribe of Banu Khuza 'a had good relations with Muhammad , whereas their enemies , the Banu Bakr , had allied with the Meccans . A clan of the Bakr made a night raid against the Khuza 'a , killing a few of them . The Meccans helped the Banu Bakr with weapons and , according to some sources , a few Meccans also took part in the fighting . After this event , Muhammad sent a message to Mecca with three conditions , asking them to accept one of them . These were : either the Meccans would pay blood money for the slain among the Khuza 'ah tribe , they disavow themselves of the Banu Bakr , or they should declare the truce of Hudaibiyyah null .

The Meccans replied that they accepted the last condition . Soon they realized their mistake and sent Abu Sufyan to renew the Hudaibiyyah treaty , a request that was declined by Muhammad .

Muhammad began to prepare for a campaign . In 630 , Muhammad marched on Mecca with 10 @, @ 000 Muslim converts . With minimal casualties , Muhammad seized control of Mecca . He declared an amnesty for past offences , except for ten men and women who were " guilty of murder or other offences or had sparked off the war and disrupted the peace " . Some of these were later pardoned . Most Meccans converted to Islam and Muhammad proceeded to destroy all the statues of Arabian gods in and around the Kaaba . According to reports collected by Ibn Ishaq and al @-@ Azraqi , Muhammad personally spared paintings or frescos of Mary and Jesus , but other traditions suggest that all pictures were erased . The Quran discusses the conquest of Mecca .

= = = = Conquest of Arabia = = = =

Following the conquest of Mecca , Muhammad was alarmed by a military threat from the confederate tribes of Hawazin who were raising an army twice Muhammad 's size . The Banu Hawazin were old enemies of the Meccans . They were joined by the Banu Thaqif ( inhabiting the city of Ta 'if ) who adopted an anti @-@ Meccan policy due to the decline of the prestige of Meccans . Muhammad defeated the Hawazin and Thaqif tribes in the Battle of Hunayn .

In the same year , Muhammad organized an attack against northern Arabia because of their previous defeat at the Battle of Mu 'tah and reports of hostility adopted against Muslims . With great difficulty he assembled thirty thousand men ; half of whom on the second day returned with Abd @-@ Allah ibn Ubayy , untroubled by the damning verses which Muhammad hurled at them . Although Muhammad did not engage with hostile forces at Tabuk , he received the submission of some local chiefs of the region .

He also ordered destruction of any remaining pagan idols in Eastern Arabia . The last city to hold out against the Muslims in Western Arabia was Taif . Muhammad refused to accept the city 's surrender until they agreed to convert to Islam and allowed men to destroy the statue of their goddess Allat .

A year after the Battle of Tabuk , the Banu Thaqif sent emissaries to surrender to Muhammad and adopt Islam . Many bedouins submitted to Muhammad to safeguard against his attacks and to benefit from the spoils of war . However , the bedouins were alien to the system of Islam and wanted

to maintain independence : namely their code of virtue and ancestral traditions . Muhammad required a military and political agreement according to which they " acknowledge the suzerainty of Medina , to refrain from attack on the Muslims and their allies , and to pay the Zakat , the Muslim religious levy . "

===== Farewell pilgrimage =====

In 632 , at the end of the tenth year after migration to Medina , Muhammad completed his first truly Islamic pilgrimage , thereby teaching his followers the rites of the annual Great Pilgrimage , known as Hajj . After completing the pilgrimage , Muhammad delivered a famous speech , known as the Farewell Sermon , at Mount Arafat east of Mecca . In this sermon , Muhammad advised his followers not to follow certain pre-Islamic customs . For instance , he said a white has no superiority over a black , nor a black has any superiority over a white except by piety and good action . He abolished old blood feuds and disputes based on the former tribal system and asked for old pledges to be returned as implications of the creation of the new Islamic community . Commenting on the vulnerability of women in his society , Muhammad asked his male followers to " be good to women , for they are powerless captives ( awan ) in your households . You took them in God 's trust , and legitimated your sexual relations with the Word of God , so come to your senses people , and hear my words ... " He told them that they were entitled to discipline their wives but should do so with kindness . He addressed the issue of inheritance by forbidding false claims of paternity or of a client relationship to the deceased , and forbade his followers to leave their wealth to a testamentary heir . He also upheld the sacredness of four lunar months in each year . According to Sunni tafsir , the following Quranic verse was delivered during this event : " Today I have perfected your religion , and completed my favours for you and chosen Islam as a religion for you " ( Quran 5 : 3 ) . According to Shia tafsir , it refers to the appointment of Ali ibn Abi Talib at the pond of Khumm as Muhammad 's successor , this occurring a few days later when Muslims were returning from Mecca to Medina .

