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## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

We are very pleased to announce that by this special issue, the Journal of Sirah Studies has led the way publishing an issue relating to the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his universal message in English. In order to achieve the goal of internationalization in academic publishing, the Journal is planning to edit another special issue in Arabic for the next year. In this way, the Journal intends to gain recognition within the international indexes and to enrich the content of the journal scholarly.

We are very thankful to have provided an opportunity to contribute the scholarship on the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his universal message. We need to thank namely Prof. Nahide Bozkurt, Prof. Seyfettin Erşahin, Assoc. Prof. Nurullah Yazar, PhD. Hüseyin Gökçalp, PhD Hatice Uluşık, PhD. Belkıs Özsoy Demiray, PhD. Öznur Özdemir and Ferhana bint İderis, and Res. Asst. Aygün Yılmaz Uzunöz for their contributions with research articles. We also acknowledge our gratitude to those who review the articles published in the Journal.

I also would like to express my special thanks to who assisted in editing this special issue, namely Assoc. Prof. Hakan Temir and Res. Asst. Ali Tekkoyun, the editor assistans, PhD. Hüseyin Gökçalp, the section editor, and Res. Asst. Elif Nur Dönmezgüç, the English Language editor of the Journal. We are also grateful to the academics of Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University, School of Foreign Languages Prof. Fatih Yılmaz and Lecturer Ayhan Diril for their support in proof-reading process. I would like to acknowledge the support of Muhammed Ali Alioğlu and Mesher Şeker, the representatives of the Siyer Foundation (Siyer Vakfı).

Prof. Tahsin Koçyiğit





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Değerli dostlar,

Siyer Arařtırmaları Dergisi bir ilke daha imza attı. Şükürler olsun, bu özel sayıda Hz. Peygamber'in hayatını içeren İngilizce makalelerle karřınızdayız. İnşallah bu adımı önümüzdeki sayılarda Arapça makalelerden oluşan bir özel sayı daha takip edecek.

Bundan böyle Alemlere rahmet olarak gönderilen Allah'ın Elçisi'nin hayatını ve evrensel mesajını sadece güzel Türkçemizle değil, sınırlarını aşarak uluslararası bir zemine kavuşturmak ana hedeflerimiz arasında olacaktır. Bu hedefi, dergimizin hem uluslararası indekslerde taranır hale getirmekle hem de içerik bakımından zenginleştirerek gerçekleştireceğiz.

Bu özel sayımıza özgün arařtırmalarıyla pek çok ilim insanı katkı sundu. Kıymetli yazarlarımız, Prof. Dr. Nahide Bozkurt, Prof. Dr. Seyfettin Erşahin, Doç. Dr. Nurullah Yazar, Ar. Gör. Aygün Yılmaz Uzunöz, Dr. Hüseyin Gökalp, Dr. Hatice Uluşık, Dr. Belkıs Özsoy Demiray, Dr. Öznur Özdemir ve Ferhana bint İderis'e ayrı ayrı şükranlarımızı sunuyoruz. Bunun yanında, özel sayıda hakemlik tekliflerimizi kabul ederek, özverili değerlendirmeleriyle bizlere destek olan hakemlerimize de ayrı ayrı teşekkür etmek zorundayız.

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Prof. Tahsin Koçyiğit







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# The Life of Muhammad Before Prophetic Call in The Sirah of Ibn Ishaq

İbn İshak'ın Sîre'si Özelinde  
Hz. Muhammed'in Risalet Öncesi Hayatı

Nahide Bozkurt\*



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### Abstract

The Prophet Muhammad, who is considered one of the most influential people in the history of humanity, is shown as an 'ideal example' for Muslims in the Qur'an. This notion has been created a historical consciousness about the importance of transferring the life of the Prophet to the next generations. Accordingly, Muslim historians had written books containing the biography of the Prophet which is called *Sirah* or *Maghazi*. In this context, it should be stated that the *Sirah* is the narrative biography of the Prophet Muhammad. Among the *Sirah* books, it is accepted that Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah* of the Prophet had no serious rival and outshone the fame of all his predecessors and contemporaries by his work. For this reason, it is an undeniable fact that it is important to understand the life of the Prophet Muhammad from Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah*. In the light of this thought, the main reference of our article will be this account. The aim of this article is to examine the basic paradigm that shaped the *Sirah* writing with reference to Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah* -which is the earliest biography of the Prophet that we have today- and to identify the earliest narrations about Muhammad's pre-prophetic life in his *Sirah*.

**Keywords:** Sirah, Prophet Muhammad (saw), Ibn Ishaq, Jahiliyyah, Makkah

### Öz

İnsanlık tarihinin en etkin insanlarından biri olarak kabul edilen Hz. Muhammed, Kur'an'da Müslümanlar için 'ideal örnek' olarak gösterilmiştir. Buna bağlı olarak Müslümanlar da Hz. Muhammed'in yaşamını gelecek kuşaklara aktarmanın önemine inanmış ve bu bağlamda siyer veya meğazi olarak adlandırılan Hz. Muhammed'in yaşam öyküsünü içeren eserler oluşturmuşlardır. Müslüman tarih yazıcılığının en eski formu olan haber/rivayet formunda oluşturulan siyer kitapları arasında en erken döneme ait olan ve günümüze ulaşan İbn İshak'ın eserinin ciddi bir rakibinin olmadığı, kendinden önce ve çağdaşları tarafından yazılmış bütün çalışmaların şöhretini gölgede bıraktığı düşüncesi genel kabul görmektedir. Bu nedenle Hz. Muhammed'in hayatını İbn İshak'ın *Sire*'sinden tespit etmenin önemi yadsınamaz bir gerçekliktir. Bu düşüncenin ışığında makalemizin temel referansını İbn İshak'ın *Sire*'si oluşturacaktır. Amacımız, erken dönem siyer yazımını şekillendiren temel paradigmayı bugün elimizde olan en eski biyografi olarak İbn İshak'ın *Siyer*'inden hareketle irdelemek ve Hz. Muhammed'in peygamberlik öncesi yaşamıyla ilgili en erken rivayetleri tespit etmek olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Siyer, Hz. Muhammed (sav), İbn İshak, Cähiliye, Mekke

## Introduction

The classical *Sirah* was a kind of biography of the Prophet and concentrated on his life as a narrative form. Although the *Sirah* mainly used isnād (the chain of transmitters) and matn (the text like the Hadith) parts, the works of *Sirah* literature presents the individual narratives/reports in chronological order of the events to which they refer. In addition to this, the narrative form of *Sirah* was a story or a narrative with a beginning, middle and end, told by author with chronological order. The *Sirah* had a religious, moral and educational dimensions as well. For this reason, they prioritized the normative dimension rather than the historical reality of events and facts.<sup>[1]</sup>

The earliest surviving *Sirah* is dedicated to Ibn Ishaq and was written about 100 years later after the Prophet's death. Ibn Ishaq was born in al-Madinah about 704 C.E.. His grandfather Yasār, who had been held as a prisoner by the Persian emperor, was captured by the Muslims at the Battle of 'Ayn al-Tamr in Iraq in 633 and sent to al-Madinah as a slave. He accepted Islam. His son Ishaq and Mūsā became scholars with special expertise in the narratives about the Prophet and the early history of Islam. In 737, he went to Alexandria to study and then returned to al-Madinah but after a year or two left the city and thought for several years in a number of places, including al-Kufah, al-Basrah, an al-Rayy, before settling in Baghdad. Ibn Ishaq died there in 767 or 768. In spite of some biographies of the Prophet exist prior to Ibn Ishaq, his *Sirah* is accepted has no rival and outshone the fame of all his predecessors and contemporaries. He collected oral traditions that shaped the basis of an important biography of the Prophet.<sup>[2]</sup>

The original work of Ibn Ishaq, which is known in the literature *al-Mubtada' wa al-Bā'ith wa al-Maghāzī* or shortly the *Sirah*, is the early biography has reached today as a whole, though with considerable absent parts. <sup>[3]</sup> An edited copy or recension of his work by his student Ziyād al-Bakka 'i (d.799), which was further edited by Ibn Hisham (d.833) is known today as *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*. Although Ibn Hisham's edition wholly survived, he abbreviated, annotated, and sometimes altered the text of Ibn Ishaq. In his words; 'things are embarrassing to discuss; issues which would upset some people; and such reports as al-Bakkā'i told me he could not be regarded as reliable were not included.'<sup>[4]</sup>

---

[1] Tarif Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad Narratives of the Prophet in Islam Across the Centuries*, New York: Doubleday, 2009, pp.58-64.

[2] Josef Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of The Prophet and Their Authors*, ed. Lawrence I. Conrad, Princeton, New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 2002, pp.74-79; W.Montgomery Watt, 'Translator's Foreword', In *The History of Tabarī*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1988, vol.6, p.xii.

[3] Horowitz, p.75.

[4] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, ed. licenneti tahkiki'l-turās bimüesseti'l-huda li tahkiki'l-turās, Kahire, 1999, I, p.7.

In this context, we can be sure that Ibn Hisham seems to be very careful to distinguish what comes from Ibn Ishaq and what he has added himself.<sup>[5]</sup>

Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah* also preserved in the recension of his student Yunus b. Bukair (d.815). This incomplete original version was first published by M. Hamidullah in 1976. The work begins with the genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad and ends with the Prophet Muhammad's Ascension into Heaven.<sup>[6]</sup>

Although Ibn Hisham did not include the beginning part of Ibn Ishaq's work which is called *al-Mubtada* and skipped all the intervening information by starting with Abraham, the ancestor of the Prophet Muhammad, in this section Ibn Ishaq began with creation and gives information about the prophets from Adam and ended the Prophet Muhammad as a 'the seal of the Prophets'. Also in this part Ibn Ishaq gives traditions from the pre-Islamic era before the life of the Prophet.

The method of giving information about creation and the history of the prophets is an expression of seeing the process of revelation as the main paradigm that shapes the design of his *Sirah*. In this regard, it could be said that Ibn Ishaq's main idea and his historical settings in his book, shows his paradigm of *Sirah* which is based on God's revelation and to accept Muhammad as the last prophet in the direct of line of the Messengers of God.<sup>[7]</sup>

Although Ibn Ishaq does not limit himself in taking narrations, he arranges, abbreviates, and expands the narrations according to his own understanding. It is worthy to note that when Ibn Ishaq gives the narratives frequently precedes a statement is *za'ama* or *za'amu* (he/they alleged). This word carries a hint that the narration may not be true. Besides he uses a frequent note *Allâhu a'lam* which means only God knows/God knows best, whether a particular statement is true or not. Actually, when Ibn Ishaq records two conflicting narrations and is unable to say which is correct, he uses this phrase. Another indication of reserve if not scepticism underlies the expression *fî mâ dhukira lî* and an expression of similar import is *fî mâ balaghanî* which means it has reached me. Very rarely Ibn Ishaq gives his own comment on the narrations he records apart from the mental reservation implied in these terms.<sup>[8]</sup>

[5] James Robson, 'Ibn Ishaq's Use of the Isnad', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 38 (2):449-465 (1956), p.451.

[6] Ibn Ishaq, *Sîretu İbn İshak el-Musemma bi kitabi'l-mubtada ve'l-meb'as ve'l-meğazi*, ed. Muhammed Hamidullah.

[7] See, Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.65; Fred M. Donner, *Narrative of Islamic Origins The Beginings of Islamic Historical Writing*, Princeton, New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1998, pp.147-151.

[8] A. Guillaume, 'Introduction', in Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad A Translation of Ishâq's Sirat Rasûl Allâh With Introduction and Notes*, by A. Guillaume, London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp.xix-xxi.

Ibn Ishaq does not always use isnād. When he uses isnād, he gives it in different ways.

‘Sometimes being content to quote his immediate authority, sometimes going a little further back, and sometimes going right back to a Companion of the Prophet, or to the Prophet himself. He commonly begins his treatment of some incident by a general statement of what happened without any authority being quoted, but this is merely his method of introducing the subject, for he usually goes on to give isnāds of various kinds for details of the incident, or to present different statements of what happened.’<sup>[9]</sup>

### A. The life of Muhammad Before Prophetic Call

We may now turn the life of Prophet Muhammad before his prophetic call according to Ibn Ishaq’s *Sirah*.

#### 1. Pure Descent and the Annunciation of the Coming Prophet

In his *Sirah*, Ibn Ishaq begins by saying that ‘this is the book of the biography of the apostle of God’ and then he gives the lineage of the Messenger of God as a ‘Muhammad’s pure descent from Adam. So he retained a genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad back to Adam in the chronological order. It runs as follows:

Muhammad was the son of Abdullah, b. Abdu’l-Muttalib (whose name was Shayba, b. Hashim (whose name was Amr), b. Abdu Manaf (whose name was al-Mughira), b. Qusayy (whose name was Zayd), b. Kilāb, b. Murra, b. Ka’b, b. Lu’ayy, b. Ghalib, b. Fihr, b. Malik, b. al-Nadr, b. Kinana, b. Khuzayma, b. Mudrika (whose name was ‘Amir), b. Ilyas, b. Mudar, b. Nizār, b. Ma’add, b. Adnan, b. Udd (or Udad), b. Muqawwam, b. Nahur, b. Tayrah, b. Ya’rub, b. Yashjub, b. Nābit, b. Isma’il, b. Ibrahim, the friend of the Compassionate, b. Tārih (who is Azar), b. Nahur, b. Sarugh, b. Rāu, b. Falikh, b. Aybar, b. Shalikh, b. Arfakhshadh, b. Sām, b. Nūh, b. Lamk, b. Mattushalakh, b. Aknuhkh, who is the prophet Idris according to what the alleged, but God knows best (he was the first of the sons of Adam to whom prophecy and writing with a pen were given), b. Yard, b. Mahlī, b. Qaynan, b. Yānish, b. Shith, b. Adam.<sup>[10]</sup>

Then he passed to the Arab descendants of Ishmael through Adnan, with a reference to the line through Qahtan. In the related section dealing with Prophet Muhammad’s ancestry, Ibn Ishaq introduces some incidents from South Arabian history which have little relevance to the Prophet’s ancestors.<sup>[11]</sup>

[9] Look at for details, Robson, pp.451-465; see also, Şaban Öz, İlk Siyer Kaynakları ve Müellifleri, İstanbul: İsar Yayınları, 2008, pp.274-280.

[10] Ibn Ishâq, pp.1-2; Ibn Hisham, I, p.6; see also, Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad A Translation of Ishâq’s Sirat Rasûl Allâh With Introduction and Notes*, by A.Guillaume, London New York Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.3.

[11] Look at for details, Ibn Hishâm, I, pp.6-72, see also, Watt, vol.6, p.xiii,xxvi.

In the purified lineage of the *Sirah*, the close ancestor is Abd al-Muttalib, the grandfather of Muhammad. He is presented as the figure who defends the Ka'ba against Abraha, the Abyssinian ruler of Yaman who planned to destroy the Ka'ba and reopens the Zamzam Well, which is attributed to holiness and has been closed for many years.

The narration, which deals with the event of Elephant, Ibn Ishaq states that when Abraha decided to destroy the Ka'ba and has been reached Mecca with the elephant named Mahmûd, Abd al-Muttalib was the leading shaykh of Quraysh. When Abraha sent to him the message that he had not come to fight them, but only to destroy the Ka'ba, Abd al-Muttalib's reply to him includes an interesting point of view. He said: 'God knows that we do not wish to fight him for we have not the power to do so. This place is the sanctuary of Allah and the temple of His friend Abraham. If Allah defends it against him, it already belongs to Him; if Allah lets him to go further, we cannot defend it!'

