

The Story of Mohammad

Mohammed, sometimes called Muhammad Abdullah, was the founder of the religion of Islam, and is considered by Muslims to be a messenger and prophet of God. Muslims believe he was the last of the Islamic prophets, which included Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus.

Born in 570 in the Arabian city of Mecca, he was orphaned at an early age and brought up by his uncle, Abu Talib. He later worked mostly as a merchant, as well as a shepherd, and was married by age 25. He also worked to help the people in his community, was a public speaker and military leader.

He was not happy with his life in Mecca, but could not understand why. 'My business is going well. My family are fine. People like me. So why am I so sad?' Muhammad thought again about Mecca, the city where he lived. It was a very busy city, full of people who were greedy and dishonest. No one cared about the poor and the needy. People believed in evil spirits and magic and worshipped many different gods.

Muhammad wondered if there was anything that would show these people how to live better lives and to give up their bad ways. He decided to leave Mecca and spend time in a cave outside the city, thinking about these things. It was a quiet, cool place where he could think and pray all by himself. According to Islamic beliefs it was here, at age 40, in the month of Ramadan, that he received his first message from God.

One day, Muhammad had a strange feeling that he was no longer alone. "Do not be afraid," said a voice. Muhammad rubbed his eyes and stared - it was an angel. It was the Angel Gabriel. Gabriel showed Muhammad some words. 'Read!' the angel commanded. But Muhammad had never gone to school. He had never learned to read or write. The angel repeated his command, before squeezing Muhammad so hard that he thought that he would faint.

The angel released Muhammad and began to read out the beautiful words. Muhammad immediately knew that these words came from God. He listened carefully and was able to remember everything the angel said.

Muhammad knew that the people needed to hear this message, so he started preaching what God had told him, that Allah is the one true God, and giving yourself to him is the only way to worship him. He said that he himself was only a prophet and messenger of God.

Muhammad did not win many followers to begin with, and some tribes around Mecca did not like his message, so he and his followers were treated harshly.

To escape from this danger, Muhammad and his followers in Mecca went to Medina in the year 622. This event, the Hijra, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

In Medina, Muhammad united the local tribes who had been fighting each other, and after eight years of fighting with the tribes from the area around Mecca, his followers, who by then had grown to 10,000, conquered Mecca. He did not punish the people who had driven him out of the city. Instead, he made new rules and laws which meant that poor people and children were looked after properly.

In 632, Muhammad fell ill and died. By the time of his death, he had united the tribes of Arabia into a single group who all followed the religion of Islam, and most people who lived on the Arabian Peninsula were Muslims.

Mohammad continued to receive messages from God for the rest of his life, and these messages became the Quran, which is the Holy Book of Islam. To Muslims, Muhammad and the other prophets are so holy, that the phrase 'Peace Be Upon Him' is always said when their names are mentioned.

Mecca

messages

Quran

evil

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Angel

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preaching

uncle

harshly

Him

thinking

570

Medina

followers

came from

Noah

city

Jesus

Peace

poor

life

worshipped

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punish

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happy

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God

knew

Ramadan

evil

Gabriel

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message

Moses

Upon

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Muhammad started p_____ what God had told him, but he did not win many f_____ and they were treated h_____.

Muhammad and his followers went to M_____ in the year 622. Eventually, Muhammad and his followers c_____ Mecca. He did not p_____ the people who had driven him out of the c_____.

Mohammad continued to receive m_____ from God for the rest of his l_____, and these messages became the Q_____. In 632, Muhammad fell i_____ and d_____. Muhammad is so holy, that 'P_____ Be U_____ H_____' is always said after his n_____.

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