===== Death and tomb =====

A few months after the farewell pilgrimage , Muhammad fell ill and suffered for several days with fever , head pain , and weakness . He died on Monday , 8 June 632 , in Medina , at the age of 62 or 63 , in the house of his wife Aisha . With his head resting on Aisha 's lap , he asked her to dispose of his last worldly goods ( seven coins ) , then spoke his final words :

O Allah , to Ar-Rafiq Al-A'la ( exalted friend , highest abode or the uppermost , highest company in heaven ) .

Ar-Rafiq Al-A'la may be referring to God . He was buried where he died in Aisha 's house . During the reign of the Umayyad caliph al-Walid I , al-Masjid an-Nabawi ( the Mosque of the Prophet ) was expanded to include the site of Muhammad 's tomb . The Green Dome above the tomb was built by the Mamluk sultan Al Mansur Qalawun in the 13th century , although the green color was added in the 16th century , under the reign of Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent . Among tombs adjacent to that of Muhammad are those of his companions ( Sahabah ) , the first two Muslim caliphs Abu Bakr and Umar , and an empty one that Muslims believe awaits Jesus . When bin Saud took Medina in 1805 , Muhammad 's tomb was stripped of its gold and jewel ornaments . Adherents to Wahhabism , bin Sauds ' followers destroyed nearly every tomb dome in Medina in order to prevent their veneration , and the one of Muhammad is said to have narrowly escaped . Similar events took place in 1925 when the Saudi militias retook the city . In the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam , burial is to take place in unmarked graves . Although frowned upon by the Saudis , many pilgrims continue to practice a ziyarat , a ritual visit , to the tomb .

===== After Muhammad =====

Muhammad united several of the tribes of Arabia into a single Arab Muslim religious polity in the last years of his life . With Muhammad 's death , disagreement broke out over who his successor would be . Umar ibn al @-@ Khattab , a prominent companion of Muhammad , nominated Abu Bakr , Muhammad 's friend and collaborator . With additional support Abu Bakr was confirmed as the first caliph . This choice was disputed by some of Muhammad 's companions , who held that Ali ibn Abi Talib , his cousin and son @-@ in @-@ law , had been designated the successor by Muhammad at Ghadir Khumm . Abu Bakr immediately moved to strike against the Byzantine ( or Eastern Roman Empire ) forces because of the previous defeat , although he first had to put down a rebellion by Arab tribes in an event that Muslim historians later referred to as the Ridda wars , or " Wars of Apostasy " .

The pre @-@ Islamic Middle East was dominated by the Byzantine and Sassanian empires . The Roman @-@ Persian Wars between the two had devastated the region , making the empires unpopular amongst local tribes . Furthermore , in the lands that would be conquered by Muslims many Christians ( Nestorians , Monophysites , Jacobites and Copts ) were disaffected from the Eastern Orthodox Church which deemed them heretics . Within a decade Muslims conquered Mesopotamia , Byzantine Syria , Byzantine Egypt , large parts of Persia , and established the Rashidun Caliphate .

= = Early social changes under Islam = =

According to William Montgomery Watt religion , for Muhammad , was not a private and individual matter but " the total response of his personality to the total situation in which he found himself . He was responding [ not only ] ... to the religious and intellectual aspects of the situation but also to the economic , social , and political pressures to which contemporary Mecca was subject . " Bernard Lewis says there are two important political traditions in Islam ? Muhammad as a statesman in Medina , and Muhammad as a rebel in Mecca . His view believed Islam as a great change , akin to a revolution , when introduced to new societies .

Historians generally agree that Islamic social changes in areas such as social security , family structure , slavery and the rights of women and children improved on the status quo of Arab society . For example , according to Lewis , Islam " from the first denounced aristocratic privilege , rejected hierarchy , and adopted a formula of the career open to the talents " . Muhammad 's message transformed society and moral orders of life in the Arabian Peninsula ; society focused on the changes to perceived identity , world view , and the hierarchy of values . Economic reforms addressed the plight of the poor , which was becoming an issue in pre @-@ Islamic Mecca . The Quran requires payment of an alms tax ( zakat ) for the benefit of the poor ; as Muhammad 's power grew he demanded that tribes who wished to ally with him implement the zakat in particular .