The story about the event, also provides an explanation for the end of Abraha's army. To wit, when the battle has been started, God sent upon them birds from the sea like swallows and starlings; each bird carried three stones, like peas and lentils, one in its beak and two between its claws. Everyone who was hit died but not all were hit. They withdraw from fighting and go back by the way they came.<sup>[12]</sup>

Ibn Ishaq further adds that when God sent Muhammad, He specially recounted to the Quraysh his goodness and favour in turning back the Abyssinians in order to preserve their state and permanence. Then Ibn Ishaq gives the Quranic verses:

*'Do you not see how your Lord dealt with the army of the elephant? Did he not utterly confound their plans? He sent ranks of birds against them, pelting them with pellets of hard-baked clay: He made them (like) cropped stubble.'*<sup>[13]</sup>

Once again, Ibn Ishaq also emphasizes a second example from the Qur'an that the Quraysh are protected by Allah.

*'(He did this) to make the Quraysh feel secure, secure in their winter and summer journeys. So let them worship the Lord of this House: who provides them with food to ward off hunger, safety to ward off fear.'*<sup>[14]</sup>

In this context Ibn Ishaq produces a significant paradigm that God saved the Quraysh from the danger and provided them with food even before the Prophetic call.

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[12] See details the Elephant event, Ibn Ishaq, pp.38-42; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.31-38; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.21-27.

[13] The Qur'an, 105:1-5. *The Qur'an*, A new translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[14] The Qur'an, 106:1-4.

As regards the issue of the reopening the Zamzam Well, narrations reintroduce that Abd al-Muttalib was an important figure in that society. In the narrative, the Zamzam was the well of Ishmael the son of Abraham where God gave him water when he was thirsty, as a little child. When his mother went to seek water for him and could not find it, so she went up to al-Safa praying to God for this, then she went to al-Marwa and did the same. God sent Gabriel, who hollowed out a place in the earth with his heel where water appeared. When her mother heard the cries of wild which terrified her on his account, and she came hurrying towards him and found him drinking the water with his hand and she made him a small hole.<sup>[15]</sup>

The narrative pointed out that the task of reopening the Zamzam Well, which has been closed for many years since the rule of the Ishmailis and the Jurhums is given to Abd al-Muttalib. In the narration, the process of reopening the Zamzam is described that when Abd al-Muttalib was sleeping in the hijr, he was ordered in a vision to dig the Zamzam. Then he followed his dream and began to dig and found the well. It is therefore Abd al-Muttalib wants to make the well his own, but the rest tribes of Quraysh claim that the well belongs to the common ancestor Ishmael and they have their own rights in the well. Debate goes on and finally they agreed to have get a judicial decision in the matter. The chosen arbitrator was the soothsayer of one of the prominent families in Damascus. Abd al-Muttalib and a group of members of different branches of Quraysh set out to consult the arbitrator. The group is left alone with the danger of thirst on the way. On running out for water, Abd al-Muttalib went to his beast and mounted her and when she got up from her knees a flow of fresh water broke from beneath her feet. Then Abd al-Muttalib and his companies invited the Quraysh to come to the water which God had given them and to drink freely. The Quraysh tribes, who witnessed the extraordinary situation, gave up their claim of partnership on the well and returned without going to the soothsayer.<sup>[16]</sup>

The phenomenon of fresh water broke out from beneath of feet Abd al-Muttalib's beast during the journey to Damascus shows a significant similarity with the first narrative of about the Zamzam. In both narratives, Ishmael and Abd al-Muttalib appear to be supported by miracles which sent by Allah. It seems that the theme of Zamzam combined with Ishmael and Abd al-Muttalib in a similar narrative and comprise elements of extraordinariness.

Apart from the already mentioned narratives, there is another narrative in which Abd al-Muttalib vow to sacrifice his son. According to this narration; when

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[15] Ibn Hisham, I, p.74; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.45.

[16] Ibn Ishaq, pp.2-4; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.92-93; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.62-63.

Abd al-Muttalib was digging the Zamzam, he vowed that if he should have ten sons to grow up and protect him, he would sacrifice one of them to God at the Ka'ba. Afterwards when he had ten sons who could protect him he gathered them together and told them about his vow and called on them to keep faith with God. They agreed to obey him and asked what they were to do. He said that each one of them must get an arrow, write his name on it, and bring it to him: this they did, and he took them before Hubal in the middle of the Ka'ba. The youngest among the children of Abd al-Muttalib and his favourite child is Abdullah, the father of the Messenger of Allah. Abd al-Muttalib prays that the arrow won't go up to him, but the arrow hits Abdullah. Abd al-Muttalib brings him in front of two idols, Isaf and Naila, with whom Quraysh cut their sacrifices.

However, the Quraysh strongly oppose this. They base their opposition on the idea that the sacrifice of human could turn into a tradition and this could weaken the human race. As a result, Abdullah is saved from being sacrificed by the suggestion of a female sorcerer. The salvation of Abdullah, who was saved by the diet of camels, takes place with a hundred camels.<sup>[17]</sup>

It is noteworthy that when Ibn Ishaq prefaced above narration, he starts with the phrase that 'it is alleged, and God knows the truth'. This statement it carries with it more than a hint that the statement may not be true, though on the other hand it may be sound.<sup>[18]</sup> Although Ibn Ishaq expressed a reservation about the historical reality on the narration, it seems in the course of that time this kind of narrations arose among the people. Could it be considered that the story of Abraham's dream in sacrificing his son,<sup>[19]</sup> may have been implying that a sort of adaptation to this phenomena? What makes this narrative significance is; the circulation of such narrations among the people could serve us to understand the way of thinking in the course of their time.

However, on the one hand there is a holy image about Abd al-Muttalib in the narrations, on the other hand, his respect to the idols and organizing his life according to arrows which Qur'an vehemently rejects<sup>[20]</sup>, brings interesting connotations. These expressions, which seem contradictory to each other, are suitable to be understood as an impression of the existence of different forms of understanding and thought in the historical context of that period.

In the lineage of the Prophet Muhammad, Ibn Ishaq records some of narrations about his father Abdullah. In these traditions, Abdullah is elevated to a special position by who those witnessed a white blaze between his eyes.<sup>[21]</sup>

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[17] Ibn Ishaq, pp.10-18; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.97-100; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.66-68.

[18] Guillaume, p.xix.

[19] al-Saffat,37:102.

[20] See al-Zumar,39:38;al-Zukhruf,43:87;al-Ma'ida, 5:3,90.

[21] Ibn Ishaq, pp.19-21; Ibn Hisham, I, p.101.

The Prophet Muhammad's mother Āmina, the daughter of Wahb b. 'Abdu Manāf b Zuhra who was the leading man of B. Zuhra in birth and honour, also described as being one of the most excellent women among the Quraysh in birth and position in that time. Under the idea of attributing a pure descent of the Prophet, Ibn Ishaq with the accompaniment of all these narratives, concludes that the Prophet Muhammad was the noblest of his people in birth and the greatest in honour both on his father and his mother's side.<sup>[22]</sup> Apart from the ancestors of the Prophet, the theme of the emergence of the Muhammad as a prophet also takes a large place in the narratives of Ibn Ishaq. The annunciation of the coming Prophet plays a special role in the pre-Islamic Arabian narratives.

One specific narration belongs to Rabī'a b. Nasr, king of the Yaman. According to narration the King had a vision which terrified him. So he summoned every soothsayer, sorcerer and astrologer in his kingdom. The soothsayer Satfih, who interprets the dream, says that Yaman will be occupied by the Abyssinians, that Iram, son of Dhu Yazan will end this occupation, but after that a pure prophet to whom revelation came from on high would bring it to an end. This person would be a man of the sons of Ghālib . Fihir b. Mālik, b. al-Nadr. The king also asked his dreams interpretation to another soothsayer who is called Shiqq. Shiqq's interpretation was very close with the other.<sup>[23]</sup>

Other narration about Yaman history presents the Jews as the source of the coming of Muhammad as a prophet. Ibn Ishaq relates that a Yamani ruler who called Tubān/Tibān As'ad Abū Karib raided the Hijaz but was prevented from attacking Medina by a pair of Medinan rabbis of Qurayza who were able to tell him about the future emigration of Muhammad to that town.<sup>[24]</sup> There is another narrative about the annunciation of the prophet which is attributed to sister of Waraqa b. Naufel. She had heard from his brother Waraqa b. Naufel, who had been a Christian and studied the scriptures, that a prophet would arise among this people.<sup>[25]</sup>

It seems that kind of narratives which deal with the annunciation or waiting a prophet could have the link with their knowledge which is comes from the holy scriptures of the Jews and the Christians. Therefore, it can be said that they are designed with in going back to scripture literature and adapted the idea for coming the Prophet. It may be concluded that most of these kind

[22] Ibn Hisham, I, p.101; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.68-69.

[23] Ibn Hisham, I, pp.12-15; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.4-6.

[24] Ibn Ishaq, pp.29-30; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.16-17; see also Uri Rubin, *The Eye of Beholder The Life of Muhammad As Viewed By The Early Muslims A Textual Analysis*, Princeton, New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1995, p.45.

[25] Ibn Ishaq, p.20; Ibn Hisham, I, p.101; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.69.

of narratives have legendary character.<sup>[26]</sup> However, they have a legendary character were still imported to the *Sirah* as other many narrations. Because of the fact that *Sirah* writer's conception of history, mainly based on the principal of giving all the accounts/narrations that reached to them as they are, rather than building on historical realities what happened in the past. Despite the fact that *Sirah* authors could make sometimes critical interference on the narrations and say that this version of events was more reliable than the other one, they take all the versions which are available for them. In addition, history for them had a moral and educational purpose. If a narrative was doubtful, it would still be included for its moral and ethical value.<sup>[27]</sup>

## 2. The Birth of the Prophet and His Early Years

In the Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah*, the Prophet's early years, starting with Āmina's pregnancy of him, birth, infancy and childhood mainly is endowed with extraordinary and miraculous elements.

To begin with, Ibn Ishaq recorded a narrative which is related to the period of the prophet's mother Āmina's pregnancy of him. He starts to the narrative with the statement that 'It is alleged in popular stories (and only God knows the truth) that Āmina d.Wahb, the mother of God's apostle, used to say when she was pregnant with God's apostle that a voice said to her, 'You are pregnant with the Lord of this people and when he is born say, 'I put him in the care of the One from the evil of every envier; then call him Muhammad.'<sup>[28]</sup>

In a different context, there is another narration in his *Sirah* that when Āmina was pregnant with him, she had a dream that a light went out from her which illumined the castle of Damascus. She had borne him with the least difficulty imaginable. When she bore him, he put his hands on the ground lifting his head towards to heavens.<sup>[29]</sup>

It could be said that in above versions surveyed some legendary and miraculous characters as Ibn Ishaq pointed out when he introduces the narratives with the statement 'It is alleged...'.<sup>1</sup>

Then, Ibn Ishaq sets some of other narratives that Prophet Muhammad was born on Monday, 12th Rabī'ul-awwal,<sup>[30]</sup> in the elephant year.<sup>[31]</sup> After his birth, his mother sent to tell his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib that she had given birth to a boy and asked him to come and look at him. When he came,

[26] Rubin, p.47.

[27] Khalidi, pp.62-63.

[28] Ibn Hisham, I, p.102; cf. Ibn Ishaq, p.22; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.69.

[29] Ibn Ishaq, p.28; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.72.

[30] Ibn Hisham, p.102.

[31] Ibn Ishaq, p.25; Ibn Hisham, I, 102.

she told him what she had seen when she conceived him and what was said to her and what she was ordered. Then Abd al-Muttalib took him before Hubei<sup>[32]</sup> in the middle of the Ka'ba, where he stood and prayed to Allah thanking him for this gift.<sup>[33]</sup> Ibn Ishaq also gives a narration that on the night Muhammad was born, a Jew calling out from the roof, saying that 'The star of Ahmed, who was born tonight, has risen'.<sup>[34]</sup>

Alongside these narratives there are also some other narratives about his infancy and childhood days in the *Sirah*. Like, after his birth the family find foster-mother for him who was Halima d. Abū Dhu'ayb of B. Sa'd. Bakr. Reports on his time with his foster-mother also provides some extraordinary motifs. The following narrations are representative examples for these kinds of themes which are included the opening heart of the Prophet when he was child.

Foster-mother Halima tells it thus:

'...we ceased not to recognize this bounty as coming from God for a period of two years, when I weaned him. He was growing up as none of the other children grew and by the time he was two he has a well-made child. We brought him to his mother, though we were most anxious to keep him with us because of the blessing which he brought us. I said to her: 'I should like you to leave my little boy with me until he becomes a big boy, for I am afraid on his account of the pest in Mecca.' We persisted until she sent him back with us.

Some months after our return he and his brother were with our lambs behind the tents when his brother came running and said to us, 'Two man clothed in white have seized that Qurayshî brother of mine and thrown him down and opened his belly, and are string it up.' We run towards him and found him standing up with a livid face. We took hold of him and asked him what the matter was. He said, 'Two man in white raiment came and threw me down and opened up my belly and searched therein for I know not what.' So we took him back to our tent.

His father said to me, 'I am afraid that this child has had a stroke, so take him back to his family before the results appears.' So we picked him up and took him to his mother who asked why we had brought him when I had been anxious for his welfare and desirous of keeping him with me. I said to her, 'God let my son live so far and I have done my duty. I am afraid that ill will befall him, so I have brought him back to you as you wished' She asked me what happened and gave me no peace until I told her. When she asked if I feared a

[32] Ibn Ishaq, p.22.Ibn Hisham does not mention about Hubei although he gives the narration from Ibn Ishaq.

[33] Ibn Ishaq, p.22; Ibn Hisham, I, 103; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.70.

[34] Ibn Hisham, I, pp.102-103.

demon possessed him, I replied that I did. She answered that no demon had any power over her son who had a great future before him...<sup>[35]</sup>

There is another similar and detailed version of the story of the opening heart which is transmitted directly from Prophet Muhammad, when his companions asked him 'tell us about you'. The Prophet's answer as follows:

*'I was suckled among the B. Sa'd b. Bakr, and while I was with a brother of mine behind our tents shepherding the lambs, two men in white raiment came to me with a gold basin full of snow. Then they seized me and opened up my belly, extracted my heart and split it; then they extracted a black drop from it and threw it away; then they washed my heart and my belly with that snow until they had thoroughly cleaned them. Then one said to the other, weighed him against ten of his people; they did so and I outweighed them...'*<sup>[36]</sup>

It is noteworthy to mention that Ibn Ishaq did not give any hint of historicity on the narration of opening heart. It could be said that these kinds of narrations show that early Muslims had the image of psychical purification ideas for the Prophet.

Ibn Ishaq continuous to give information about his childhood and says that when he was six years old, he lost his mother in al-Abwa on their return journey from visiting his uncles in Yathrib. Then his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib took him into his care. Having lost his grandfather at the age of eight, Muhammad had a protection by his uncle Abū Talib.

When Prophet Muhammad was still a young boy, staying with his uncle Abū Talib, Ibn Ishaq gives one particular account which is related the idea of coming prophet, attributed to Monk Bahīrā. According to narration, to make it briefly, the Prophet joins his uncle Abū Talib on a trade journey. When the caravan reached Busrā in Syria, there was a monk there in his cell by the name of Bahīrā, who was well versed in the knowledge of Christian. While he was in his cell, he saw the apostle of God in the caravan when they approached, with a cloud overshadowing him among people. Bahīrā invites them for food. Muhammad, being the youngest, stayed with the baggage under tree. Bahīrā encourages the people to bring the boy along, interrogates him, finds the seal of the prophet hood on his back. He urges Abū Talib to protect the boy from Jews, who will be his cruellest foes. Ibn Ishaq also adds that some of them even intended to assassinate the boy while he was still in Busrā, but Bahīrā prevented them from doing so.<sup>[37]</sup>

[35] Ibn Ishaq, pp.25-28; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.103-106; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.70-72.

