

The Family Tree of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ



The Prophet Muhammad

The Prophet Muhammad was born in Makka, a town in Arabia, early on a Monday morning on the 12th of Rabi-al-Awwal more than 1,400 years ago. It was in the year 570 of the Christian Era (CE). That year was called Am-al-Fil or the 'Year of the Elephant'. At that time, Abraha, the Governor of Yemen, had invaded Makka intending to demolish the Ka'ba. He arrived, together with his troops, on elephants. Abraha had set up a mock Ka'ba in Yemen and he wanted people to visit this one instead of the Ka'ba of Allah in Makka. Allah sent flocks of birds to fly over the invaders. Each bird carried a pebble of clay. They dropped the pebbles from high up in the sky onto the invaders until all the soldiers and elephants were destroyed. Abraha fled back to Yemen, but he could not escape the wrath of Allah. Soon afterwards, he died a very painful death. This story is told in the Qur'an in Sura al-Fil (105). The Prophet's father who was called 'Abd Allah belonged to the Quraish tribe whose members were descended from the Prophet Ibrahim. 'Abd Allah died before his son's birth. The Prophet's mother's name was Amina and his grandfather's was 'Abd al-Muttalib. He was named Muhammad, by his grandfather. His mother, who had pleasing visions of him before he was born, named him Ahmad. Both names were new to the Arabs. Allah addresses him by both these names in the Qur'an.

The Prophet 'Isa (Jesus) had told his people that the most respected Messenger of Allah, whose name would be Ahmad, would come to this world after him:

And remember, 'Isa, son of Maryam, said: 'O children of Israel! I am the Messenger of God (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.' (Sura al-Saff 61: 6)

Exercise:

1. What was the name of the Prophet's tribe?
2. What was the day and the time of the Prophet's birth?
3. What were the names of the Prophet's parents?
4. What was the name of the Prophet's grandfather?
5. Who was Abraha?
6. Who gave the Prophet the name Muhammad?
7. Who gave him the name Ahmad?
8. List the people in the Prophet's family tree until Qusayy.

Qusayy, _____, _____, _____, _____, Muhammad 

Prophethood

One day, while Muhammad was remembering his Creator in the Cave of Hira, an angel appeared before him and asked him to read. He said that he did not know how to read.

The angel pressed against his body and said: 'Read'. Muhammad replied again that he did not know how to read. The angel pressed against him and repeated his instruction. Muhammad could only reply as before. The angel then pressed against him a third time and said:

Read in the name of Your Lord and Cherisher Who created man From a clot of congealed blood. Proclaim! And Your Lord is most bountiful. He, who taught the use of knowledge with the pen Taught man that which he knew not,

(Sura al-'Alaq 96: 1-5)

The Angel who brought this message from Allah was Jibril, peace be upon him, and the message was verses from the Qur'an.

The Angel Jibril appeared to Muhammad on the 17th day of Ramadan (August, 610 CE). According to the lunar calendar, he was then forty years old. This was the day when Allah bestowed Prophethood on him. For the previous six months, Muhammad was being taught by Allah through his visions. The more he remembered how the angel Jibril had brought Allah's message to him, the more his heart quivered. When he reached his house from the Cave of Hira, his heart was pounding and he was trembling all over.

While Khadija comforted him, he told her what had happened. He was worried about the great responsibility All-Mighty Allah had given him.

Khadija knew that so virtuous a man as Muhammad, her husband for fifteen years, could not be affected by anything evil. She consoled him, recalling his good deeds, how he was always kind and sympathetic to everyone, helping the needy and supporting the poor. So the good wishes of all the people were with Muhammad, and Allah showers His mercy on such people.

Khadija said to Muhammad: 'Do not be worried. You are true. You belong to Allah and Allah is with you.'

Khadija knew of an old man in Makka who was very pious and had a great knowledge of books. She felt sure he would be able to advise them about her husband's experience in the cave. Muhammad and Khadija went to this man, whose name was Waraqa bin Naufal, to tell him what had happened. Waraqa said that indeed Prophethood had been bestowed by All-Mighty Allah upon Muhammad. He added that people would mock him, but Allah would assist him and those who are virtuous would follow him.

All-Mighty Allah had chosen the best of human beings and had already prepared him to be worthy of this great mission. He had endowed him since birth with the best qualities that any human being could ever possess.

Exercise:

1. How old was Muhammad when Prophethood was bestowed on him?
2. What was the day and date when it happened?
3. Which angel appeared to Muhammad in the Cave of Hira?
4. What did the angel say to Muhammad?
5. What was the first message of Allah?
6. How had All-Mighty Allah prepared the Prophet to receive His message?
7. Why did the Prophet seek Waraqa's advice?