= = Appearance = =

The description given in Muhammad ibn Isa at @-@ Tirmidhi 's book Shama 'il al @-@ Mustafa , attributed to Ali ibn Abi Talib is as followed :

Muhammad was middle @-@ sized , did not have lank or crisp hair , was not fat , had a white circular face , wide black eyes , and long eye @-@ lashes . When he walked , he walked as though he went down a declivity . He had the " seal of prophecy " between his shoulder blades ... He was bulky . His face shone like the moon . He was taller than middling stature but shorter than conspicuous tallness . He had thick , curly hair . The plaits of his hair were parted . His hair reached beyond the lobe of his ear . His complexion was azhar [ bright , luminous ] . Muhammad had a wide forehead , and fine , long , arched eyebrows which did not meet . Between his eyebrows there was a vein which distended when he was angry . The upper part of his nose was hooked ; he was thick bearded , had smooth cheeks , a strong mouth , and his teeth were set apart . He had thin hair on his chest . His neck was like the neck of an ivory statue , with the purity of silver . Muhammad was proportionate , stout , firm @-@ gripped , even of belly and chest , broad @-@ chested and broad @-@ shouldered .

The " seal of prophecy " between Muhammad 's shoulders is generally described as having been a type of raised mole the size of a pigeon 's egg . Another description of Muhammad was provided by Umm Ma 'bad , a woman he met on his journey to Medina :

I saw a man , pure and clean , with a handsome face and a fine figure . He was not marred by a skinny body , nor was he overly small in the head and neck . He was graceful and elegant , with intensely black eyes and thick eyelashes . There was a huskiness in his voice , and his neck was long . His beard was thick , and his eyebrows were finely arched and joined together .

When silent , he was grave and dignified , and when he spoke , glory rose up and overcame him . He was from afar the most beautiful of men and the most glorious , and close up he was the sweetest and the loveliest . He was sweet of speech and articulate , but not petty or trifling . His speech was a string of cascading pearls , measured so that none despaired of its length , and no eye challenged him because of brevity . In company he is like a branch between two other branches , but he is the most flourishing of the three in appearance , and the loveliest in power . He has friends surrounding him , who listen to his words . If he commands , they obey implicitly , with eagerness and haste , without frown or complaint .

Descriptions like these were often reproduced in calligraphic panels ( hilya or , in Turkish , hilye ) , which in the 17th century developed into an art form of their own in the Ottoman Empire .

= = Household = =

Muhammad 's life is traditionally defined into two periods : pre @-@ hijra ( emigration ) in Mecca ( from 570 to 622 ) , and post @-@ hijra in Medina ( from 622 until 632 ) . Muhammad is said to have had thirteen wives in total ( although two have ambiguous accounts , Rayhana bint Zayd and Maria al @-@ Qibtiyya , as wife or concubine . ) Eleven of the thirteen marriages occurred after the migration to Medina .

At the age of 25 , Muhammad married the wealthy Khadijah bint Khuwaylid who was 40 years old . The marriage lasted for 25 years and was a happy one . Muhammad did not enter into marriage with another woman during this marriage . After Khadija 's death , Khawla bint Hakim suggested to Muhammad that he should marry Sawda bint Zama , a Muslim widow , or Aisha , daughter of Um Ruman and Abu Bakr of Mecca . Muhammad is said to have asked for arrangements to marry both . Muhammads marriages after the death of Khajida were contracted mostly for political or humanitarian reasons . The women were either widows of Muslims killed in battle and had been left without a protector , or belonged to important families or clans whom it was necessary to honor and strengthen alliances with .

According to traditional sources Aisha was six or seven years old when betrothed to Muhammad , with the marriage not being consummated until she had reached puberty at the age of nine or ten years old . She was therefore a virgin at marriage . Muslim authors who calculate Aisha 's age based on other sources of information , such that available about her sister Asma about whom more is known , estimate that she was over thirteen and perhaps in her late teens at the time of her marriage .

After migration to Medina , Muhammad ( now in his fifties ) married several more women .

Muhammad did household chores and helped with housework such as preparing food , sewing clothes , and repairing shoes . He is also said to have had accustomed his wives to dialogue ; he listened to their advice , and the wives debated and even argued with him .