[36] Ibn Ishaq, p.28; Ibn Hisham, I, p.106; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.72.

[37] Ibn Ishaq, pp.53-55; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.115-116; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.79-81; Rubin, p.50.

In the story of monk Bahīrā, Ibn Ishaq gives his hint with using the term ‘they alleged’. The statement points out that Ibn Ishaq has doubt authenticity of the narration. Even if the historical authenticity of the narration or similar narrations like this<sup>[38]</sup> are doubted, it shows that such thoughts has been appeared in a very early date.<sup>[39]</sup>

In addition, there are some other narratives which are related in his early ages. These are including information that Allah kept him away from all evil and sin.

In this regard, Ibn Ishaq says that:

‘The apostle of God grew up, God protecting him and keeping him from the vileness of heathenism because God to honour him wished to honour him with apostleship, until he grew up to be the finest of his people in manliness, the best in character, most noble in lineage, the best neighbour, the most kind, truthful, reliable, the furthest removed from filthiness and corrupt moral, through loftiness and nobility, so that he was known among his people as ‘The trustworthy’ because of the good qualities which God had implanted in him.’<sup>[40]</sup>

### 3. His Youth

The accounts of Prophet Muhammad’s youth are quite limited in Ibn Ishaq’s *Sirah*. Ibn Ishaq is silent from his journey to Syria with his uncle Abū Talib until Prophet Muhammed reached twenty years old. When Ibn Ishaq is mentioning the Fijar War he adds that ‘this war broke out when the Prophet of God was twenty years of age.’<sup>[41]</sup>

Other narrations about the youth of the Prophet are related to Khadīja. The account is that Khadīja who was a merchant woman of dignity and wealth, when she heard of the honesty, trustworthiness, and honourable character, she sent for him and proposed that he should take her goods to Syria and trade with them, while she would pay him more than she paid other. The Prophet Muhammad accepted the proposal and went to Syria with accompanied by Khadīja’s slave Maysara.

During this journey what we have in the narrations of Ibn Ishaq are that also has some extraordinary motifs. In some ways, there are some similarities between the account of the monk Bahira and what happened during this journey with Maysara. According to narration when the Prophet and Maysara stopped in the shade of a tree near a monk’s cell, the monk came up

[38] See the attestation narrations in detail, Ibn Ishaq, pp.62-65; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.128-133.

[39] Khalidi, p.70; Rubin, pp.44-55.

[40] Ibn Ishaq, pp.58; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.81.

[41] Ibn Hisham, I, p.118.

to Maysara and asked who the man was resting beneath the tree. Maysara told him that he was of Quraysh, the people who held the sanctuary; and the monk exclaimed: 'None but a prophet ever sat beneath this tree.'

Also Ibn Ishaq adds another narration that their returning journey to Mecca. The story goes that Maysara saw two angels shading the Prophet from the sun's rays. Narration continues that when they returned to Mecca Maysara told Khadija about two angels who shaded him and of the monk's words. After Khadija heard these things, she proposed him marriage. At that time Khadija was the best born women in Quraysh, of the greatest dignity and, too, the richest and all of people were eager to get possession of her wealth if it were possible. The Prophet accepted her proposal and he married her. They had children namely al-Qasim, al-Tahir, al-Tayyib, Zaynab, Ruqayya, Umm Kulthum, and Fatima. The boys died in paganism, and his daughters lived into Islam, embraced it, and migrated to Medina.<sup>[42]</sup> In this context, Ibn Ishaq relates that Khadija shared the information what Maysara told her, with her cousin Waraqa b. Naufel, who was a Christian who had studied the scriptures and was a scholar. Waraqa said to her 'if it is true, Khadija, verily Muhammad is the prophet of this people...'<sup>[43]</sup>

What is noteworthy in Muhammad's marriage to Khadija is that Ibn Ishaq does not mention either the age at which Muhammad married her or the age at which Khadija married him.<sup>[44]</sup>

When Ibn Ishaq mentions in another part about Khadija's death he says that Khadija was the first wife of the Prophet and Khadija had previously been married twice. Her first husband was the Atiq b. 'Ā'idh b. Abdullah al-Makhzumī and she had a daughter from him. When he died, she got married Ebu Hala an-Nabash b. Zurara b. at-Tamimī and had one son and one daughter, from him.<sup>[45]</sup>

Ibn Ishaq gives place to two narrations about Muhammad's religious belief before prophetic call. According to the narrative, when the Prophet Muhammad was a young boy, they visited Zayd b. 'Amr (d.606) who refused to believe idols with his slave Zayd b. Haritha out of Mecca. They sat next to him. They had some meat prepared from the sacrifices they had slaughtered on idols. The Messenger of Allah, offered him the food and said, "Eat this dish, uncle." Zayd expresses his doubts by saying, "O son of my brother, maybe it is one of those sacrifices you have made for your idols." When the Messenger of Allah says

[42] Ibn Ishaq, pp.59-61, Ibn Hisham, I, pp.118-120; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.82-83.

[43] Ibn Hisham, I, p.120; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, p.83.

[44] Ibn Hisham adds that Prophet Muhammad was 25 years old when he got married with her (Ibn Hisham, I, p.118). Ibn Hisham is silent about Khadija's age when she got married with the Prophet.

[45] Ibn Ishaq, pp.228-229.

yes, he does not eat. Then he criticized those who worship them and sacrifice to them. After this incident, the Messenger of Allah did not touch any idols, nor did he sacrifice for them, until Allah honoured him with his prophet hood.<sup>[46]</sup>

From the point of view of the Prophet's religious belief before prophetic call had the dilemma in Ibn Ishaq's *Sirah*. On the one hand, Ibn Ishaq gives some narrations of that Muhammad was protected from sin and error, even when he was child by Allah, but on the other hand, he records narratives that includes his respecting the idols. In this regard, it will be significance to mention that Ibn Hisham omitted the story of Zayd from his recension of Ibn Ishaq.

In spite of mentioning no time and even out of chronological context, Ibn Ishaq recorded a narrative which is related with The Confederacy of the Fudul/Hilf al-Fudul. According to narration, the tribes of Quraysh decided to make a covenant and assembled for that purpose in the house of Abdullah b. Jud'ān. Those party to the agreement with him were B.Hashim, B.'l Muttalib, Asad b. Abdu'l-Uzza, Zuhra b. Kilāb, and Taym b. Murra. They bound themselves by a solemn agreement that if they found anyone, either a native of Mecca or an outsider, had been wronged they would take his part against the aggressor and see that the stolen property was restored to him.

We find in this narration of Ibn Ishaq in which the Prophet said: 'I witnessed in the house of Abdullah b. Jud'ān a covenant which I would not exchange for any number of fine camels: if I were invited to take part in it during Islam I should do so.'<sup>[47]</sup>

We could strongly have assumed that this event happened when the Prophet was young, although there is no fixed time for the event.

#### 4. His Life After Marriage to Khadīja and Pre-Revelation Visions

What did Prophet Muhammad do after his marriage Khadīja in these fifteen years before prophetic call? Ibn Ishaq interestingly remains silent to present details about his life during this period, except of his role in the rebuilding of the Ka'ba.<sup>[48]</sup>

According to the narrative of which Ibn Ishaq presents; the Quraysh decided to rebuild the Ka'ba when the Prophet was thirty- five years old, fifteen years after the sacrilegious war. The tribes of Quraysh gathered stones for the building, each tribe collecting them and building by itself until the building was finished up to the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad), where controversy

[46] Ibn Ishaq, p.98; in another version in the same page, Ibn Ishaq states that Zayd b. 'Amr visited them.

[47] Ibn Hisham, I, pp.87-88; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.57-58.

[48] Khalidi, p.78.

arose, each tribe wanting to lift it to its place. And almost got ready for battle. After some days Quraysh gathered in the mosque and took counsel. The oldest man of Quraysh urged them to make the first man to enter the gate of the mosque umpire in the matter in dispute. They did so and first to come in was the Prophet. When they saw him, they said ‘This is the trustworthy one, we are satisfied. When he came to them and they informed him of the matter he said, ‘Give me a cloak,’ and when it was brought to him he took the Black Stone and put it inside it and said that each tribe should take hold of an end of the cloak, and they should lift it together. They did this so that when they got it into position he placed it with his own hand, and then building went on above it. Ibn Ishaq also adds that Quraysh used to call the Prophet before revelation came to him, ‘the trustworthy one’.<sup>[49]</sup>

The reports of that Muhammad would be sent as a prophet before he was born, are similarly carried over to a time period just before Muhammad’s prophet hood in Ibn Ishaq’s *Sirah*. These reports include information about the time of coming and qualifications of him from the eye of some Jewish rabbis, Christian monks, and Arab soothsayers.<sup>[50]</sup>

In this context Ibn Ishaq records in his *Sirah* a verbatim quotation from the Gospel of John<sup>[51]</sup>, and translates the Paraclete as *al-Munhamanna*. He says that *al-Munhamanna* in Syriac is ‘Muhammad’, and that in Greek it is al-Baraqlitis.<sup>[52]</sup>

The narrations in Ibn Ishaq’s *Sirah* about the life of the Prophet before prophetic call ends with his Hira experiences, pre-revelation dreams and visions.

The narration with his Hirā experiences refers that the Prophet practises *tahannuth*/religious devotion every year for a month as was the custom of Quraysh in heathen days.

One of the reports with his pre-revelation dreams was transmitted from Ā’isha. She told that when Allah desired to honour Muhammad, the first sign of prophet hood was true visions, resembling the brightness of daybreak, which were shown to him in his sleep and Allah made him love loneliness so that he liked nothing better than to be alone.

The other report runs as follows:

‘The apostle at the time when Allah willed to bestow His grace upon him and endow him with prophet hood would go forth for his affair and journey far afield until he reached the glens of Mecca and the beds of its valleys where is no house was in sight; and not a stone or tree that he passed by but would

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[49] Ibn Ishaq, pp.83-88; Ibn Hisham, I, pp.121-124; Ibn Ishaq, *The Life*, pp.84-86.

[50] Look at details, Ibn Ishaq, p.90; Ibn Hisham, I, p.128.

[51] Look at Gospel of John, 15:23-26, 16:1.

[52] Ibn Hisham, I, pp.145-146; see also Rubin, p.22-23.

say, 'Peace unto thee, O apostle of Allah.'. And the apostle would turn to his right and left and look behind him and he would see naught but trees and stones. Thus he stayed seeing and hearing so long as it pleased Allah that he should stay. Then Gabriel came to him and with the gift of God's grace whilst he was on Hirā in the month of Ramadan.<sup>[53]</sup>

Ibn Ishaq says that when the Prophet has been experienced the first revelation, he was forty years old, but at the same time gives another narration that he was forty-three years old.<sup>[54]</sup>

## Conclusion

Throughout the forgoing article, first of the aims has been a determining of Ibn Ishaq's paradigm of the *Sirah*. Secondly, what kind of narratives has been reached to him about the early life of the Prophet has been reflected. The most crucial side of this article is to highlight the images of the Prophet's life before prophetic call in the eye of early Muslims.

It could be said that Ibn Ishaq's main paradigm was to accept the Prophet as 'the seal of the Prophets'. Nevertheless, Ibn Ishaq does not have a limit in giving narrations which has been reached him. That is why there are some legendary, miraculous, and contradictory narrations in his *Sirah*. In spite of giving hints that some narrations could not be true, Ibn Ishaq has no objection in including the narrations that reach him in his book. It is noteworthy to retain that to have any kind of materials even including contradictions, there still remain significances for us. In other words, we actually are lucky to have the ideas in that historical context via these narrations.

Finally, when we turn to the narrations which deal with the early life of the Prophet, it has been seen that some of the narrations are partly include legendary, miraculous, and contradictory motifs. There are some reasons for this. Firstly, the earliest surviving biography of the Prophet which belongs to Ibn Ishaq was written over 100 years later after the Prophet's death. The timing gap and oral narratives could suggest a lack of information and some variety of biases and perspectives. Secondly, one of the main goals of the author of *Sirah* also had a religious, moral, and educational dimensions. For this, they prioritized the normative dimensions rather than the historical reality of events or facts.

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[53] Ibn Hisham, I, pp.146-148; see also Ibn Ishaq, pp.100-101; *Ibn Ishaq, The Life*, pp.104-105.

[54] Ibn Ishaq, p.88, 109. Cf., p.114.

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# The First Revelation and the Period of Persecution by Meccans

İlk Vahiy ve İřkence Dönemi

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### Abstract

In a list of the greatest times of transformation and breaking moments in human history, the events whose main components are religion and religious arguments will be the first ones that come to mind. Accepting the birth of Jesus as a direct religious event as the beginning of the Gregorian calendar or the effects of the geographical, political, economic, cultural and technological processes of the geography included in the scope of the crusades in the Middle Ages are just two of the examples that can be given to make the proposition meaningful.

In this study, we will focus on one of the most important religious moments in the history of the world, the beginning of the last messages of Allah to humanity, and analyze what happened after. Thus, we will try to understand the feeling of the Prophet who addresses the divine message, the methods he uses to fulfill his prophetic mission, the reactions of people who were addressed revelation, the violent side of man and the effort to solve problems with violence. The study is a contribution in terms of bringing a new perspective to the narrations about the first revelation and the events after revelation in Islamic historical sources. Additionally, descriptive and analytical methods are used in accordance with the subject of the study.

**Keywords:** History of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, revelation, Meccans, persecution.

### Öz

İnsanlık tarihinin en büyük dönüşüm zamanları ve kırılma anlarına dair yapılacak bir listede, ana bileşeni din ve dinî argümanlar olan olaylar ilk sıraların değişmez akla gelenleri olacaktır. Doğrudan dinî bir olay olarak Hz. İsa'nın doğumunun gregorian takvim için başlangıç kabul edilmesi veya Orta Çağ'da gerçekleşen haclı seferlerinin kapsama alanında yer alan coğrafyanın dini, siyasi, ekonomik, kültürel ve teknolojik süreçlerine etkileri ifade edilen önermenin anlamlı hale gelmesi için verilebilecek örneklerden sadece ikisidir. Biz de bu çalışmada dünya tarihindeki en önemli dini anlardan birisine, Allah'ın insanlığa son uyarısının başlangıcına odaklanıp sonrasında yaşananları tahlil edeceğiz. Böylece ilahi mesaja muhatap olan bir peygamberin hissiyatını, peygamberlik görevini yerine getirmek için kullandığı metodları, vahye muhatap olan insanların reaksiyonlarını, insanın şiddete meyyal tarafını ve sorunları şiddetle çözme çabasını anlamaya çalışacağız.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam Tarihi, Hz. Muhammed, İlk Vahiy, Mekkeliler, İşkence

## Introduction

Allah has not left man alone after He created him. Through the prophets He reminded people of his goal, his purpose for life, and the limits of his power. However, with the ability to act contrary to the commandments and prohibitions of Allah, which are proof of freedom of will, and with the mind that has managed to legitimize this attitude in the most beautiful way, man has managed to religion his interests instead of obeying what was revealed to him through the prophets. Allah has also sent numerous prophets to people as an opportunity to remember his essence and to shape his life in this direction. But the cycle, which mankind constantly violates, was supposed to stop somewhere. Otherwise, the world venture of mankind would continue in this way and man's duty as a successor in the earth would lose its meaning. In about six centuries after the birth of Jesus, Allah has once again sent Muhammad (pbuh) as a warner reminding people who he is, why he was created, the meaning of life, the limits of his power and strength, as well as a bearer of glad tidings for those who heed his warnings, provided that this sending is the last.

