

Muhammad

Without Muhammad, there would be no Koran and thus, no Islam. Every verse of the Koran is a "revelation" Muhammad said he received from Allah. What do these "revelations" tell us about Muhammad?

In Chapter 4, Verse 80, the Koran states that Muhammad speaks for Allah:

He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad), has indeed obeyed Allah...

And in Chapter 59, Verse 7, the Koran specifically commands Muslims to obey Muhammad:

...And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.

And in Chapter 33, Verse 21, the Koran states that Muhammad is considered the timeless standard by which Muslims should conduct themselves:

Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.

Muhammad is known as the Prophet of Allah, the Apostle, and Allah's Messenger. But who was Muhammad?

He was born Muhammad bin 'Abdullah (son of 'Abdullah) in Mecca in 570 AD. His father died before he was born, and his mother died when he was 6 years old. Muhammad then lived with his grandfather for two years until his grandfather died. His uncle, Abu Talib, then became his guardian.

Abu Talib was a successful Meccan businessman, and he initially employed Muhammad as a camel driver in his commercial caravans. Muhammad started working his way up in his uncle's business and continued accompanying the caravans.

Muhammad met Khadija, who was a wealthy Meccan widow and successful businesswoman. She hired him and he eventually became her business partner. They were married in 595 when he was 25 and she was 40. By his late 30's Muhammad was living a life of material comfort. He and Khadija had seven children; but of these, only the four daughters lived to become Muslims and emigrate to Medina. The three boys died at young ages.

It was in 610 when Muhammad, who was 40 years old, claimed to have received his first "revelation" from Allah while he was in a cave (the Cave of *Hira*) outside of Mecca. He started quietly preaching about these "revelations" to his family and close friends in Mecca. Khadija became the first Muslim. The second Muslim was Muhammad's ten year old cousin, Ali bin Abi Talib. But the increase in the number of new Muslims was very slow.

For many years Mecca had been a destination for pilgrims because it was the location of the Ka'bah, a sacred building housing hundreds of pagan tribal gods. Providing food and lodging for these pilgrims was a lucrative business for

many Meccans. But in 613 Muhammad started going around openly preaching that there was only one god. Consequently, resistance to this new religion started building among the Meccans, and the Muslims started being harassed and ill-treated.

In 620 Muhammad met with a group of six men from Medina who were making a pilgrimage to Mecca. He converted this group to Islam, and the religion started to grow in Medina. They provided a new base of support for Muhammad.

In July 622 the Muslims started leaving Mecca for Medina. There were about 70 Muslim males and their families who emigrated from Mecca. Muhammad emigrated to Medina in September of that year, accompanied by Abu Bakr, his close companion and then-father-in-law. This emigration was known as the *Hijra*, and it was so significant for Islam that the year 622 became the first year of the Muslim calendar.

In early 623 Muhammad started sending out Muslim raiding parties from Medina against Meccan caravans and eventually against neighboring Arab tribes who had not accepted Islam. As the Muslims successfully raided those caravans and divided the plunder, and conquered surrounding Jewish and Arab tribes, the military strength of the Muslims grew, as did the number of converts to Islam.

In 622 there had been about 200 Muslim men, women, and children who had emigrated from Mecca to Medina. Yet in January 630, less than eight years after the *Hijra*, Muhammad returned to Mecca with an army of 10,000 Muslim warriors and conquered that city.

Muhammad continued to live in Medina and received "revelations" until his death. He died

in Medina on June 7, 632. On his death-bed he gave one last command:

It has been narrated by 'Umar b. Al-Khattab that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) saying: I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslims.

Sahih Muslim, No. 1767

Facts about Muhammad

(Information from Chapter 4, “The Significance of Muhammad,” in my book *Letting Islam Be Islam: Separating Truth From Myth*)

Wives: It is generally accepted that Muhammad consummated marriages with eleven women during his life. During the time of his first marriage, he had only one wife, Khadija. During the last three years of his life, he had nine wives at one time.

Muhammad’s favorite wife was Aisha. He was married to her when she was six years old and he was 50 years old; the marriage was consummated when Aisha was nine years old.

Slave Concubines: Muhammad had at least two slave concubines. With one, Mariyah the Copt, he had a son who died as a baby.

Slaves in general: Muhammad bought, sold, and gave away slaves, for example:

After the defeat of the Jewish Bani Qurayzah tribe, Muhammad divided up that tribe's "property, wives, and children" among the Muslims; but some of the women he sent to Najd to be sold for horses and weapons.

After the defeat of the Jews at Khaybar, Muhammad had the women of Khaybar "distributed among the Muslims."

Muhammad bought one of his wives, Safiyyah, for the price of seven slaves.

Muhammad sold Adda' bin Khalid a female slave – “Sold by a Muslim to a Muslim.”

Amputation for Theft: This is found in 5:38 of the Koran, and Muhammad ordered the hands of many thieves to be cut off.

Stoning Adulterers: Muhammad said he was the first to revive this “order of God,” and he commanded many adulterers to be stoned to death.

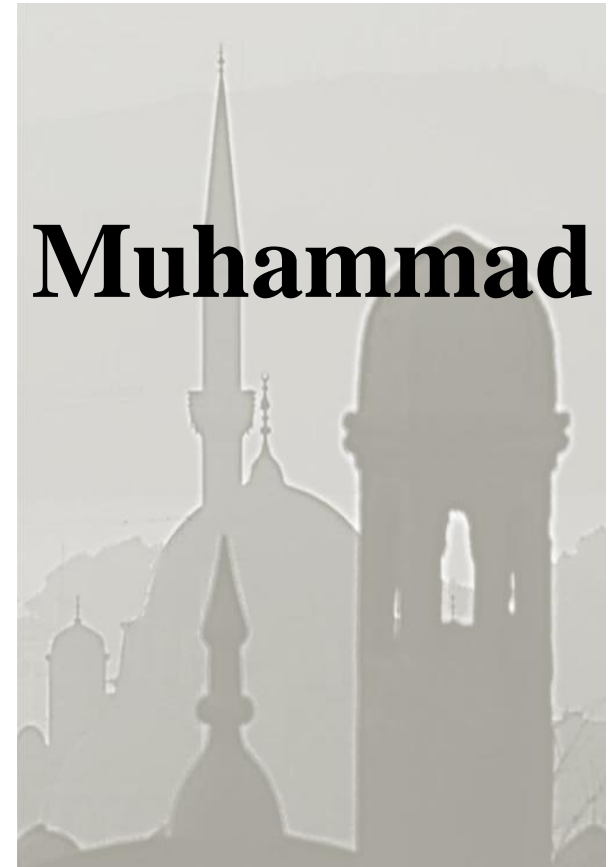
The “Prophet’s Mosque”: When Muhammad emigrated to Medina, the first mosque was built on land that had been used as a cemetery by non-Muslims. Muhammad ordered that their graves be dug up, after which construction of the mosque began.

Homosexuality: Muhammad cursed gays and lesbians, and he said that those committing homosexual acts should be killed.

Criticizing Muhammad: Muhammad said there was no punishment for the killing of anyone who reviled and/or criticized him.

Terror: Muhammad said, *I have been made victorious with terror (cast in the hearts of the enemy)...*

Dr. Kirby is the author of five books on Islam. His latest book is *The Lure of Fantasy Islam: Exposing the Myths and Myth Makers*. His books are available on Amazon.com.



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