**THE MISSION AT MECCA**

**Introduction**:

The Islamic prophet Muhammad was born and lived in Mecca for the first 52 years of his life (570–622 A.D.) Orphaned early in life, he became known as a prominent merchant, and as an impartial and trustworthy arbiter of disputes. He married his first wife, the 40-year-old widow Khadijah at age of 25. He would also marry Aisha later in his life. Islamic scholars debate her age but are agreed that she was in her teenage years. Her marriage is in Sahih Bukhari Volume 7, Book 62, and Number 18.

According to the Muslim tradition, Muhammad began receiving revelations at the age of 40. The key themes of his messages in Mecca were the oneness of God and the rejection of polytheism, generosity towards the poor and the needy, kind treatment and emancipation of slaves, and the equality between men and women before God. Some of his peers respected his words and became his followers. Many others, including tribal leaders, opposed, ridiculed and eventually boycotted his clan, and Muhammad and his followers were harassed, assaulted, tortured and forced into exile. Several attempts were made on his life. When his uncle and chief protector, Abu Talib, who was the head of the clan of Banu Hashim, died, Muhammad migrated to Medina in 622, where he had many followers who agreed to help and assist him.

Muhammad is the one of the first founders of a major world religion who had biographies written by contemporaries, and about whom there are numerous records in historical texts, although like other premodern historical figures not every detail of his life is known. The other was Yeshua bar Yosef, of whome westerners know as Jesus of Nazareth.

For the Muslims, Muhammad is just the last prophet of the unique religion preached by the other prophets before him.

**Academic perspective**

The Qur'an is considered to be the most credible primary source for the life of Muhammad in Mecca. Next in importance are the historical works survived from the writers of 3rd and 4th century of the Muslim era.

The text of the Qur'an is generally considered by academic scholars to record the words spoken by Muhammad as the search for variants in Western academia has not yielded any differences of great significance. The Qur'an however mainly records the ideological and spiritual considerations of Muhammad, and only fragmentary references to the details of Muhammad's life in Mecca, which makes it difficult to reconstruct the chronological order of the incidents in his or his followers' life in Mecca. Modern biographers of Muhammad try to reconstruct the economic, political and social aspects of Mecca and read the ideological aspects of the Qur'an in that context.

The historical works by later Muslim writers include the traditional Muslim biographies of Muhammad and quotes attributed to him, which provide further information on his life. The earliest surviving written sira (biographies of Muhammad and quotes attributed to him) is Sirah Rasul Allah by Ibn Ishaq(died 761 or 767 CE). Although the original work is lost, portions of it survive in the recensions of Ibn Hisham (died 833 CE) and Al-Tabari (died 923 CE). Many, but not all, scholars accept the accuracy of these biographies, though their accuracy is unascertainable. Henri Lammens rejected all the accounts of Muhammad's life in Mecca but later scholars generally agree that Lammens went too far. Studies by J. Schacht and Goldziher has led scholars to distinguish between the traditions touching legal matters and the purely historical ones. According to William Montgomery Watt, in the legal sphere it would seem that sheer invention could have very well happened. In the historical sphere however, aside from exceptional cases, the material may have been subject to "tendential shaping" rather than being made out of whole cloth.

Hadith compilations are records of the traditions or sayings of Muhammad. It might be defined as the biography of Muhammad perpetuated by the long memory of his companions and community for their exemplification and obedience. The development of hadiths is a vital element during the first three centuries of Islamic history. There had been a common tendency among the earlier western scholars against these narrations and reports gathered in later periods; such scholars regarding them as later fabrications. Leone Caetani considered the attribution of historical reports to Ibn Abbas and Aysha as mostly fictitious while proffering accounts reported without isnad by the early compilers of history like Ibn Ishaq. Wilferd Madelung has rejected the stance of indiscriminately dismissing everything not included in "early sources" and in this approach tendentious alone is no evidence for late origin. Madelung and some later historians do not reject the narrations which have been complied in later periods and try to judge them in the context of history and on the basis of their compatibility with the events and figures.

**Traditional Muslim perspective**

**Sunni Islam:** For Sunnis, after the Qur'an the most widely accepted and famous collection of traditions is Sahih al-Bukhari. Imam Bukhari, the author of the book is said to have spent over 16 years gathering over 1600000 traditions and finding the best 7397 of them. Most of these traditions deal with the life of Muhammad.