Mecca, in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula, where there is no agriculture<sup>[1]</sup>, where life is shaped around trade in the shadow of religion, was the venue of this latest intervention of Allah. If a photo of Mecca was taken, the first thing that would attract attention would be that religion determines the main axis of city life. The Holy Kaabah, built by Abraham and his son Ishmael, was the center of attraction around which life took place. The Meccans did not hesitate to use the sanctity that their city had for their own interest and benefits. For this purpose, the process that started with an idol in Mecca resulted in the fact that many of the Arab tribes brought their idol/god to Mecca and the Kaabah turned into a "pantheon". Over time, it became a principle for Meccans to "adopt everyone's faith in order to be together with everyone" and as a result of this approach, the Kaabah was made the center of faith tourism. So paganism had become an important source of income for the Meccans.

This established system continued to strengthen in favor of the Quraysh Tribe of Mecca after the event which was recorded in the sources as "The Year of Elephant" and in which Allah protected His Sacred House with His own hand. Although they had no intervention in the process, the Quraysh, who turned what was happening into an opportunity for them, was described as "the neighbors of the house of Allah", "the people of Allah". Thus, their reputation on the Arabian Peninsula has become even stronger, they have

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[1] *The Qur'an*, trans. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Ibrāhīm 14/37.

become a group maintained by an inviolable and divine power, as well as an indisputable power.<sup>[2]</sup>

In addition, after this period, opposing the Quraysh and fighting with them began to be considered sufficient to earn the wrath of Allah. This belief gave the Quraysh many privileges, especially the right to trade freely. On the one hand, the Quraysh traded freely and prospered, and on the other hand, they turned Kaabah into a pantheon and established new rules for visiting it, which they made the common religious center of the peninsula. All of these rules were aimed at making the Quraysh richer and more distinguished than other tribes.

The continuity of the concessions obtained depended on the preservation of the established order, and therefore a system closed to discussion in all spheres of life operated in Mecca. Thus, everyone lived in strict accordance with their role in the system. When the administrative system of Mecca is examined, it is seen that it is based on a great balance policy. The administrative structure was based on opening up space for everyone. The areas of the tribes, their tasks and what they could do were determined by strict boundaries.

#### A. The First Revelation - The First Command

Although the beginning of the revelation took place in 610, it can be said that the process for the Prophet Muhammad began some time ago.<sup>[3]</sup> In that time, which can be defined as “the training period for revelation”, Muhammad’s (pbuh) outlook on life, his lifestyle, his attitude changed and almost gained a new character. Faithful dreams are the basis of change. Later, according to Aisha, all of the Prophet Muhammad’s dreams came true like the light. In other words, the clarity of his dreams while he was asleep made him like seclusion.<sup>[4]</sup>

The reflection of the change in Muhammad’s (pbuh) mind that he felt on social life corresponded to seclusion. The Cave of Ḥirā’, where his grandfather Abdul-muttalib used to retreat from time to time, was chosen as a place of seclusion, and while the calendars show the month of Ramadan in 610, the Angel of Revelation, Gabriel, revealed the first five verses of Sūrat al-‘Alaq, which contains the first commandments of Islam.<sup>[5]</sup> It is noteworthy that the dialogue that is narrated

[2] For detail information see Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq Ibn Yasār b. Khiyār, *Kitāb al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1978), 61-67; Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitāb al-Arabi, 1990), 1/63-71; Muḥammad Ibn Sa’d Ibn Manī’ al-Hashimī, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (Cairo: Maktab al-Khanji, 2001), 1/60-74; ‘Aḥmad ibn Yahyā ibn Jābir ibn Dāwūd al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2001), 1/75-76.

[3] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 129; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/264-265; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/125-130; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/116; Abū Ja’far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh al-Rusūl wa al-Mulūk*, (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1968) 2/298.

[4] al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/298; see also İbrahim Sarıçam, *Hz. Muhammed ve Evrensel Mesajı* (Ankara: DİB Yayınları, 2002), 83.

[5] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/265-266; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/164-167; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/116-117; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/298-305.

to have taken place between Gabriel and Muhammad (pbuh) during revealing of the first revelation. When Gabriel ordered him to “Read”, Muhammad (pbuh) responded meaningfully by saying “I do not know how to read!” Muhammad’s (pbuh) response shows that he was consciously and restrainedly dealing with Gabriel. With the first message of the five verses of Sūrat al-‘Alaq, Allah has reminded people of himself for the last time and permanently.<sup>[6]</sup>

The first revelation was an unexpected development for the Prophet Muhammad. After he went home due to the effects of what he had experienced, he asked his wife to cover him up as with still quaking heart. This may suggest that his awe level was increased. When he calmed down and his pulse normalized, he told his wife what he had seen and heard. Whereupon, Khadija said: “Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you; You keep good relations with your relative and kin, tell the truth, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones.” By these words and her reassurances strengthened the heart of the Prophet.<sup>[7]</sup> These words also summarize why Khadija married Muhammad (pbuh).

On the one hand, the fact that he wants to be covered up, and on the other hand, that he is talking to Khadija shows that the Prophet’s mind is working in many ways. Trying to put what he was going through in his mind and discussing a much deeper topic in his heart, he asked Khadija: “Who believes in me?” In the face of this question, which expressed the expectation of receiving support, Khadija declared that she would always support and believe, even if no one believed him.<sup>[8]</sup> Her response motivated Muhammad (pbuh) very much that he has never left Khadija out of his mind at any time in his life.

The first revealed verses have important clues about how the new era will take shape. The first address to the Prophet is “Read!” Immediately after that, it explains how to read it with the phrase “*In the name of your Lord the Creator*”. The later verses say, Allah created man from a clinging substance, He is the most Generous who taught by the pen, and taught humanity what they knew not. These five verses includes the difference between a person who knows his essence and his creator and a person who forgets that he was created and that he was taught by Allah what he knew not, and who thinks that he has power by thinking that he has value for himself.<sup>[9]</sup>

While Muhammad (pbuh) was trying to internalize what he saw and heard, Khadija also looked for someone who could explain what her husband had

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[6] al-‘Alaq 96/1-5.

[7] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 131; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/269; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/164-165; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/116; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/298-301.

[8] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/269.

[9] al-‘Alaq 96/1-5.

told her. The person Khadīja consulted with him was Waraqah b. Nawfal her uncle's son. This old man was a wise person who had knowledge of Judaism and Christianity and read the holy books of these religions. Waraqah who listened carefully to what was said, told that there had come unto Muhammad (pbuh) the greatest Nāmūs, Archangel Gabriel, and Muhammad (pbuh) is the Prophet of these people. In the following days Waraqah met with Muhammad (pbuh). After listening to him, he said: "Verily an angel has come to you, even it also came to the Prophet Moses. You will be denied, persecuted, and expelled from your homeland. Besides, there will be a war on you. If I reach those days, I will help the religion of Allah."<sup>[10]</sup> Waraqah gave the good news that what Muhammad (pbuh) experienced through first revelation was prophetic signs and eliminated the confusion he was in. However, with the history of the past nations and the knowledge gained from the lives of the prophets, he caused another surprise by saying that Muhammad's (pbuh) community would deny him, would not believe him, and would drive him out of Mecca.

It is certain that a new stage had begun for Muhammad (pbuh) with the first revelation. But in that time, the Prophet Muhammad was faced with an extremely important problem, which is the lack of knowledge of method. Because he was aware of the role he was undertaking, but he did not know what to do, where to start, how to follow a way and a method about this mission. In other words, thoughts about the method of role were preoccupying the Prophet's mentality. At this point, Allah informed him about the method he would use and gave directions about the way he should follow.

The subject will become clear when the first verses of Sūrat al-Muddaththir, which follow the first commandment, Sūrat al-Alaq, are examined. In these verses the Prophet was commanded to arise and warn the people, to keep away from idols, and to proclaim the greatness of Allah in the world. After that, he was asked to avoid from all kinds of moral-material uncleanness and to explain Islam without any hesitation, fear, and doubt, reminding that he should ultimately be patient for the sake of his Lord.<sup>[11]</sup>

## 1. The Period of Invitation and the First Muslims: A Secret Invitation or a Private Invitation?

In the history of Islam, chronologically, it is difficult to determine the time between the first revelation and the Prophet's speech on Safa Hill, where he spread the message of Islam to the general public. Based on the information

[10] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 132-133; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/269-272; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/164-166; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/117-118; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 2/302-303.

[11] al-Muddaththir 73/1-7.

about this period, it is not easy to follow the historical process. Because there are few names that witnessed the period, and these persons were interested in facts, instead of events. Such reasons make it difficult to determine. Since it is the priority choice to record the narrations instead of making a fiction when it is desired to write down the events, it becomes very complicated to follow the chronology of the events. This, unfortunately, leads to a number of misidentifications in the perception of the early years of Islam. The expression “secret invitation”, which is used in the sources for the early period of calling to Islam (da’wah),<sup>[12]</sup> is the product of such an identification error.

Whether secretly invitation to Islam can be qualified is a matter that should be considered. In this context, it is necessary to focus on the process of accepting Islam by two names and to examine some of the verses, recorded as the beginning of the public invitation, that were revealed before 214th verse of of Sūrat al-Shu‘arā’. Because they give some details about understanding the structure of the first period of Islamic invitation.

The names that should be mentioned in the processes of accepting Islam are Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī and Amr b. Abasa who is of Yemeni origin. Abū Dharr lived in a village near Mecca. One day he became aware of a person who said that idols were useless in Mecca and invited the Meccans to the unity of Allah. Abū Dharr, who already does not believe in idols from a religious point of view and is in search of them, thought that this person in Mecca might be the name that could answer the questions he had in mind. Afterwards, he sent his brother Unays to this city to investigate the authenticity of the news he heard, the status of the person who said he was a prophet, and the nature of the words he told. Then he asked his brother to inform him.<sup>[13]</sup>

Unays stayed in Mecca long enough and made observations. He turned to his brother and conveyed his impressions to him. According to Unays, Abū Dharr should have gone to Mecca and got to know this person. Because the person who is said to be a prophet was inviting the unity of Allah and calling people to goodness. Moreover, he was a person of good morals in character. However, the Meccans called him a poet, soothsayer, and magician. They also hated this person and treated him badly.<sup>[14]</sup>

He went to Mecca to see Muhammad (pbuh) for the information he had received from his brother and waited for him around the Kaaba. Because a person who receives a message from Allah should most likely have been in the Kaaba. During his waiting, he went through many events. But one of

[12] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/295; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/168; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/131-132; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/306.

[13] Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 4/205-206.

[14] Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 4/206.

them provides us with extremely important information from the point of view of our topic.<sup>[15]</sup>

Abū Dharr, who was examining the Kaabah and its surroundings, thought that he had finally found someone to whom he could ask him to the person he was looking for, and questioned if he knew the man who said he was a prophet. However, the response that Abū Dharr received was not as he expected. This person informed the Meccans by saying out loud that he was one of the Muslims, and the Meccans took out their anger at Muhammad from Abū Dharr and beat him severely.<sup>[16]</sup>

Abū Dharr did not abandon his cause due to the attack of the Meccans. After a while, he found the Prophet Muhammad, talked with him, and accepted Islam. Although there is no clear information in the sources about how many people were Muslims at that time, it was narrated that he was the fourth or fifth Muslim.<sup>[17]</sup>

The second name that should be mentioned is Amr b. Abasa from Yemen. While he was on a quest to fill the void in his faith, he heard that a person in Mecca did not worship idols and called on people to worship Allah, who is one. After that, he left Yemen and came to Mecca in no time. After meeting with Muhammad (pbuh), he became a Muslim. According to Amr, when he became a Muslim, only Abū Bakr and Bilāl al-Ḥabashī were Muslims.<sup>[18]</sup>

Considering the accepting of Islam by two names, one Bedouin (*badawī*) and the other Yemeni, it is clear that narratives about the early period of Islamic history should be reevaluated. The fact that both names were narrated among the first Muslims shows that the knowledge of Islam had already crossed borders of Mecca when the number of Muslims very few, no more than a handful of people. Moreover, Unays' expressions that Meccans described Muhammad (pbuh) as poet, soothsayer, and magician, and the rejection of Amr's request to stay in Mecca shows that even when the number of Muslims was only a few people, the Meccans started to speak out against Muhammad (pbuh) and did not hesitate to use physical violence from the first period. Briefly, the narrations tell us that the Meccans became aware of the new religion in a very short time and reacted to this religion very quickly, as well as positioned themselves over the contrast.

The transmission of the history of revelation is also supportive of these narratives. It is known that the communication between Muhammad (pbuh)

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[15] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 4/206.

[16] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 4/206-207.

[17] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 141-142; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 4/207-208; For more on this topic see aslo Nurullah Yazar, *Hz. Ebu Zer*: (İstanbul: Beyan Yayınları, 2020).

[18] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-kabīr*, 4/207-208.

and Gabriel was cut off for a while after the first revelation. This period was called *Fatrat al-Wahy*, cessation of revelation, in Islamic history.<sup>[19]</sup> However, there are disputes about its duration. In that period Meccans said that his Lord had left Muhammad, He was offended by him. These words deeply hurt the Prophet. Meanwhile, Gabriel appeared and came back to him revealing *Sūrat al-Ḍuḥā*. This *Sūrat* comforted Prophet. Because in the verses of *Sūrat Allah* has said: “Your Lord has not abandoned you, nor has He become hateful ‘of you!’”<sup>[20]</sup> In the next verses it has been said: “Did He not find you as an orphan then sheltered you? Did He not find you unguided then guided you? And did He not find you needy then satisfied your needs?”<sup>[21]</sup> Actually, these verses summarize the life of the Prophet up to that moment and the following verses, “So do not oppress the orphan, nor repulse the beggar, and proclaim the blessings of your Lord.” shows his method in calling people to Islam. Shows his method in calling people to Islam.<sup>[22]</sup>

The following verses, which are accepted among revealed the first revealed verses, also supports that even before the public call of Islam began, the Meccans were aware of the new religion and the prophetic discourse of Muhammad (pbuh).<sup>[23]</sup> These verses are as follows: “By the grace of your Lord, you are not insane.<sup>[24]</sup> Soon you and the pagans will see, which of you is mad.<sup>[25]</sup> So do not give in to the deniers.<sup>[26]</sup> Be patient ‘O Prophet’ with what they say, and depart from them courteously.<sup>[27]</sup> Then turned his back ‘on the truth’ and acted arrogantly, saying, this ‘Quran’ is nothing but magic from the ancients. This is no more than the word of a man.<sup>[28]</sup>

It seems that what happened in *Ḥirā’* was shared with other people along with Waraqah and found a place on the agenda of Mecca. Mecca is the religious and commercial center of its geography. In a city that has strong ties to every part of the Arabian Peninsula and where communication channels are always open, it should not be strange that an event can reach everywhere very quickly. In short, the Meccans were aware of the existence of Islam. But

[19] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 135; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawiyya*, 1/275; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/168; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/120; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/306.

[20] *al-Ḍuḥā* 93/3.

[21] *al-Ḍuḥā* 93/6-8.

[22] *al-Ḍuḥā* 93/9-11.

[23] Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/166; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/119-122; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2/303-304.

[24] *al-Qalam* 68/2.

[25] *al-Qalam* 68/5-6.

[26] *al-Qalam* 68/8.

[27] *al-Qalam* 73/10.

[28] *al-Muddaththir* 74/23-25.

being informed and having content are separate things. This is the reason for dividing invitation of Islam into two separate time periods. The Meccans were aware of what was happening in their city. However, they have not yet been informed about the content. The fact remains that anyone could access this information.