Khadijah is said to have had four daughters with Muhammad ( Ruqayyah bint Muhammad , Umm Kulthum bint Muhammad , Zainab bint Muhammad , Fatimah Zahra ) and two sons ( Abd @-@ Allah ibn Muhammad and Qasim ibn Muhammad , who both died in childhood ) . All but one of his daughters , Fatimah , died before him . Some Shi 'a scholars contend that Fatimah was Muhammad 's only daughter . Maria al @-@ Qibtiyya bore him a son named Ibrahim ibn Muhammad , but the child died when he was two years old .

Nine of Muhammad 's wives survived him . Aisha , who became known as Muhammad 's favourite wife in Sunni tradition , survived him by decades and was instrumental in helping assemble the scattered sayings of Muhammad that form the Hadith literature for the Sunni branch of Islam .

Muhammad 's descendants through Fatimah are known as sharifs , syeds or sayyids . These are honorific titles in Arabic , sharif meaning ' noble ' and sayed or sayyid meaning ' lord ' or ' sir ' . As Muhammad 's only descendants , they are respected by both Sunni and Shi 'a , though the Shi 'a place much more emphasis and value on their distinction .

Zayd ibn Harith was a slave that Muhammad bought , freed , and then adopted as his son . He also had a wetnurse . According to a BBC summary , " the Prophet Muhammad did not try to abolish slavery , and bought , sold , captured , and owned slaves himself . But he insisted that slave owners treat their slaves well and stressed the virtue of freeing slaves . Muhammad treated slaves as human beings and clearly held some in the highest esteem " .

= = Legacy = =

= = = Muslim views = = =

Following the attestation to the oneness of God , the belief in Muhammad 's prophethood is the main aspect of the Islamic faith . Every Muslim proclaims in Shahadah that " I testify that there is no god but God , and I testify that Muhammad is a Messenger of God " . The Shahadah is the basic creed or tenet of Islam . Islamic belief is that ideally the Shahadah is the first words a newborn will hear ; children are taught it immediately and it will be recited upon death . Muslims repeat the shahadah in the call to prayer ( adhan ) and the prayer itself . Non @-@ Muslims wishing to convert to Islam are required to recite the creed .

In Islamic belief , Muhammad is regarded as the last prophet sent by God for the benefit of mankind . Quran 10 : 37 states that " ... it ( the Quran ) is a confirmation of ( revelations ) that went before it , and a fuller explanation of the Book ? wherein there is no doubt ? from The Lord of the Worlds . " . Similarly Quran 46 : 12 states " ... And before this was the book of Moses , as a guide and a mercy . And this Book confirms ( it ) ... " , while 2 : 136 commands the believers of Islam to " Say : we believe in God and that which is revealed unto us , and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes , and that which Moses and Jesus received , and which the prophets received from their Lord . We make no distinction between any of them , and unto Him we have surrendered . "

Muslim tradition credits Muhammad with several miracles or supernatural events . For example , many Muslim commentators and some Western scholars have interpreted the Surah 54 : 1 ? 2 as referring to Muhammad splitting the Moon in view of the Quraysh when they began persecuting his followers . Islamic historian Denis Gril believes the Quran does not overtly describe Muhammad performing miracles , and the supreme miracle of Muhammad is identified with the Quran itself .

According to Islamic tradition , Muhammad was attacked by the people of Ta 'if and was badly injured . The tradition also describes an angel appearing to him and offering retribution against the assailants . It is said that Muhammad rejected the offer and prayed for the people of Ta 'if .

The Sunnah represents actions and sayings of Muhammad ( preserved in reports known as Hadith ) , and covers a broad array of activities and beliefs ranging from religious rituals , personal hygiene , burial of the dead to the mystical questions involving the love between humans and God . The Sunnah is considered a model of emulation for pious Muslims and has to a great degree influenced the Muslim culture . The greeting that Muhammad taught Muslims to offer each other , " may peace be upon you " ( Arabic : as @-@ salamu `alaykum ) is used by Muslims throughout the world . Many details of major Islamic rituals such as daily prayers , the fasting and the annual pilgrimage are only found in the Sunnah and not the Quran .

The Sunnah contributed much to the development of Islamic law , particularly from the end of the first Islamic century . Muslim mystics , known as sufis , who were seeking for the inner meaning of the Quran and the inner nature of Muhammad , viewed the prophet of Islam not only as a prophet but also as a perfect human @-@ being . All Sufi orders trace their chain of spiritual descent back to Muhammad .