**Shia Islam:** For Shi'is, the words and deeds of their Imams, who are also progeny of Muhammad, is authoritative. These were originally oral but were written down after several generations. Some of these sayings, according to their chain of transmission, are sayings of Muhammad as transmitted through the Shi'i' Imams.

**Background**

The Arabian Peninsula was largely arid and volcanic, making agriculture difficult except near oases or springs. Thus the Arabian landscape was dotted with towns and cities near those oases, two prominent of which were Mecca and Medina (then known as Yathrib). Communal life was essential for survival in desert conditions, as people needed support against the harsh environment and lifestyle. The tribal grouping was thus encouraged by the need to act as a unit. This unity was based on the bond of kinship by blood. People of Arabia were either nomadic or sedentary, the former constantly traveling from one place to another seeking water and pasture for their flocks, while the latter settled and focused on trade and agriculture. The survival of nomads (or bedouins) was also partially dependent on raiding caravans or oases; thus they saw this as no crime. Medina was a large flourishing agricultural settlement, while Mecca was an important financial center for many of the surrounding tribes.

In pre-Islamic Arabia gods or goddesses were viewed as protectors of individual tribes and their spirits were associated with sacred trees, stones, springs and wells. There was an important shrine in Mecca (called the Kaaba) that housed statues of 360 idols of tribal patron deities and was the site of an annual pilgrimage. Aside from these tribal gods, Arabs shared a common belief in a supreme deity Allah who was however remote from their everyday concerns and thus not the object of cult or ritual. Three goddesses were associated with Allah as his daughters: al-Lat, Manat and al-Uzza. Some monotheistic communities also existed in Arabia, including Christians and Jews. According to the tradition, Muhammad himself was a descendant of Ishmael, son of Abraham.

**Birth**

Muhammad was born in the month of Rabi' al-awwal. Tradition places the year of Muhammad's birth as 570, corresponding with the Year of the Elephant, which is named after the failed destruction of Mecca that year by the Aksumite king Abraha who had in his army a number of elephants. Recent scholarship has suggested alternative dates for this event, such as 568 or 569. The precise date of Muhammad's birth is considered by Sunni Muslims to have been the 12th day of the month of Rabi'-ul-Awwal, while Shi'a Muslims believe it to have been the dawn of 17th day of same month (26 April 570). Muslim tradition reports various miracles in connection with Muhammad's birth.

Muhammad was born into the family of Banu Hashim, one of the prominent families of Mecca, although the family seems to have not been prosperous during Muhammad's early lifetime. His parents were Abd Allah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, from Banu Hashim, and Aminah bint Wahb, the sister of the then-chief of the Banu Zuhrah. According to Ibn Ishaq, the early biographer of Muhammad, Abdul Muttalib the grandfather of Muhammad named him "Muhammad", a name quite unknown at that time in the Arabian Peninsula.

**Childhood**

Muhammad's father, Abdullah, died almost six months before he was born. According to tradition, soon after his birth Muhammad was sent to live with a Bedouin family in the desert, as the desert life was considered healthier for infants. Because he was fatherless, wetnurses refused to take him, fearing that it would not be profitable to take care of an orphan. However, he was accepted by Halimah bint Abi Dhuayb, a wetnurse who had found no child to take care of. Muhammad stayed with his foster-mother, Halimah bint Abi Dhuayb, and her husband until he was two or three years old. One day, according to his wetnurse Halima, Muhammad was visited by two men, who opened up his chest and washed his heart. Troubled, Halima and her husband returned Muhammad to his mother. He lived with his mother in Mecca for three years until she took him to Yathrib to visit some relatives (uncles from the mother side), and she died on the way back. Now orphaned, Muhammad, aged 6, was passed into the custody of his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, who was eighty years old. According to traditional accounts, Muhammad was very close to his grandfather, as had been his father before him. However, two years later, his grandfather died. Muhammad then came under the care of his uncle Abu Talib, the new leader of the Hashim clan of the Quraysh tribe. In 6th-century Arabia, there was general disdain for guardians who took care of the weaker members of the tribes in Mecca. Although Muhammad's guardians saw that he did not starve to death, 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.