These information show us that there has never been a time when the invitation to Islam was carried out secretly in early days. It is not the right approach for a person to define the subjects that he does not have control over as confidential. The lack of information on matters that only concern the addressees of the event does not make an issue secret. This makes the situation private and closed. For this reason, it would be more meaningful to define the starting days of the invitation as “private invitation period” or “personal invitation period” rather than “secret invitation period”. It is not a secret invitation to Islam, but it is the concealment of being a Muslim. Because in a society where there is no individual’s name within the framework of tribalism and *‘aṣabiyya*, a person must act together with his tribe. Acting together also includes belief. A person who does not share the faith of his tribe will not have belonging to his tribe. It is also impossible for a person to exist in Mecca without belonging.

Actually, the Prophet Muhammad did not declare his invitation to Islam, did not formalize it, and did not spread it to the general public. By acting in that way, he prevented the formation of a collective reaction of Quraysh in Mecca against him, Islam, and Muslims. This gave the first Muslims an important time to internalize Islam and shape their lives around the Islamic thought. Although there is no restriction on being aware of the existence of Islam, the content of Islam was shared by the Prophet primarily with his family and close friends. It is quite natural for a person to share what he has been through, what he has experienced, or what he has with his relatives and those whom he finds close. But this is also a very risky choice. Those who most accurately describe the character, personality, attitude, view of life of an individual are his family and sincere friends. In fact, the most difficult people for a person to convince are his parents. Because of that reason, the first indicator of a person’s reliability is the reactions and words of his family and friends who have known him for many years.

A person who convinces his family and gets their support will feel both psychologically strong and will not be in the position of a person who does not even receive support from his family. The unconditional acceptance of Muhammad’s (pbuh) prophethood by his family is an extremely important mirror of his personality. After his family, it is time for open-minded people who can understand the meaning of the Islamic message to be invited to the

unity of Allah. At this point, the call to Islam is made by establishing a peer to peer communication. With the established communications, the names invited by the Prophet to Islam have largely accepted the new religion, which indicates the success of the Prophet in analyzing people correctly.

## 2. The Period of Invitation: General/Public Invitation

Although it became clear from the reported verses which method the Prophet Muhammad should follow, there was no information about the first step to be taken to explain *Tawhīd* to Meccans with a stereotypical mind that even the Kaabah does not make sense in their minds or hearts. After all, taking the first step correctly would also determine the progress of the next process. In this regard, Allah stepped in once again and determined another step that his last representative would take.

The message of Islam, which started with the method of individual invitation, in a private circle, spread to the general public with the addresses of “*So proclaim that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the idolaters.*”<sup>[29]</sup> and “*And warn the nearest people of your clan.*”<sup>[30]</sup> The venture of Islam has moved to a new stage with the guidance of the revealed verses. The Prophet Muhammad, who determined the method of invitation with the guidance of Allah, adopted a general style of expression instead of explaining Islam to the person, and kept all the Meccan people informed about Islam and continued the message of Islam publicly.<sup>[31]</sup>

Firstly, the Prophet Muhammad explained the content of the religion of Islam to his clan, the Hāshimites.<sup>[32]</sup> Considering the social relations of Mecca, which are based on tribal belonging, it becomes clear why it is important to get the support of his. Therefore, it is very common for the Prophet to start from his own tribe.

The Prophet organized a feast to explain the content of Islam to his clan. While he was going to convey the religion of Islam, his uncle Abu Lahab did not give him a chance to speak and he made atmosphere very reactionary. As a result of this act, those who attended the meal left without saying anything to the Prophet. Although Abu Lahab’s attitude upsets Muhammad (pbuh), it does not deviate him from his goal. A few days later, the Prophet once again gathers his relatives together, and this time he announced his prophecy and

[29] al-Hijr 15/94.

[30] al-Shu‘arā’ 26/214.

[31] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sira wa al-Maghāzī*, 145-148; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/295; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/168-169; Balādhuri, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/132.

[32] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/295; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/169; Balādhuri, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/134.

invites his relatives to the religion of Allah. In this way, the message of Islam is explained to everyone.<sup>[33]</sup>

After the Prophet's invitation to Islam, Abū Ṭālib, who was the head of the Hāshimites, said that he would continue to protect his nephew, whom he had raised since the age of eight and witnessed every moment of his life, even though he did not give up on the religion of his ancestors. On the other hand, Abu Lahab maintained his usual negative attitude, insulted Muhammad and tried to prevent him, and provoked his relatives against him. However, Abū Ṭālib spoke once more and reiterated his support for his nephew. The fact that Abū Ṭālib was on the side of the Prophet caused his tribe to support him even if they did not believe in Islam.<sup>[34]</sup>

The second target audience of the Prophet Muhammad who informed his relatives about the content of Islam, was other Meccans. Gathering the elders and notables of the city on Ṣafā hill, which is used as a venue for the announcement of an important issue related to the city, the Prophet said, "If I told you that there is an army behind this mountain, would you believe me?" The Meccans who were there said together, "Yes, we would believe it. Because we have never seen you lie."<sup>[35]</sup> At this point, we see that the first subject of the Islamic message is the Prophet Muhammad himself. While spreading the message of Islam to the general public, the Prophet primarily took the opinion of the society about himself. Thus, he tried to reinforce the value of the word with the value of the speaker. This method of the Prophet Muhammad also reveals his place in the Islamic religion. He is not a passive sender of the revelation process, but rather an active and effective part of it. In order for the revelation to find value, he revealed himself, his past, his personality, and his value in society. This style is extremely important for understanding the position of the revelation and Prophet along with revelation.

It is grossly unfair to see the Prophet Muhammad as a means of communication, to attribute everything that has happened directly to the divine will, to ignore the personality, character, preferences, and most importantly, the efforts of the prophet. By saying "Who will believe me?" he played an active role in the acceptance of revelation by people he devoted his whole life to.

After the Meccans' emphasis on truthfulness, the Prophet Muhammad said, "Then I inform you that you will suffer a great punishment... Allah has ordered me to warn my closest relative. Unless you say, 'There is no god but

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[33] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 145-148; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-kabīr*, 1/169; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/131; see also Muhammad Hossein Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, trans. Ismail Ragi A. Al-Faruki (USA: American Trust Publications, 2014), 80.

[34] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/297-299; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/170.

[35] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/169; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/136-137.

Allah!’ I will not be of any use to you in this world or in the hereafter.” As soon as the Prophet Muhammad had finished his words, his uncle Abu Lahab, who followed him almost step by step, said, “Did you call us for this?, and then he insulted the Prophet. Thus, he became the first person to openly oppose and react to the message of Islam and the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh).<sup>[36]</sup> Allah has not left unanswered the person who insulted His Prophet, and has revealed Sūrat al-Tabbat.<sup>[37]</sup>

### 3. The First Example of the Relation Between Islam and Space: Dār al-Arqām

The first Muslims preferred to perform their worship in secluded places at the beginning of the Islamic invitation. During this period, the place for meeting, praying and learning about the faith was the house of Arqām b. Abu’l-Arqām, who had converted to Islam when he was only 17-18 years old. His house, called Dār al-Arqām in Islamic history, had been the most important center of Muhammad’s prophetic mission.<sup>[38]</sup>

Arqām’s house provided Muslims with the opportunity to act in several ways without attracting attention to themselves. The first point is that it was located near the Kaaba and on the east of Safa Hill. In other words, it was located near the center of Mecca. The fact that Muslims gathered in the house of Arqām in the daily mobility of city life did not attract the attention of the polytheists. The second point is that the tribe that reacted the most to the message of Islam and the person of the Prophet Muhammad was the Banū Makhzūm and Arqām was a member of this clan. Because Arqām did not openly declare that he was a Muslim, it was not thought that his house could be the center of such activity. For this reason, Muslims used Arqām’s house comfortably.<sup>[39]</sup>

The Prophet was meeting with Muslims in this house, conveying the verses of the Qur’an, explaining Islam, worshiping together, making speeches to keep their faith alive. As a result of the activities carried out in Arqām’s house, which became a gathering and training center, many people converted to Islam. The house of Arqām has taken such a big place in the minds of Muslims that on the

[36] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sira wa al-Maghāzī*, 156; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/169; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/137-139.

[37] “In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful. The Power of Abu Lahab will perish, and he will perish. His wealth and gains will not save him. He shall roast at a flaming fire, And his wife, the carrier of firewood Will have upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre” (al-Tabbat 111/1-5); See also Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sira wa al-Maghāzī*, 156; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/69; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/137-139.

[38] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/287; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/223.

[39] Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/224-225.

dates of the first Muslims' acceptance of Islam, markers such as "before the Messenger of Allah entered Dār al-Arqām", "while in Dār al-Arqām" or "After Dār al-Arqām" were used.<sup>[40]</sup>

When the Meccans became aware of the nature of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad began to convey the message of Islam openly to everyone. Although none of the oligarchs of Mecca responded positively to Muhammad's (pbuh) call to Islam, there were those from every segment of society and tribe residing in Mecca who responded positively to the message of Islam. Every positive answer given in favor of Islam meant an increase in the danger of Islam for the Meccan mushriks. The growth of the danger brought with it the growth of the reactions.

## B. The Reasons for the Reactions of Meccans to Islam

First of all, it should be stated that the Meccans were people who created an original economic, religious and cultural structure in their city, at the center of which was the Kaabah, which they supported with a polytheistic belief system, and had their own laws and institutions. In the minds of these people, Islam was perceived as a threat to the belief system, tribal structure, social order and economic system that had been prevalent in the city where an accepted order had been living for centuries. Acceptance of Islam made it necessary for the Meccans to redesign their entire way of life. This new way of life did not suit the outstanding and elite group of Mecca. This was the main basis for their opposition to the Prophet Muhammad and the religion he brought.<sup>[41]</sup> In the following sub-titles, the structure that the Meccans want to protect can be examined.

### 1. The Reflex of Preserving the Social Structure

The most important discourse of the Prophet Muhammad for the society was that people should be equal in the sight of Allah. This discourse had opened social structure of Mecca up for discussion. In the sight of Allah being equal in the context of creation and putting the principle of justice at the foundation of social dynamics were issues that the defenders of the established system had difficulty accepting.

In Mecca, on the other hand, the main elements were the *'aşabiyya* and the idols at the center of the belief system. From this point of view, the most

[40] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/224-225.

[41] About the issues that Islam has changed the psychological and sociological, theological and economic values of Polytheists, see. Eyup Baş, *Son Peygamber Hz. Muhammed* (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2020), 47; see also. W. Montgomery Watt, *Hz. Muhammed Mekke'de*, trans. Rami Ayas-Azmi Yüksek (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1986) 60-87.

dangerous rhetoric of the Prophet Muhammad for the defenders of the Meccan system had been the consciousness of the ummah, which he replaced with *‘aşabiyya*, and the belief in *Tawḥīd*, saying that idolatry would not benefit.<sup>[42]</sup>

In fact, it is understandable that the sharpest reactions to the Prophet Muhammad came from the clans of Umayyads and the Makhzumids who took the highest advantage of the *‘aşabiyya* system. For members of these tribes, the discussion of the system in a sense meant questioning their existence and authority. The system established as a result of long struggles and serving its own interests was the most important value that needed to be defended and maintained.

One of the areas of the social structure that should be protected for the Meccans was the knowledge of the past. The Meccans gave importance to the customs and traditions inherited from their ancestors. For the Meccans, everything they inherited from their ancestors was true. Because this inheritance gave them dignity, prestige, privileges, and money. Because of what they had, paganism was a value that must be protected, and the religion of their ancestors was also considered the most correct religion.<sup>[43]</sup> Therefore, when they were invited to Islam and said, “*Come to what Allah has revealed (the Qur’an) and to the Prophet!*” they answered, “*The religion on which we found our fathers is sufficient for us.*”<sup>[44]</sup> Again, when it was said, “Follow what Allah has revealed!” they replied, “*No, we follow the (path) on which we found our forefathers!*”<sup>[45]</sup>

## 2. Trade

The most important elements for trade are road safety, regional stability and trust. In cases where these three elements are damaged, the merchant refrains from offering his product. This leads to the deterioration of trade market balances. The Meccans saw the Prophet as a person who disrupted the order of the city and thought that Islam would damage Mecca’s trade along with its social structure.

The Meccans, who traded in the north-south direction, brought their people to their towns in the region and earned income from buying and selling at fairs. In this sense, the economy of Mecca was dependent on foreign revenues. However, they had gone so far in trade that they had also made religion an element of commerce.

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[42] al-Anbiyā’ 21/98-100.

[43] Sariçam, *Hz. Muhammed’in Evrensel Mesajı*, 97; See also, Maxime Rodinson, *Hazreti Muhammed*, trans. Attila Tokatlı (İstanbul, 1994), 90.

[44] al-Mā’ida 5/104.

[45] al-Baqara 2/170.

By allowing pagan Arab tribes to place their idols in the Kaaba, which has been considered Sacred for thousands of years, they have made the Kaaba the center of faith of every tribe in the region. The idols placed in the Kaaba were connecting people from all over the peninsula with Mecca through faith tourism. Those who visited Mecca to worship their gods made an economic contribution to this city. This was the main reason why there were hundreds of idols in the Kaaba. The Quraysh thought that Islam would undermine the religious privilege they had and damage their commercial activities.

If they believed in a God, they would have lost all the gods they had placed in the Kaaba and ascribed glory to them, and of course the economic gains that these gods provided to the city would be lost, thus they would suffer financial loss.

Hundreds of idols that would serve the system in Mecca were acceptable gods for the Meccans. However, a single god who would disrupt the functioning of the system and change the order was the biggest enemy for them. The mushriqs of Quraysh were concerned that the religious superiority and commercial interests they had achieved in the eyes of all the Arab tribes would be taken away by the fall of paganism.

### 3. Tribal Rivalry

Tribal rivalry also played a role in the Meccans' opposition to the new religion. In Mecca, powerful and authoritarian tribes were using the same arguments when they were fighting each other. That means the reward for a favor was a favor and the reward for a feast was a feast. But the prophethood was different from all this, it embodied a force that could not be put on the same level of reciprocity. In this sense, the phenomenon of the Prophet had the power to reshape the system in Mecca. When Abū Jahl, one of the biggest opponents of Islamic, was asked about Muhammad (pbuh), he stated that he was a truthful person, but he said, "We competed with Banū 'Abd Manāf in everything to attain status and nobility. They fed people, so we also fed people. They gave charity, so we also gave charity. They looked after people; so did we. We did these until we became equal. And now they say, 'A prophet has come from us who receives revelations from the sky.' How can we possibly be able to compete with this? By Allah, we will never believe in him and we will never accept his message!"<sup>[46]</sup>

It seems that Abū Jahl evaluated the issue of prophecy within the framework of the rivalry between the Banū Makhzūm and the Banū Hāshim, and he regarded accepting the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) as accepting the superiority of the Banū Hāshim.

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[46] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/320.

#### 4. The Elitist Approach

The idea of nobility based on lineage is also one of the reasons for opposition. The Prophet was not a person who could be a prophet in the eyes of the Meccans. Because he was neither the richest, nor the most aristocratic, nor the bravest, nor the strongest in Mecca. In their view, someone who did not have these qualifications could not be a leader, he should not be. In short, the elite of Mecca did not consider the Prophet on their level, in other words, they did not consider him worthy of the prophecy.

According to them, if someone was to become a prophet, he should only be among the leader of Mecca or the leader of Taif. Because they associated the value of the word with the position of the speaker. Thus, in their mind, the prophet should have been a rich or powerful person. Indeed, these thoughts show that they understand prophecy as leadership.<sup>[47]</sup>

The Meccans thought that if they accepted Islam and acted according to the directions of the Prophet, they would lose their privilege. The idols, which were the source of this privilege, and the existing belief system had provided them with glory, reputation, and economic power. Having these understandings was their way of life. Even if they were interested in the message of Islam the thought that they would lose what they had with Islam was pushing them to resist the Prophet and his invitation.