Muslims have traditionally expressed love and veneration for Muhammad . Stories of Muhammad 's

life , his intercession and of his miracles ( particularly " Splitting of the moon " ) have permeated popular Muslim thought and poetry . Among Arabic odes to Muhammad , Qasidat al @-@ Burda ( " Poem of the Mantle " ) by the Egyptian Sufi al @-@ Busiri ( 1211 ? 1294 ) is particularly well known , and widely held to possess a healing , spiritual power . The Quran refers to Muhammad as " a mercy ( rahmat ) to the worlds " ( Quran 21 : 107 ) . The association of rain with mercy in Oriental countries has led to imagining Muhammad as a rain cloud dispensing blessings and stretching over lands , reviving the dead hearts , just as rain revives the seemingly dead earth ( see , for example , the Sindhi poem of Shah ?Abd al @-@ Latif ) . Muhammad 's birthday is celebrated as a major feast throughout the Islamic world , excluding Wahhabi @-@ dominated Saudi Arabia where these public celebrations are discouraged . When Muslims say or write the name of Muhammad , they usually follow it with Peace be upon him ( Arabic : sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam ) . In casual writing , this is sometimes abbreviated as PBUH or SAW ; in printed matter , a small calligraphic rendition is commonly used ( ? ) .

= = = Islamic depictions = = =

In line with the hadith prohibition against creating images of sentient living beings , which is particularly strictly observed with respect to God and Muhammad , Islamic religious art is focused on the word . Muslims generally avoid depictions of Muhammad , and mosques are decorated with calligraphy and Quranic inscriptions or geometrical designs , not images or sculptures . Today , the interdiction against images of Muhammad ? designed to prevent worship of Muhammad , rather than God ? is much more strictly observed in Sunni Islam ( 85 % ? 90 % of Muslims ) and Ahmadiyya Islam ( 1 % ) than among Shias ( 10 % ? 15 % ) . While both Sunnis and Shias have created images of Muhammad in the past , Islamic depictions of Muhammad are rare . They have , until recently , mostly been limited to the private and elite medium of the miniature , and since about 1500 most depictions show Muhammad with his face veiled , or symbolically represent him as a flame .

The earliest extant depictions come from 13th century Anatolian Seljuk and Ilkhanid Persian miniatures , typically in literary genres describing the life and deeds of Muhammad . During the Ilkhanid period , when Persia 's Mongol rulers converted to Islam , competing Sunni and Shi 'a groups used visual imagery , including images of Muhammad , to promote their particular interpretation of Islam 's key events . Influenced by the Buddhist tradition of representational religious art predating the Mongol elite 's conversion , this innovation was unprecedented in the Islamic world , and accompanied by a " broader shift in Islamic artistic culture away from abstraction toward representation " in " mosques , on tapestries , silks , ceramics , and in glass and metalwork " besides books . In the Persian lands , this tradition of realistic depictions lasted through the Timurid dynasty until the Safavids took power in the early 16th century . The Safavids , who made Shi 'i Islam the state religion , initiated a departure from the traditional Ilkhanid and Timurid artistic style by covering Muhammad 's face with a veil to obscure his features and at the same time represent his luminous essence . Concomitantly , some of the unveiled images from earlier periods were defaced . Later images were produced in Ottoman Turkey and elsewhere , but mosques were never decorated with images of Muhammad . Illustrated accounts of the night journey ( mi 'raj ) were particularly popular from the Ilkhanid period through the Safavid era . During the 19th century , Iran saw a boom of printed and illustrated mi 'raj books , with Muhammad 's face veiled , aimed in particular at illiterates and children in the manner of graphic novels . Reproduced through lithography , these were essentially " printed manuscripts " . Today , millions of historical reproductions and modern images are available in some Muslim countries , especially Turkey and Iran , on posters , postcards , and even in coffee @-@ table books , but are unknown in most other parts of the Islamic world , and when encountered by Muslims from other countries , they can cause considerable consternation and offense .

= = = Medieval Christian views = = =

The earliest documented Christian knowledge of Muhammad stems from Byzantine sources . They indicate that both Jews and Christians saw Muhammad as a false prophet . Another Greek source for Muhammad is Theophanes the Confessor , a 9th @-@ century writer . The earliest Syriac source is the 7th @-@ century writer John bar Penkaye .

According to Hossein Nasr , the earliest European literature often refers to Muhammad unfavorably . A few learned circles of Middle Ages Europe ? primarily Latin @-@ literate scholars ? had access to fairly extensive biographical material about Muhammad . They interpreted the biography through a Christian religious filter ; one that viewed Muhammad as a person who seduced the Saracens into his submission under religious guise . Popular European literature of the time portrayed Muhammad as though he were worshipped by Muslims , similar to an idol or a heathen god .