Having lived closely with destitute people, knowing the impoverished widowhood of his mother, and experiencing his own status as an orphan, Muhammad empathised with the underprivileged and needy.[citation needed] These experiences contributed to a better understanding of the social reform needed and which will be ordered by God later under his prophethood.[36][unreliable source?] Muhammad learned from his nomadic family the Bedouin oral tradition and he developed mastery over the spoken language. He also came to observe, understand and respect nature, a development that would later be reflected in verses of the Qur'an.

In his short stay at Yathrib, Muhammad learned more practical skills, like swimming. He also accompanied his grandfather, the chief of the clan, to the assembly of the most influential men in Mecca, where important matters were discussed. While living with his uncle, Muhammad began tending flocks on the outskirts of Mecca to earn his living. As a shepherd he learned patience, reflection and a sense of independence in life and work, preparing him for other careers in life. His uncle also took him on many commercial journeys. These journeys exposed Muhammad to cultural diversity and varying religious traditions.

According to tradition, when Muhammad was either nine or twelve years old, he went with his uncle Abu Talib on a business journey to Syria. There he met Bahira in the town of Bosra. When the caravan was passing by his cell, the monk invited the merchants to a feast. They accepted the invitation, leaving the boy to guard the camel. Bahira, however, insisted that everyone in the caravan should come to him. Then a miraculous occurrence indicated to the monk that Muhammad was to become a prophet. According to one version, those were the stigmata that Bahira found on young Muhammad. Other variants of the story say that it was a miraculous movement of a cloud or an unusual behavior of a branch that kept shadowing Muhammad regardless of the time of the day. The monk revealed his visions of Muhammad's future to the boy's companion, warning him to preserve the child from the Jews (in Ibn Sa'd's version) or from the Byzantines (in al-Tabari's version).

**Merchant**

As an orphan, Muhammed had few options when it came to making a living. He was obliged to help support other members of his family and so after accompanying his uncle on trading journeys to Syria, he became a merchant and was involved in trade between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. By age twenty, Muhammad had built a reputation for honesty and efficiency. He became known as "Al-Amin" (Arabic: الامين), meaning "Trustworthy" and was sought out as an impartial arbitrator of disputes.

**Alliance of the virtuous**

A merchant from Yemen came to Mecca, and became the victim of a fraud by a Meccan who knew that the merchant had no relatives, hence no support, in the city. Instead of letting it pass, the Yemeni merchant made his case public, appealing the people for justice. In response a meeting was hosted in which various chiefs and members of tribes pledged to respect the principles of justice, and collectively intervene in conflicts to establish justice. Among the members who agreed to the terms of the pact was Muhammad. Later on, after proclaiming Islam, Muhammad still acknowledged the validity of the pact, ignoring the fact that most of the signatories were non-Muslim. That pact also purportedly marked the beginning of formalised justice in Mecca, which would be later repeated by Muhammad when he would preach Islam.

**Marriage**

After a successful assignment, word about Muhammad being an "honest, fair and efficient" merchant became more widespread. Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, a widow merchant at Mecca, heard about Muhammad, and asked him to manage her commercial operations in Syria. When Muhammad returned from an extraordinarily successful commercial trip, Khadija proposed to him through one of her friends. Tradition reports that Khadija was forty years old.

Muhammad consented to the marriage, which by all accounts was a happy one. Khadija was not only Muhammad's wife, but also his friend and confidante and later his moral support. On his wedding day, Muhammad freed a slave-girl he had inherited, while Khadija, in return, gave Muhammad the slave boy Zayd ibn Harithah, whom Muhammad also freed. Ibn Ishaq records that Khadijah bore Muhammad six children: a boy named Qasim who lived only two years, then four girls Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Um Kulthum, Fatimah and finally a boy named Abdullah who also died at two.[43] According to some Shi'a scholars, Fatimah was Muhammad's only daughter.[48] The combination of the death of Abdullah, and his desire to relieve his uncle Abu Talib of the burden of a large family, as Abu Talib was already in great financial difficulty, led Muhammad to take his uncle's son Ali into his own home. Muhammad also adopted Zayd, giving him the name "Zayd ibn Muhammad" (meaning Zayd son of Muhammad). However, owing to the adoption revelation from Allah, later verses were revealed stating clearly that a child, especially after adoption, could not be treated as a natural son by marriage or inheritance. Consequently, the adopted child had to retain the name of their biological father. Therefore, Zayd could not be known as the son of Muhammad, but the son of his father, Haritha, and be known as Zayd ibn Haritha. In Quran: 33:40 40. Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets. And Allah is Ever All-Aware of everything.