Additionally, in this adopted lifestyle, everyone accepted their role and led a life appropriate to their position in society, while Islam rejected this situation. However, Islam brought to mind questioning the functioning of system. Such a questioning was a threat to those who worked in favor of the system, but it was a hope for those who were offended by the system and this hope became is the greatest fear for the status quo. The beginning of change is the feeling of satisfaction felt by dreams. In order to dream, it is necessary to think first. By asking, *“Do you not reason?”*<sup>[48]</sup> *“Do you not consider?”*<sup>[49]</sup>, *“Would you pay no heed?”*<sup>[50]</sup>, Islam has called people to think about the situation they are in. The increase in the positive responses to the call fed the fear of the Meccans, and as the fear grew, the speed of the reaction against the new religion increased.

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[47] The Qur'an refers to their expectation about prophethood. In the verses of Sūrat al-Zukhruf it was explained as follows, *“They say, ‘Why was this Qur’ān not revealed on a great man from (either of) the two towns?’ Is it they who allocate the mercy of your Lord? We have allocated among them their livelihood in the worldly life, and have raised some of them over others in ranks, so that some of them may put some others to work. And the mercy of your Lord is much better than what they accumulate.”* (al-Zukhruf 43/31-32).

[48] al-Baqara 2/44.

[49] Yūnus 10/16.

[50] al-Mu'minūn 23/85.

### C. The Reactions of Meccans to Public Invitation (Dawah)

The religion conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad has taken concepts such as Allah, human, society, nobility, and superiority completely different from known definitions. The new approach led to the fact that the political, economic, and religious structure of Mecca began to be discussed. This situation attracted the reactions of the opponents of Islam in Mecca. Reactions can be evaluated in two parts as reactions to the Prophet Muhammad and reactions to other Muslims. The dimensions of these reactions expanded in parallel with the spread of Islam and took place in several stages in itself.

#### 1. Reactions to the Prophet Muhammad

The first way that the Meccans used method that never got old: an attempt to make a person look worthless with lies and slander. The Meccans initially saw the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) message as a transitory situation and the individual discourse of a simple person. However, with the increase in the number of people who believe in him, they have applied the method we mentioned a little earlier.

Firstly, they mocked the Prophet by saying, "The nephew of Abū Ṭālib who claims to have received revelation from heaven!"<sup>[51]</sup> In the next stage, this time they claimed that the Prophet was not mentally healthy.<sup>[52]</sup> The Prophet Muhammad's response to these words was very clear that is "I have lived among you for years before it. Have you, then, no sense?"<sup>[53]</sup>

In the process, ridicule has been replaced by emotional pressure. The Meccans had accused the Prophet Muhammad of lying and described him as a poet, soothsayer,<sup>[54]</sup> magician, and insane.<sup>[55]</sup> With the baseless claims their aim was to create a social perception by damaging the trust in him. It was to direct people's view of the Prophet and, most importantly, the message of Islam through this perception. In other words, it was to discredit the Prophet's reputation in the sight of people's perception. So, they aimed to make people move away from the religion he described and the lifestyle he expressed.<sup>[56]</sup>

Emotional violence affected the Prophet Muhammad so much that Allah intervened and protected His Prophet. He also responded to the strategy of

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[51] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sira wa al-Maghāzī*, 151; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/199; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/131.

[52] *Al-Qalam* 68/51.

[53] *Yūnus* 10/16.

[54] *al-Ḥāqqa* 69/41-42.

[55] *al-Dhāriyāt* 51/52.

[56] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sira wa al-Maghāzī*, 151-152; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/302-303; see also Adem Apak, *Anahatlarıyla İslam Tarihi I* (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2018), 44.

the Meccans by rejecting all the allegations raised, as well as he described those who caused these baseless claims with the most severe expressions and informed them that they would end badly. In this way, He prevented a polemic between the Prophet and the Meccans by holding His Prophet from answering them, as well as protecting the Prophet mentally and spiritually, not allowing what was said to affect him, and giving the Meccans the necessary answer in a way they could understand.

The Qur'an describes the Meccans in negative terms and informs them of their future state. It was deciphering the conversations between them. When they met those who believe, even though they said, "We believe!" they were saying among themselves, "We are making fun of them." Because of that reason, The Qur'an condemned them. This was a disgrace to the Meccans. A group that saw itself as an elite, noble, powerful, capable, and dominant of everything, were faced with a group they could not dominate, an event they could not manage, and a process they could no manage. As their plans and moves did not benefit them, the number of the opposing side increased day by day. At that time, The Qur'an, in its rhetoric, was always undermining the authority of those who considered themselves to be the elite.

The rhetoric of Qur'an made the Meccans anxious as well as helpless. Hereby the Meccans who made international agreements and guided the commercial and religious life of the peninsula were desperate for the position of the Prophet Muhammad and the style of the Qur'an.

One of the emotional violence suffered by the Prophet was carried out through his daughters, which we can see as the most sensitive point of a father. The daughters of the Prophet, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum, were engaged to Abu Lahab's two sons. Abu Lahab and his wife broke off the engagement by insulting the Prophet and his daughters severely, just to upset him.<sup>[57]</sup>

As a result of all their efforts, the Meccans did not get results from emotional violence and changed their methods. This time, with physical violence, they tried to dissuade the Prophet Muhammad from his invitation. At this point, they used various methods, such as placing thorns on the roads through which he passed, trying to drown him, and placing entrails of camel on his shoulders.<sup>[58]</sup> However, they have not achieved their desired goals.

When the Meccans realized that they could not achieve their goals through the Prophet Muhammad, they also targeted the Qur'an. The Meccans sometimes disliked the statements of the Qur'an and said, "Either bring us another Qur'an from this one or change it." The answer of the Prophet was, "*It is not*

[57] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 10/36-39.

[58] al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/147.

*possible for me to make changes in it on my own. I follow nothing but what is revealed to me.”*<sup>[59]</sup>

Later, the Meccans said, *“We shall never believe in you unless you cause a spring to gush forth for us from the earth. Or you have a garden of date palms and grapes, then you bring forth rivers from their midst in abundance. Or you cause the sky to fall upon us in pieces, as you claimed, or you bring Allah and angels before us face to face. Or you have a house made of gold. Or you ascend to the sky, and we will not believe in your ascension unless you send down to us a book we may read.”*<sup>[60]</sup>

Allah has warned people through the prophets He has appointed many times, and He has helped His prophets in a way that makes people helpless. Moses crossed the Red Sea<sup>[61]</sup> and Jesus raised the dead by Allah’s will.<sup>[62]</sup> These are situations that leave people helpless. Allah has not provided His last Prophet with support that will only make the other side helpless at that moment, but He has given him such support that all of humanity will not be able to bring its like until the day of Resurrection. It was miracle that is the Qur’an. He asked His prophet to address those who expect extraordinary things from him in the following way, *“I proclaim the Glory of my Lord. I am nothing but human, a messenger.”*<sup>[63]</sup> This was the enough answer for their requests.

The Meccans were doing their best and trying every possible way to prevent the message of Islam from reaching large masses. In the early period, the main way of inviting people to Islam was to read verses of the Qur’an. The Prophet also went to the Kaabah, where people were crowded, and read the Qur’an here and kept people informed of the commandments of Allah. Whenever the Prophet recited the Qur’an, the Meccans tried to prevent people from hearing the signs of Allah by raising their voices or making various noises. The 26th verse of Surah al-Fussilat refers to this event.<sup>[64]</sup> Against those who tried to suppress the Prophet’s voice, he tried to make people hear by reading the Qur’an aloud. However, Allah warned him about this issue and informed him that he should not behave in this way, as well as he should protect his dignity, not being too loud in his prayer, or too quiet, but seeking a middle way.<sup>[65]</sup>

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[59] Yūnus 10/15.

[60] al-Isrā’ 17/90-93.

[61] al-Baqara 2/50.

[62] al-Ma’ida 5/110.

[63] al-Isrā’ 17/93.

[64] Fuṣṣilat 41/26.

[65] al-Isrā’ 17/110.

## 2. Pressure

The lack of an authority accepted by everyone in Mecca left the Meccans indecisive in their attitude towards the Prophet Muhammad and the Islamic invitation. The solution found by the Meccans was to neutralize the Prophet by his tribe. In this context, they appealed to Abū Ṭālib, who was the leader of the Banū Hāshim, and asked him to prevent Muhammad (pbuh) from preaching new religion. This request, which seemed very simple and ordinary, contained the idea of interfering in the internal affairs of a tribe. When Abū Ṭālib resisted in any way with his nephew, it would be as if he was ruling his tribe at the request of someone else, as well as someone else who was a rival.

Therefore, Abū Ṭālib, who knew very well the consequences of accepting the Quraysh's request, and enough experience to realize that once he began to lead his tribe according to someone else's demands, then he would not be seen as a leader. Because those who made a request for a tribal member could make a request for the duties carried out by the Banū Hāshim. The process, which began with a tribal member being prevented from talking to people, could eventually have resulted in the losing effectiveness of Hāshimites in Mecca. Hereby Abū Ṭālib, for whatever reason, did not welcome someone else's attraction in the internal affairs of his tribe, but he put it through with pleasant language and a conciliatory answer, without making it a matter of issue.<sup>[66]</sup>

The Meccans, who did not get the result from their first attempt, turned to Abū Ṭālib once again when they saw that the converting to Islam were continuing. For this reason, they said that they could not stand the Prophet Muhammad's words, either to dissuade him from his mission or to stop patronizing him, otherwise they would turn against him. Abū Ṭālib, who was between his community and his nephew, decisively asked the Prophet Muhammad to give up his message. He, thinking that his uncle has stopped protecting him, said a little sadly, "O my uncle, by Allah, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left on condition that I abandon this cause, before Allah has made it victorious, or I perish therein, I would not abandon it." Abū Ṭālib, who was extremely impressed by the sincerity of his nephew, said that he would protect him in all circumstances and at all times.<sup>[67]</sup>

The Meccans, who also did not get any results from this attempt, came to Abū Ṭālib for the third time. Umara, the son of Walid b. Mughira, was also with them and they offered exchange the Prophet with him, keeping him as his son instead of the Prophet Muhammad and surrendering Muhammad

[66] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawiyya*, 1/298; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/181; *al-Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh*, 2/323.

[67] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 154; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawiyya*, 1/298-299; *al-Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh*, 2/323.

(pbuh) to them that they can kill him. Upon this offer, Abū Ṭālib's answer was, "Swear by Allah that you have indeed spoken the evil. Do you mean that I should hand over my son to you so that you can kill him and will give me your son in exchange so that I take care of him! I swear by Allah that if I do so, I would be but an evil man."<sup>[68]</sup>

### 3. The Demands of Meccans for Reconciliation

It often happens that human life is built on two definitions such as friend-enemy, beautiful-ugly or good-evil. The main factor determining whether to be on the positive or negative side in this determination is not similarities, but power struggles. When a person feels strong and thinks that the situation he is dealing with will not be a problem for him, he defines it positively. When he sees it a threat to himself, his identification becomes different, returns to negative.

So, the changed definition affects the reaction shown. Situations that are initially unresponsive and ignored can turn into a threat perception over time. The perception of a threat to a person is a condition that needs to be quickly intervened and eliminated, as it will lead to feelings such as anxiety, uncertainty, fear, obscurity, and worry. What to do if the threat, despite everything, turns into a bigger problem day by day and cannot be eliminated? The answer to the question can be found in the new method that the Meccans used after they failed to achieve the end result, despite all their oppression and torment against the Prophet Muhammad.

Although the Meccans tried all kinds of violence, they could not dissuade him from steadfastness in their mission. They could not prevent him from telling Islam, then they started to implement the strategy under the name of reconciliation against the Prophet Muhammad. That is to say, "if you cannot destroy it, be with it". The main goal of this strategy was to make Muhammad a part of the established system. Thus, Muhammad (pbuh), who was isolated, ostracized, condemned, and tried to be destroyed, had become a focus of power for the Meccans and indirectly the person they were trying to reconcile with.

The Meccans used the method, they knew best, to negotiation and an agreement. After all, they were a powerful tribe and community who had connected the peninsula with agreements called *Īlāf* and built its own trade routes, as well as convinced successfully the Eastern Roman emperor, one of the most powerful figures of the era. Now they could have also convinced him. As a result of this approach, they personally met with the Prophet himself and presented him with a number of offers.

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[68] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/299-300; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/171-172; *al-Ṭabarī*, *Ta'rikh*, 2/326-327.

Their first offerings were an office, goods, and women.<sup>[69]</sup> Because they thought that a person would most desire nobility, wealth, or women. We can say that this offer also reflects the general character of the Meccans. The Meccans were offering Muhammad (pbuh) whatever they considered valuable to them. A Muslim attitude, in fact, a human attitude, is to appreciate what they have.

The offer was prepared to address the most basic desires and weaknesses of a person, and it was not an offer that could be rejected immediately. As a result, if Muhammad (pbuh) accepted the offer, he would suddenly become the most respected, richest, and most powerful person in Mecca. However, the Prophet did not heed any of these offers and gave Muslims an extremely important example of what kind of mission they should have.<sup>[70]</sup> In this context, acting with a plan, compromising values, hiding the character changes and transforms a person. A new personality and character, on the other hand, means a new person and new goals.

When the Meccans did not get any results from these offers, they offered an alliance and wanted the Prophet to change his side. Their suggestion that time was that both sides worship what each other worships. Upon this suggestion, which is a clear indication that faith is a mean and the main thing is benefit in the mind of Meccans, Sūrat al-Kāfirūn was revealed, and it has been decisively emphasized that *Tawḥīd* and *shirk* cannot coexist at the same time.<sup>[71]</sup>

#### 4. The Spread of Oppression in General

When the Meccans realized that the Prophet Muhammad would not compromise his mission, they increased the pressure and violence and started targeting all Muslims. Therefore, Muslims did not have the security of life and property in their own cities. The Quraysh considered the faith of the other side to be the enemy. Instead of recognizing, understanding and making sense of it, they were looking for a way to destroy faith and trying in every way to dissuade believers. In this context, they were trying to find a way to turn every Muslim away from their religion, adopting an attitude appropriate to his social status. For example, when they found out that an elite member of a powerful tribe was a Muslim, they tried to dissuade him from Islam with the rhetoric they had developed based on nobility, reputation, customs, and adherence to tradition. When they learnt that a merchant was a Muslim, they preferred economic pressure. When they heard that one of the Mawali or slaves was a Muslim, they were not afraid to commit physical violence. Already, the slaves

[69] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 197-202; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/293-295.

[70] Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra wa al-Maghāzī*, 198; bn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/326.

[71] al-Kāfirūn 109/1-6.

and the Muslims, who had no one to protect them, were the most affected by the suffering of the Meccans. The mother of ‘Ammār b. Yāsir, Sumayya, and his father, Yāsir, lost their lives due to torture of *Mushriqs* and then they became the first martyrs of Islam.<sup>[72]</sup>

When it is understood that the Meccans devalue some of the people with their definitions of nobility and impose meaning on principles such as justice, equality, freedom in their own interests, it becomes clear why the believers maintain their position despite such torment. Islam has provided people with a way of life and has not forced anyone to accept it or not. Although Muslims adopted a lifestyle of their own free will, those who did not adopt this lifestyle oppressed and tormented them. In a sense, the Meccans tried to take the right to design life into their own hands. They saw in themselves the authority to determine the content of all kinds of issues such as social, religious, economic, even personal topics. Thus, they expected those other than themselves to obey what was offered. From one point of view, one group in Mecca, considered itself the main subject, and they saw others as the object that complements them.