In later ages , Muhammad came to be seen as a schismatic : Brunetto Latini 's 13th century *Li livres dou tresor* represents him as a former monk and cardinal , and Dante 's *Divine Comedy* ( *Inferno* , Canto 28 ) , written in the early 1300s , puts Muhammad and his son @-@ in @-@ law , Ali , in Hell " among the sowers of discord and the schismatics , being lacerated by devils again and again . "

= = = = Emergence of positive views in Europe = = = =

After the Reformation , Muhammad was often portrayed in a similar way . Guillaume Postel was among the first to present a more positive view of Muhammad . Gottfried Leibniz praised Muhammad because " he did not deviate from the natural religion " . Henri de Boulainvilliers , in his *Vie de Mahomed* which was published posthumously in 1730 , described Muhammad as a gifted political leader and a just lawmaker . He presents him as a divinely inspired messenger whom God employed to confound the bickering Oriental Christians , to liberate the Orient from the despotic rule of the Romans and Persians , and to spread the knowledge of the unity of God from India to Spain . Voltaire had both a positive and negative opinion on Muhammad : in his play *Le fanatisme , ou Mahomet le Prophète* he vilifies Muhammad as a symbol of fanaticism , and in a published essay in 1748 he calls him " a sublime and hearty charlatan " , but in his historical survey *Essai sur les m?urs* , he presents him as legislator and a conqueror and calls him an " enthusiast " , not an impostor . Jean @-@ Jacques Rousseau , in his *Social Contract* ( 1762 ) , brushing aside hostile legends of Muhammad as a trickster and impostor , presents him as a sage legislator who wisely fused religious and political powers . Emmanuel Pastoret published in 1787 his *Zoroaster , Confucius and Muhammad* , in which he presents the lives of these three " great men " , " the greatest legislators of the universe " , and compares their careers as religious reformers and lawgivers . He rejects the common view that Muhammad is an impostor and argues that the Quran proffers " the most sublime truths of cult and morals " ; it defines the unity of God with an " admirable concision . " Pastoret writes that the common accusations of his immorality are unfounded : on the contrary , his law enjoins sobriety , generosity , and compassion on his followers : the " legislator of Arabia " was " a great man . " Napoleon Bonaparte admired Muhammad and Islam , and described him as a model lawmaker and a great man . Thomas Carlyle in his book *Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* ( 1840 ) describes Muhammad as " [ a ] silent great soul ; [ ... ] one of those who cannot but be in earnest " . Carlyle 's interpretation has been widely cited by Muslim scholars as a demonstration that Western scholarship validates Muhammad 's status as a great man in history .

= = = = Views by modern historians = = = =

According to William Montgomery Watt and Richard Bell , recent writers generally dismiss the idea that Muhammad deliberately deceived his followers , arguing that Muhammad " was absolutely sincere and acted in complete good faith " and Muhammad 's readiness to endure hardship for his cause , with what seemed to be no rational basis for hope , shows his sincerity . Watt says that sincerity does not directly imply correctness : In contemporary terms , Muhammad might have mistaken his subconscious for divine revelation . Watt and Bernard Lewis argue that viewing Muhammad as a self @-@ seeking impostor makes it impossible to understand Islam 's development . Alford T. Welch holds that Muhammad was able to be so influential and successful



because of his firm belief in his vocation .

== = Other religious views == = =

Bahá 'ís venerates Muhammad as one of a number of prophets or " Manifestations of God " . He is thought to be the final manifestation , or seal of the Adamic cycle , but considers his teachings to have been superseded by those of Bahá 'u'lláh , the founder of the Bahai faith , and the first of Manifestation of the current cycle .

== = Criticism == =

As early as the 7th century Muhammad was attacked by non @-@ Muslim Arab contemporaries for preaching monotheism . In modern times , criticism has also dealt with Muhammad 's sincerity in claiming to be a prophet , his morality , warfare , and his marriages .

== = Praise and veneration == =

Praise and veneration of Muhammad have been expressed throughout the life of Muhammad , where from an early age , he was referred to as al @-@ Amin ( faithful , trustworthy ) and as @-@ Sadiq ( truthful ) . Muslim scholars , thinkers , mystics and other religious scholars have expressed praise and veneration of Muhammad throughout history and it remains an integral part of the Islamic tradition . Topics of the praise and veneration of Muhammad include the personality , character , teachings , morality , conduct , actions , and way of life .

== = Encyclopedias == =