**Restoration of Kaaba**

According to tradition, Muhammad played a role in the restoration of the Kaaba, after parts of it had been destroyed by one of Mecca's frequent flash floods. When the reconstruction was almost done, disagreements arose among the clan leaders as to who would have the honor of lifting the sacred Black Stone into place. The disagreements increased to the point where the clans were about to take up arm against each other, when one of the elders suggested they take the advice of the next person who entered the gates of the Haram. This happened to be Muhammad. He spread out his cloak, put the stone in the middle and had members of the four major clans raise it to its destined position. The cloak became an important symbol for later poets and writers because of this event and what happened later as described in the Hadith of the Cloak.

**The Beginnings of the Qur'an**

At some point Muhammad adopted the practice of meditating alone for several weeks every year in a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca. Islamic tradition holds that in one of his visits to the Mount Hira, the angel Gabriel began communicating with him here in the year 610 and commanded Muhammad to recite the following verses:

Proclaim! (or read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created- Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,- He Who taught (the use of) the pen,- Taught man that which he knew not.(Qur'an 96:1–5)

According to some traditions, upon receiving his first revelations Muhammad was deeply distressed but the spirit moved closer and told him that he has been chosen as a messenger of God. Muhammad returned home and was consoled and reassured by his wife, Khadijah and her Christian cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal. Shia tradition on the other hand maintains that Muhammad was neither surprised nor frightened at the appearance of Gabriel but rather welcomed him as if he had been expecting him.[54] The initial revelation was followed by a pause of three years during which Muhammad gave himself up further to prayers and spiritual practices. When the revelations resumed he was reassured and commanded to begin preaching: Your lord has not forsaken you nor does he hate (Qur'an 93:1–11).

According to Welch these revelations were accompanied by mysterious seizures, and the reports are unlikely to have been forged by later Muslims. Muhammad was confident that he could distinguish his own thoughts from these messages.

**Mission**

Muhammad's mission involves preaching monotheism: The Qur'an demands Muhammad to proclaim and praise the name of his Lord and instructs him not to worship idols apart from God or associate other deities with God. According to the Qur'an, one of the main roles of Muhammad is to warn the unbelievers of their eschatological punishment (Qur'an 38:70, Qur'an 6:19). Sometimes the Qur'an does not explicitly refer to the Judgment day but also provides examples from the history of some extinct communities and warns Muhammad's contemporaries of similar calamities (Qur'an 41:13–16). Muhammad is not only a warner to those who reject God's revelation, but also a bearer of good news for those who abandon evil, listen to the divine word and serve God.

**Early preaching**

Muhammad first told about his message to his wife, his cousin Ali, his adopted son Zayd, his nursemaid Um Ayman and his friend Abu Bakr, all of whom accepted it. Abu Bakr, who used to purchase slaves to set them free in accordance with Muhammad's principle of equality, attracted a large number of converts. Nevertheless, the converts remained small, and Muhammad concentrated on quietly building a small, but spiritually strong, community. Around 613, the Qur'an then commanded Muhammad to "admonish your nearest kinsmen"(Quran 26:214), initiating the phase of public preaching. One day he climbed Mount as-Safa, and called out the tribal chiefs. After receiving assurances that the chiefs, who reportedly never heard Muhammad tell lies, would believe him, he declared the Oneness of God. Later Muhammad organized dinners in which he conveyed and advocated the substance of his message. At these events, Muhammad met fierce opposition from one of his uncles, Abu Lahab.

Most Meccans ignored it and a few mocked him, while some others became his followers. According to Ibn Sad, in this period the Quraysh "did not criticize what he said... When he passed by them as they sat in groups, they would point out to him and say "There is the youth of the clan of Abd al-Muttalib who speaks from heaven." The Qur'anic exegesis however maintained that the persecution of Muslims began as soon as Muhammad began preaching in public. According to Welch, the Qur'anic verses at this time were not "based on a dogmatic conception of monotheism but on a strong general moral and religious appeal". Its key themes include the moral 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; the wonders of nature and everyday life, particularly the phenomenon of man, as signs of God to show the existence of a greater power who will take into account the greed of people and their suppression of the poor. 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 , being chaste and not to kill new-born & under-aged girls. 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. The oligarchy of the Quraysh rejected the ideas that Muhammad preached, since they would have to surrender their privileges. The Quraysh also did not accept Muhammad as a prophet since he came from a clan less powerful than his opponents'. Muhammad, however, wanted to attract the influential to support his cause. In one attempt to win over the leaders of the Quraysh he was disrupted by a blind man. Muhammad, anxious that he may lose the opportunity to convey his message, turned away from the blind man. The Qur'an, however, rebuked Muhammad for turning away from the blind man.