Muslims have been subjected to persecution because of their faith. They could not live their own truths and beliefs in their own homeland. This was exactly the situation for the Muslims in Mecca. The increasing pressure and violence against the Muslims and their inability to stop these injustices have led them to seek a different solution point. At this point, the solution that the Prophet Muhammad found was to temporarily resettle at least some of the Muslims in a place where they could be comfortable.

## Conclusion

The first revelation that took place in the cave of Ḥirā’ in Mecca through the Archangel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad was the beginning of the last warning of Allah in order to ensure the return of mankind to the essence. Thus, Allah revealed to His Prophet that the world is finite and declared that man that the world is finite and declared that man should recognize his creator and stand always on a straight path.

When the first six years of Islamic history are examined, it is seen that more than one actor is included as the main figure. Naturally, the Prophet Muhammad is the most prominent actor. Everything was taking shape around him and in accordance with his message. It seems that the message of the Prophet Muhammad divided the Meccans into two groups: those who

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[72] For detailed information about the torture of the Quraysh against Muslims during the reign of Mecca, see Ibn Ishāq, *al-Siyar wa al-Maghāzī*, 189-203; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/344-347; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/178-222.

fundamentally accept and believe and those who reject and oppose. Among those who accept and believe, it is possible to see people of all statuses and all age groups of society. Those who refuse and oppose to the invitation of the Prophet were the richest and the most elite of Mecca. Also, it is seen that none of those who consider themselves as the elite of Mecca accept Islam. For these names, Islam is the greatest threat, and Muhammad (pbuh) is the greatest enemy. The main reason why they do not accept Islam is that Islam and their interests do not coincide.

Another group during this period is those who do not accept Islam as a faith, but do not turn their oppositions into hostility. A significant part of the Prophet Muhammad's tribe, Banū Hāshim, a moderate group of Meccans takes part in this group.

There is another figure, which can only be seen when viewed in three dimensions. It is Allah, who follows the process of His Prophet's mission, guides Muhammad (pbuh) when necessary, gives hope to Muslims from time to time and renews their faith, and in some cases responds to the untruthful accusations of the Meccans with the most severe expressions.

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# The Treaty of Aqabah, The Messenger of The Hijrah

Hicretin Habercisi Olarak Akabe  
Biatları'nın Yeri ve Önemi

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### **Abstract**

The city of Yathrib (Medina), which has the biggest role in the formation and statehood of the religion of Islam, and its people, consisting of two Arab tribes named Aws and Khazraj, have great importance for Islamic history. The Prophet (pbuh) started negotiations with the surrounding tribes in the face of the oppression and persecution of the Quraysh and preferred the hajj seasons in which he could reach large masses. Especially after the death of his wife, Khadija, and his uncle, Abu Talib, who guarded and protected him, the Prophet (pbuh) increased his meetings and had the opportunity to meet with the people of Yathrib in a place called Aqabah. As a result of this meeting, the people of Yathrib gradually adopted Islam, called Muslims in Mecca, especially the Messenger of Allah, to their cities, and swore that they would protect them at the risk of their lives and open up their houses to the end. Following this promise, the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions left their homes, where they were born and grew up, and migrated to Yathrib, a city they had never known, where they could practice their religion freely and be sure that they would be safe.

**Keywords:** Sirah, Aqabah, Yathrib, Mecca, Treaty.

### **Öz**

İslam dininin teşekkül ve devletleşme aşamasında en büyük paya sahip olan Yesrib (Medine) şehri ve Evs ve Hazrec isimli iki Arap kabilesinden oluşan halkı, İslam tarihi açısından büyük önem arz etmektedir. Hz. Peygamber Kureys'in baskı ve eziyetleri karşısında civar kabilelerle görüşmelere başlamış bunun için de büyük kitlelere ulaşabileceği hac mevsimlerini tercih etmiştir. Bilhassa eşi Hz. Hatice ve onu koruyup kollayan, himaye eden amcası Ebu Talib'in vefatı üzerine Hz. Peygamber görüşmelerini sıklaştırmış ve Akabe denilen mevkiye Yesrib halkı ile görüşme fırsatı bulmuştur. Bu görüşme sonucunda Yesrib halkı peyderpey İslamiyet'i benimsemiş, başta Allah Resülü olmak üzere Mekke'de yaşayan Müslümanları şehirlerine davet ederek onları canları pahasına koruyacaklarına ve yuvalarını sonuna kadar açacaklarına dair yemin etmişlerdir. Hz. Peygamber ve sahabiler bu vadin akabinde doğup büyüdükleri yurtlarını terk ederek hiç bilmedikleri bir şehre, sırf dinlerini özgürce yaşayabilecekleri ve güven içinde olacaklarından emin oldukları Yesrib'e hicret etmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sirah, Aqabah, Yathrib, Mecca, Treaty.

### A. Seeking Protection and the Visit to Ta'if

When the Prophet (pbuh) lost his uncle Abu Talib and his wife Khadija, the oppression of the mushriks increased. He went to Ta'if with Zayd ibn Harithah, thinking that they would guard and protect themselves. He invited them to Islam, but they neither protected nor sheltered him. On top of that, they treated the Prophet (pbuh) worse than his tribe did. However, he did not give up and stayed in Ta'if for ten days, by continuing to invite people to Islam.<sup>[1]</sup> In this expedition, the people of Taif provoked the city's rabble against him. "Oh! Allah, I complain to you about my weakness and my lack of respect for people. Oh! Forgiving Allah. You are the Lord of despicable and despised combines; you are my Lord... To whom do you leave me? To the people who are bad spoken, bad-faced; or the enemy involved in my job? If you do not have wrath against me, if you are willing to do so, I will never mind the misfortunes and sufferings that I have suffered. If this misfortune and torment on me do not come from your wrath, I would tolerate it from my heart. However, believe that your appetite is desirably more spacious-wide and wider. I take refuge in your light which is the source of the world, and hereafter issues from your wrath; I will expect your forgiveness until you are satisfied! Divine, all power and strength are only in you..."<sup>[2]</sup>

The Prophet came to Ta'if three days before the end of Shawwal in the tenth year of his Prophethood and returned to Mecca on Tuesday, which coincides with the 23rd of Dhu al-Qaeda.<sup>[3]</sup>

When the Messenger of Allah returned to Mecca, he sent a member of the Khuza'ah tribe to Suhayl ibn Amr to convey his request to be under his protection. Suhayl refused this request. Thereupon, he sent him to Mut'âm ibn Adi. He accepted the protection.<sup>[4]</sup>

### B. Events Before the Treaties of Aqabah

Aqabah is the place where the Prophet met with the people of Yathrib before he migrated to Medina to preach Islam and at the same time seek protection from them. There are many places called Aqabah in the Arabian Peninsula. The place of the treaties of Aqabah made by the Prophet (pbuh) with the people of Yathrib is the region within the borders of Mina, three kilometres away

[1] Ibn Kathir, Abu al-Fida Imad ad-Din Ismail al-Omar b Kathir el-Qurashi Al-Dimashqi, *al-Bidaya wa'n-Nihaya*, (Ürdün: Beytü'l-Efkârî'i-Devliyye), 1/425-426.

[2] Ibn Hisham, Abu Muhammad Abd al-Malik, *as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah*, (Beyrut: Dâru Ibn Hazm, 2006), 193; al-Jawzi, Abu al-Faraj Ibn ul-Qayyim, Ibn al-Jawzi al-Hanbali, *Zaad al-Ma'ad*, trans. Şükrü Özen, H. Ahmet Özdemir, Mustafa Erkekli, (İstanbul: İklim Yayınları, 1989), 3/52.

[3] al-Baladhuri, Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Jabir, *Ensabu'l-Eşraf*, trans. Hikmet Akdemir, (İstanbul: İlk Harf Yayınları), 1/416.

[4] al-Baladhuri, 1/417.

from the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca. Later, a mosque was built on the place of treaties, which still endures today.<sup>[5]</sup> Although there were many superstitions in the beliefs of the Arabs of Jahiliyyah (Days of Ignorance), they were fulfilling the pilgrimage obligation since Abraham. By circumambulating the Kaaba, they were sacrificing for the idols, and finally, they came to Aqaba and completed their worship.

Two Arab tribes named Aws and Khazraj belonging to the tribe of Qahtani, and three Jewish tribes called Banu Nadir, Banu Qaynuqa, and Banu Qurayza were living in Medina. While the Jews were generally engaged in agriculture, the Arab tribes were mostly engaged in trade and crafts.<sup>[6]</sup> On the one hand, the wars between Aws and Khazraj continued for years, and consequently, they became so poor and weak that they needed the Jews and, on the other hand, the Jews constantly threatened them by taking advantage of the conflict between Aws and Khazraj and made life difficult for the people of Yathrib.

The Muslims of Makkah went to the Prophet (pbuh) and asked him how long they would live in Mecca under these unbearable conditions upon the increase of persecution, torture, and oppression against Muslims.<sup>[7]</sup> In the direction of these demands, the Prophet (pbuh) began to meet with people from the surrounding tribes more frequently during the pilgrimage seasons and told them about Islam. On the one hand, his uncle Abu Lahab, who was an unbeliever, denied the Prophet on all occasions, on the other hand, his uncle Abu Talib, who raised him, did not stop protecting his nephew despite all the insistence and threats of the mushriks, even though he was not a Muslim.<sup>[8]</sup>

The Prophet (pbuh) had the opportunity to meet with the Kindah tribe and the Banu Haneefah tribe. Members of this tribe did not accept the invitation of the Prophet, and they abused him. When they met with the tribe of Amir bin Sa'saa (Banu Amir), he said to the Prophet: "If we give the oath of allegiance to you in this matter and God will give you victory over your opponents, will you hold us your position thereafter?" "This is God's affair," answered the Prophet, "He holds it to whoever He desires." Thereupon, they said, "We will make our necks the target of whatever is thrown at you, and when God gives you triumph it goes to others? Nay, we are not in need for your affair," rejected them.<sup>[9]</sup> The Prophet (pbuh) met with the Ka'b b. Rabia tribe of the same tribe.

[5] Önkal, Ahmet, "Akabe Biatları", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1989), 1/211.

[6] Apak, Adem, *İslam Tarihi 1, (Hz. Muhammed (sav) ve Dönemi)*, (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2006), 171.

[7] adh-Dhahabi, Shams ad-Din, *Tarikh al-Islam ve Wafayat al-Mashahir wa'l-A'lam*, thk. Ömer Abdüsselam Tedmuri, (Beyrut: 1990), 2/201.

[8] al-Baladhuri, 1/497.

[9] İbnü'l-Athir, *Kamil*, 2/92; İbn Kathir, 1/425.

Although they did not respond to the Prophet, they accepted to protect him. He even said to the Messenger of Allah: “No one can harm you while you are with us. No one can be warmed by our fire without our knowledge” The Prophet settled with them for a while. He talked to his people and did business with them. One day, Baihara b. Firas al-Qushayrih came to them and asked who the Prophet was. When they gave information about the Prophet, Baihara said: “I did not see anyone returning to his hometown with something more terrible and troublesome than you at this festival. So, you are going against all the tribes and you are not afraid of the Arabs shooting arrows from a single bow. If his tribe and relatives would be treated with kindness or generosity by him, they would have been happier than anyone else and would not have denied him and fired him. You, on the other hand, take care of him, shelter him and help him.” Thereupon, they stopped protecting the Prophet and asked him to return to his tribe.<sup>[10]</sup>

Despite all these problems, the Prophet (pbuh) continued to meet with the tribes, including Kindah, Kalb, Banu Amir, Ghassan, Banu Kharith, Banu Murra, Banu Haneefah, Banu Sulaym, and Banu Abbas.<sup>[11]</sup>

### C. The First Meeting with Ansar

Festivals were organized during the hajj seasons during the period of jahiliyyah, poetry competitions, and commercial activities were held in there. These festivals occupied an important place in Arab life. The Prophet (pbuh) also used to come to fairs every year during the hajj season, recited the Qur’an to people, and talked about Islam to them. He said to these people, “Protect me so that I can preach the religion of Allah”.<sup>[12]</sup> The Prophet always met with the tribes at night because when the mushriks saw or heard that the Prophet was meeting with anyone, they immediately engaged in counter-propaganda and prevented him from preaching Islam. In 620, the 11th year of Nubuwwah, the Messenger of Allah met with six people from the Khazraj tribe living in Yathrib at night.<sup>[13]</sup> When the Prophet (pbuh) first saw and asked them: “Who are you?”. “We are from Khazraj,” they replied. Prophet asked, “Aren’t you all neighbors with the Jews, they replied “yes”. Then the Prophet said that he wanted to talk to them. The people of Khazraj allowed it. The Prophet told them about Islam. They said to each other, “O

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[10] Ibn Kathir, 1/428.

[11] Ibn Hisham, p. 193.

[12] Ibn Sa’d, Muḥammad ibn Sa’d ibn Mani al-Baṣri al-Hashimi, *Kitabū’t- Tabakâti’l-Kebîr*, ed. Adnan Demircan, trans. Musa Kazım Yılmaz, (İstanbul: Siyer Yayınları, 2014), 1/204.

[13] Sallâbî, Ali Muhammed, *Siyer-i Nebî*, trans. Mustafa Kasadar, Sadullah Ergin, Şerafettin Şenaslan, (İstanbul: Ravza Yayınları, 2017), 1/392.

community! By Allah, this is the Prophet by whom the Jews threatened us. Let's accept him before they do." They accepted the call of the Messenger of Allah.<sup>[14]</sup> After confirming the Prophet, he said: "We have left our people who are alienated from one another and are full of hatred for one another. How I hope they might meet you and unite under your leadership. We will soon return among them and invite them to religion. Should this ever become the case, you will be the strongest man". The names of these six people who met with the Prophet (pbuh) in Aqabah are as follows: Abu Umame As'ad Ibn Zurarah, Avf b. Kharith from Banu Najjar, Rafi b. Malik, Qutba b. Amir b. Hadidah, Uqbah b. Âmir and Jabir b. Ri'ab.<sup>[15]</sup>

#### D. Reasons for Ansar to Believe in the Prophet (Pbuh)

There are some explanations for the people of Yathrib to believe in the Prophet (pbuh). The most important one is that the people of Yathrib could no longer endure the economic pressures of the Jews with whom they lived, because the Jews were provoking the Aws and Khazraj tribes living there on all occasions and dragging them into a constant state of war. While they were struggling with conflicts, they were also getting stronger in the economic and social field, thus they were making the Arabs dependent on them.

The reason which brought the Khazraj tribe to Mecca was to ask for an alliance from the Quraysh against the Aws tribe.<sup>[16]</sup> Even Anas b. Rafi, who accepted the Prophet 's invitation to Islam, said: "How strange! "We came here to ask for an alliance from the Quraysh against our enemies. However, now we are returning by making the Quraysh our enemies."<sup>[17]</sup>

They hoped that the presence and dominance of someone new would be better for them because neither the Aws tribe wanted to accept the leadership of the Khazraj nor the Khazraj tribe wanted to accept the leadership of someone from the Aws tribe. Thus, as a consequence of their meeting with the Prophet (pbuh), they said to him: "We are now abandoning our people. There was no such thing as a tribe because of the enmity and evil among them. We hope that God will bring them together with you. We will tell them about this religion that we accept, if they gather around this religion and come together, there will be no one stronger and more devoted than you."<sup>[18]</sup>

[14] Ibn Hisham, p. 371-372.

[15] al-Zurqani, Abu Abdullah Abd al-Baqi, *Sharh al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah*, Dâru'l-Kütübi'l-İlmiyye, (Beyrut: 1992), 2/74-76; Sallâbi, 1/402; Gadban, Münir Muhammed, *Muhtasar Fikhu's-Sîre*, çev. Mehmet Aydemir, (İstanbul: Ravza Yayınları, 2015), p.183-184.