**Opposition**

Conservative opposition arose to Muhammad's speeches. According to Ibn Sad, the opposition in Mecca started when Muhammad delivered verses that "spoke shamefully of the idols they (the Meccans) worshiped other than Himself (God) and mentioned the perdition of their fathers who died in disbelief." According to Watt, as the ranks of Muhammad's followers swelled, he became a threat to the local tribes and the rulers of the city, whose wealth rested upon the Kaaba, the focal point of Meccan religious life, which 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.

Some of the ranking and influential leaders of the Quraysh tried and failed to come to some arrangements with Muhammad in exchange for abandoning his preaching. They offered him admission into the inner circle of merchants and establishing his position in the circle by an advantageous marriage, but Muhammad refused. During this period, Muhammad urged his followers to be pacifist, commanding them to "deal gently with the infidels".

**Persecution**

The relations between the Muslims and their pagan fellow-tribesmen rapidly deteriorated. While the Quraysh had not previously shown significant opposition to Muhammad and his followers, his denunciation of the Meccan idols provoked hostile reactions. Muhammad was mainly protected from physical harm due to belonging to the Banu Hashim. However, many reacted in anger, which led to several attempts on his life.[citation needed] One such attempt was made by Uqba ibn Abu Mu'ayt who strangled Muhammad with a garment, until he was pushed away by Abu Bakr. In another attempt, Abu Jahl, one of the tribal leaders, attempted a pre-planned murder, as he tried to smash Muhammad in the head with a rock. There are many records, at great length, of the persecution and ill-treatment of Muhammad's followers. At first the more traditional Quraysh taunted Muslims, and interrupted their prayers.[citation needed] But this later changed and Muslims were physically hurt, starved, harassed and boycotted. If this didn't work, the Muslims would be staked out on the ground under the scorching heat of the Arabian Desert.

Sumayya bint Khubbat, a slave of Abu Jahl and a prominent Meccan leader, is famous as the first martyr of Islam, [citation needed] having been killed with a spear by her master when she refused to give up her faith.[citation needed] Bilal, another Muslim slave, suffered torture at the hands of Umayya ibn khalaf by placing a heavy rock on his chest to force his conversion. According to Marco Schöller, during this period, Muhammad "suffered from humiliation, derision and from being treated either like a madman or an outcast. Some people would even fling pebbles at him while he was praying and others kicked stones at him so that he had to run away with bleeding feet. The Quraysh was however reluctant to physically hurt Muhammad, since it would open up a blood feud between Muhammad and Abu Talib's clan, and the clan that hurt Muhammad. Brazenly initiating such a blood feud would also undercut the legitimacy and moral of authority of tribal chiefs in general.

**Migration to Axumm**

In 615, at a time when his followers were suffering open violence, Muhammad arranged for his followers to immigrate to the Kingdom of Aksum and found a small colony there under the protection of the Christian king. While the traditions view the persecutions of Meccans to have played the major role in the emigration, William Montgomery Watt, a professor of Islamic studies, states "there is reason to believe that some sort of division within the embryonic Muslim community played a role and that some of the emigrants may have gone to Abyssinia to engage in trade, possibly in competition with prominent merchant families in Mecca.

**Conversion of Umar**

Umar ibn al-Khattab initially reacted to Muhammad's preaching by ardently opposing it. He seems to have been a devout pagan, angered by Muhammad's preaching which had led to divisions within Meccan society. He eventually decided to kill Muhammad, whom he held responsible for the divisions. A man told Umar, while Umar was en route to his planned assassination of Muhammad, that he should deal with his sister who had secretly converted to Islam. He then rushed to his sister's place, and heard her reciting the Qur'an. He considered the words beautiful and noble, and immediately converted to Islam. He made his conversion public instantly, even to the most hostile Quraysh. The effect of Umar's conversion was that Muslims could now pray openly at the Ka'ba, as the pagans were reluctant to confront Umar, known for his forceful character.

**Boycott**

According to tradition, two important clans of Quraysh, declared a public boycott against the clan of Banu Hashim, their commercial rival, in order to put pressure on the clan to withdraw its protection from Muhammad. The terms imposed on Banu Hashim, as reported by Ibn Ishaq, were "that no one should marry their women nor give women for them to marry; and that no one should either buy from them or sell to them, and when they agreed on that they wrote it in a deed." The boycott lasted for two or three years but eventually collapsed mainly because it was not achieving its purpose, and because the boycott had caused extreme privation and the sympathizers within the Quraysh finally united to annul the agreement.

**Events leading up to the Hijra**

**"Year of Sorrows"**

In 619, the "year of sorrows," both Muhammad's wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu Talib died.

With the death of Abu Talib, the leadership of the clan of Banu Hashim was passed to Abu Lahab who was an inveterate enemy of Muhammad. Soon afterwards Abu Lahab withdrew the clan's protection from Muhammad. This placed Muhammad in mortal danger since the withdrawal of clan protection implied that the blood revenge for his killing would not be exacted. Muhammad then tried to find a protector for himself in another important city in Arabia, Ta'if, 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 safely to re-enter his native city.

**Isra and Mi'raj**

Sometime in 620, Muhammad told his followers that he had experienced the Isra and Miraj, a supernatural journey said to have been accomplished in one night along with the angel Gabriel. In the first part of the journey, the Isra, he is said to have travelled from Mecca to "the farthest mosque" (in Arabic: masjid al-aqsa), which Muslims usually identify with the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. In the second part, the Miraj, Muhammad is said to have toured heaven and hell, and spoken with earlier prophets, such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque congregation building, the site from which Muhammad is believed by Muslims to have ascended to heaven.

Ibn Ishaq, author of first biography of Muhammad, presents this event as a spiritual experience while later historians like Al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir present it as a physical journey. Some western scholars of Islam hold that the oldest Muslim tradition identified the journey as one traveled through the heavens from the sacred enclosure at Mecca to the celestial Kaʿba (heavenly prototype of the Ka'ba); but later tradition identified Muhammad's journey from Mecca to the abode of sanctuary (bayt al-maqdis) in Jerusalem.

**Pledges at Aqabah**

Many people were visiting Mecca on business or as pilgrims to the Kabaa. 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 was somewhat familiar with monotheism because a Jewish community existed in that city. Following the pledges at Aqabah, Muhammad encouraged his followers to emigrate to Yathrib. As before, with the migration to Abyssinia, the Quraysh attempted to stop the emigration. However, almost all Muslims managed to leave.

**Failed assassination**

Muhammad himself stayed behind, in order to see to it that all Muslims managed to leave. Quraysh tribe members meanwhile plotted to assassinate Muhammad. They decided that one man from every clan would stab Muhammad at the same time, making every clan in Mecca guilty of Muhammad's murder.[citation needed] The theory was that Muhammad's own clan would be reluctant to avenge his death, since that would entail fighting everybody, and the assassins would not be put to death. The day of the scheduled assassination, Muhammad asked his friend Abu Bakr, whom he’d, asked to stay behind, to make preparations for departure. He also asked his cousin Ali to stay behind to settle outstanding economic obligations. Muhammad slipped from his home the night of the planned assassination. Ali had worn Muhammad's cloak, leading the assassins to think Muhammad had not yet departed. By the time the assassins came to know of this Muhammad had already departed. Following his escape from Mecca, the Quraysh placed a bounty of one hundred camels on him.[citation needed] Meanwhile, to further trick his enemies, Muhammad travelled south for a few days instead of north to Yathrib. After a few days he took a relatively untrammeled path to the Red Sea. From there he followed the coastline up to Yathrib, arriving outside the town proper on Monday, 27 September 622.

**Conclusion**:

Ali survived the plot, but risked his life again by staying in Mecca to carry out Muhammed's instructions: to restore to their owners all the goods and properties that had been entrusted to Muhammad for safekeeping. Ali then went to Medina with his mother, Fatima binte Asad, and Muhammed's daughter, Fatimah, as well as two other women.

**Recommendation:**

1. Muhammad The Final Messenger,

By Majid Ali Khan

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_in_Mecca>

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