[16] Apak, *İslam Tarihi* 1, 173.

[17] al-Baladhuri, 1/418.

[18] Ibn Hisham, p. 372.

Another factor that enabled the people of Yathrib to believe in the Prophet (pbuh) was that they heard that a Prophet would come among the Jews. Jews used to say to themselves on all occasions: "Surely, a Prophet shall be sent soon, his time is near, and we will follow him and kill you. They were saying, "We will kill you with his help, just like people of Aad and Iram were killed." When the Prophet preached Islam to them, the Ansar understood that Muhammad was the Prophet that the Jews often spoke of.<sup>[19]</sup>

Although the local people of Medina were pagans, the Jews they lived with believing in a divine religion. Even though the Torah was falsified and forged, there were much good news about "the last divine religion" and "the last Prophet". With the expectation that a Prophet would emerge from them, the Jews constantly expressed this, boasted about it, and even threatened the Arabs. Therefore, Arabs were not far from a new religion and belief in Prophet's. It was another factor that influenced their adoption of Islam.<sup>[20]</sup>

All these made it easier for the people of Yathrib to convert to Islam. However, the most crucial point was undoubtedly the effective speech, conversation, determination, tolerance, and attraction of the Prophet (pbuh) that influenced people. Indeed, the mushriks knew that whoever he talked to, he was convinced and declared his loyalty to the Prophet. They even broke off relations with their families for this cause. Therefore, they were constantly trying to prevent the Prophet from meeting with anyone and sabotaging the conversation. Although six people initially believed, their full embrace of Islam and their deep devotion to the Prophet made it easier for the people around them to become Muslims. Consequently, calling people to Islam activities, which began with six people and went beyond the borders of Mecca, would give results at short notice and Islam would spread rapidly.

### E. The First Treaty of Aqabah

The Prophet (pbuh) had not met with six people from the Ansar by pledging. As usual, he went to Aqabah in Mina at night and met six people from Khazraj and told them about Islam. This group promised that they would preach Islam to their tribe and return the next year, and then they left Mecca.<sup>[21]</sup>

The first person from the Khazraj who became Muslim was Abu Umama As'ad bin Zurarah b. 'Udas b. 'Ubaid b. Tha'laba b. Ghanm b. Malik b. al-Najjar.<sup>[22]</sup> The others were Abu'l Haytham b. Tayyehan, Avf. b. Kharith b. Rifaa b. Sawad b. Malik, b. Ghanm b. Malik b. Najjar, Rafi b. Malik b. Ajlan b. Amir b. Zurayq

[19] Ibn Hisham, p. 372; Ibnü'l-Athir, al-Kamil, 2/210; Ibn Kathir, 1/431

[20] Sallâbi, 1/408-409.

[21] Azzam, Laila, Aisha Gouverneur, *The Life of The Prophet Muhammad*, p. 39.

[22] Ibn Sa'd, 1/205.

az-zurki Qutba b. Amir b. Hadidah b. Amr. Ghanm, Uqbah b. Âmir Nabi b. Zayd ibn Harran, Jabir b. Abdullah b. Ri'ab b. Numan b. Sinan.<sup>[23]</sup> These six people sent Muaz b. Afraa and Rafi b. Malik as envoys to Yathrib and demanded someone to teach them Islam and fiqh<sup>[24]</sup>. The Prophet (pbuh) sent Mus'ab b. Umair with them to Yathrib<sup>[25]</sup>. Mus'ab had been a guest in the house of As'ad b. Zurarah in Medina and stayed here during this period. The people of Yathrib kept their word and came to Mecca with twelve people the next year. These people were As'ad b. Zurarah also known as Abu Umame, Avf b. Harith, sons of Harith b. Rufaa, also known as Afra, and his brother Mu'az, Rafi b. Malik b. Ajlan, Zakwan bin Abd-i-Qais, Ubadah ibn el-Samit İbn Qais, Yazid b. Sa'lebe, Abbas b. Ubadah. Nadle, Uqbah b. Amir b. Nabi and Qutba b. amir b. Hadida (10 people from Khazraj), Abu'l Haytham b. Tayyehan, whose name is Malik, and Usaym b. Sâ'ide was from Aws tribe.<sup>[26]</sup>

Later, when talking about his allegiance to Aqaba, Ubadah ibn el-Samit said: "I was one of the Naqibs who gave the ('Aqaba) Pledge of Allegiance to Allah's Messenger . We were twelve people. We gave the pledge of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah like the allegiance of women. We gave the pledge of allegiance to him that we would not worship anything other than Allah, would not steal, would not commit illegal sexual intercourse, would not kill our children, would not accuse an innocent person and would not to be disobedient (when ordered) to do good deed."<sup>[27]</sup>

The Prophet (pbuh) recited the 35th verse of Surah Ibrahim to these 12 people who accepted Islam<sup>[28]</sup> and said to them: "If you keep up with your promise, there is Paradise for you. If you violate any of these terms, this is God's affair. He forgives whom he wishes to forgive and punishes whom he wishes to punish. Since this pledge of allegiance does not include issues related to war and conflict, it is called "women's pledge of allegiance" (Bey'atu'n-Nisa).<sup>[29]</sup> Muslims from the Ansar would secretly come to Mecca to meet with the Prophet, and after having faith in God, they would return to Medina and preach the message of Islam to their family. Thus, Islam had entered every house.<sup>[30]</sup>

[23] al-Zurqani, 2/77-78.

[24] Bayhaqi, Abu Bekir Ahmad b. Hüseyin b. Ali, *Dala'il al-Nubuwwa wa Ma'rifat Ahwal Sahib al-Shari'ah*, (Beyrut 1985), 2/177.

[25] Taberi, Abu Jafar Muhammad b. Jarir, *Tarih-i Taberi*, trans. M. Faruk Gürtunca, (İstanbul: Sağlam Yayinevi), 3/115; al-Zurqani, 2/83.

[26] Ibn Hisham, 198; Bayhaqi, 2/254.

[27] al-Zurqani, 2/81.

[28] "And (remember) when Abraham said: "O my Lord! Make this city (Makkah) one of peace and security, and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols."

[29] Ibn Hisham, p. 198; al-Baladhuri, 1/422.

[30] Ibn Hibban, Abu. Hatim Muhammed b. Hibban, *es-Sîretü'n-Nebeviyye ve Ahbâru'l Hulefâ*, trans. Harun Bekiroğlu, (Ankara: 2017), 83.

After the Ansar returned to Medina, discussions continued about who would lead the prayer. In the direction of the requests of the Ansar, the Prophet (pbuh) sent Mus'ab to Medina for the second time to teach the people of Yathrib the Qur'an, Islam, and fiqh. After the Ansar returned to Medina, discussions continued about who would lead the prayer. In the direction of the requests of the Ansar, the Prophet sent Mus'ab to Medina for the second time to teach the people of Yathrib the Qur'an, Islam, and fiqh. In this process, Mus'ab b. Umair always led the prayers. With the efforts of Mus'ab and Yathrib Muslims, Sa'd b. Muaz and Usaid b. Hudair, who were the leaders of the tribe, also converted to Islam.<sup>[31]</sup> Their conversion to Islam was gladly welcomed in Medina.<sup>[32]</sup> Sa'd went to his people and invited them to believe in Allah and His Messenger. He said that if they did not accept, he would not talk to them again. All of his tribe, male and female, became Muslims before evening.<sup>[33]</sup> Mus'ab continued to preach at full speed. All of the Ansar converted to Islam, except for the sons of Umayya b. Zaid, the sons of Wail and Khalaf.

It was As'ad b. Zurarah gathered Muslims for the first Friday prayer in Medina. Muslims were forty people at that time. Then, Ka'b Ibn Malik prayed to Abu Umama every Friday during the recitation of adhan.<sup>[34]</sup>

## F. The Second Treaty of Aqabah

As Islam spread among the Ansar, 72 people,<sup>[35]</sup> two of whom were women, came to Aqaba one by one during the pilgrimage season the following year to meet with the Prophet (pbuh) secretly, according to their promise. (Women: Nusaybah bint Ka'ab Umm al Ammarah and Asma' Ummu Amr bint Adi).

Uwaim b. Sa'idah, Sa'd b. Haysama and a few people from Ansar who came to Mecca arrived at the place where the Prophet was and said, "O Messenger of Allah! We have a meeting council. We are not few. We agreed to stand by you. We will support you in everything. If necessary, we sacrifice our lives. We will protect you as we protect ourselves from enemies. When should we meet?" His uncle, Abbas, who was with the Prophet, said to them: "Among your pilgrims, there are some (mushriks of Yathrib who did not agree with you.)"<sup>[36]</sup>

[31] Sallabi, 1/404-407.

[32] Ibn Abd al-barr, (d. 463), *al-Isti'ab fi Ma'rifah al-Ashab*, (Beirut: Dâru'l-Kütübü'l-İlmiyye), 2/602; Ibn Hajar, al-Askalani, *al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah*, (Beirut: 1328), 2/37; adh- Dhahabi, 2/197-198; Ibn Kathir, 1/432; Ibnü'l-Athir, Abu Hasan Izz al-din Ali b. Muhammad (630), *al-Kamil fi't-Tarikh*, Riyad: Beytü'l-Efkârî'l-Devliyye, 2/215-216.

[33] Ibn Abd al-barr, 1/193; Ibnü'l Athir, Abu'l Hasan Izz al-din Ali b. Muhammed b. Abd al-karim. *Usd al-ghabah fi marifet al-Sahabe*. thk. Muhammed İbrahim el-Bennâ. Dâru'l-Fikr, 1/112.

[34] Ibn Hisham, 199; Ibn Hibban, 85.

[35] al-Baladhuri, 1/425-442.

[36] While there were 72 Muslims in the convoy from Yathrib, there were about five hundred mushriks. See: Sallabi, 1/415.

Reduce your visit here until the pilgrims leave. Keep this a secret, too.” Indeed, the Prophet promised to meet with them on the night of the last hajj caravan’s departure from Mecca, at the foot of the Aqaba Hill, provided that they would not wake up those who fell asleep and would not wait for those who did not come.<sup>[37]</sup> Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, was also in these meetings, and although he was not a Muslim, he kept watch for his nephew and attempted to prevent anything from happening to him.<sup>[38]</sup> Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, was also in these meetings, and although he was not a Muslim, he kept watch for his nephew and attempted to prevent anything from happening to him. Abbas said to the people of Yathrib, “O people of Khazraj (Aws and Khazraj were also addressed in this manner)! You know the esteem and power in which we hold Muhammad, and we have protected him from his enemies. But he has resolved to turn to you and bind himself to you. So, if you think you can keep your promises to him and protect him, the burden will be upon you. But if you fear that you will betray him and fail in your obligations, then leave him now. They said: “We listened to you,” They turned to the Prophet: “O Messenger of Allah! What assurance do you want from us for yourself and your Lord?” they said. Thereupon, the Prophet recited the Qur’an and then said: “You shall protect me even as you protect your women and children.” Bara b Ma’rur seized his hands and said, “By Allah, we will protect you as we protect our women and children...”<sup>[39]</sup> Then Abu Haytham b. et-Tayyehan said, “O Messenger of Allah! There are agreements between us and the Jews which we would then sever. If Allah grants you power and victory, should we expect that you would not leave us, and join the ranks of your people (i.e., the Quraish)?<sup>[40]</sup> The Prophet smiled and replied, ‘No, it would never be, your blood will be my blood. In life and death, I will be with you and you with me. I will fight who you fight, and I will make peace with those whom you make peace with’ and asked them to choose twelve representatives from among them. These twelve would represent their tribe. As a result, nine representatives from Khazraj and three from Aws were selected.<sup>[41]</sup>

Abu Umame As’ad b. Zurara, the representative of sons of Malik b Najjar, Bara b. Ma’rur and Abu Jabir b Abdullah, the representatives of sons of Salamah, Mundzir b Amr b Hunays, and Sa’d b. Ubadah, the representatives of the sons of Sa’ide, Rafi b. Malik b. Ajlan, the representative of the sons of Zurayq b.

[37] al-Baladhuri, 1/446-47; Ibnü'l Athr, *Usd al-ghabah*, 1/207; adh-Dhahabi, *Târihu'l-İslâm*, 2/204.

[38] al-Baladhuri, 1/446; Ibn Hazm, *Cevâmiu's-Sîre (Siyer'in Özü)*, trans. Mehmet Salih Arı, (İstanbul: 2004), 52; Irving, Washington, *Hiz. Muhammed*, trans. Rukiye Erulaş, (İstanbul: 2012), p. 103.

[39] Ibn Hisham, 200; Ibnü'l-Athir, *Usd al-ghabah*, 1/207; Gadban, 179.

[40] al-Tabari, 3/116.

[41] adh-Dhahabî, *Tarikhul-İslâm*, 2/201; Apak, *İslam Tarihi* 1, 175.

Amir, Abdullah b Rawaha and Sa'd b er-Rebi, the representatives of the sons of Harith b. al-Khazrej, Ubadah b. es-Samit, representative of Avf b. al-Khazrej, Usaid b. Hudhair and Abu'l Haytham b. Tayyehan, the representatives of the sons of Abdulashal, Sa'd b. Haysama. [42] The Prophet (pbuh) said to these representatives: "You are the guarantors of your people, just as the disciples were guarantors of theirs before Jesus, Son of Mary. I, for my part, am the guarantor of my people."<sup>[43]</sup>

Abbas b. Ubadah from Ansar said: "O people of Khazraj! Are you fully aware of what you are about to covenant with this man? You are about to covenant with him to make war against all sorts of men without discrimination. If you have any fear that, should you lose your wealth and should your leaders fall by the sword, withdraw from this covenant. For if you do not and then betray your oath, you will have lost this world as well as the next. But if you feel certain that you can stand by him and fulfill this oath, then go ahead and covenant with him. He is, by God, the best gain in this world and in the next."<sup>[44]</sup>

Ansar answered together, "We take him despite all threats to property, wealth, and murders of our honorable ones. Tell us, O Prophet of God, what will be our reward' if we remain true to this oath?" Muhammad answered, "Paradise." They stretched out their hands to him, and he to them, and the covenant was concluded. The Ansar pledged allegiance to the Prophet.<sup>[45]</sup> They would listen to the orders/commands of the Prophet (pbuh) in adversity and prosperity, in pleasure and displeasure, obey the people they appointed, not question the administration of the ruler they would appoint, and not hesitate to be criticized by any critic of condemnatory about the religion of Allah wherever they were. [46] The Prophet (pbuh) did not shake hands with the two Companions (women) were among the Muslims and said that he accepted their pledge of allegiance verbally.<sup>[47]</sup>

Abbas b. Ubadah said to the Prophet (pbuh): O Messenger of Allah, we are powerful enough to put the people of Mina to our swords tomorrow, if you desire." Prophet (pbuh) said "We have not been commanded to follow that course. Now, back to your camps." They went back to sleep until morning. In the morning, the Quraysh came to the caravan of Yathribs to meet with the people of Yathribs about the possible consequences of a military agreement that cannot be repaired. When they said "O people of Khazraj, it transpired

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[42] Ibn Hibban, 93-94.

[43] Ibn Hisham, 205.

[44] Ibn Hisham, 205-208.

[45] Ibnü'l-Athir, *Kamil*, 2/217.

[46] Ibn Hibban, 91.

[47] Ibn Hajar, 4/418.

to us that you have come here to conclude a treaty with Muhammad to fight against us and take him with you, those who were mushriks among the Yathribs and those who were unaware of the Muslims denied the news with their oaths, saying: By Allâh, we do really hold in abhorrence any sort of fight between Arab Tribes. <sup>[48]</sup> Even Abdullah b. Ubaid said, “How could they attempt such a thing without my knowledge? <sup>[49]</sup>” There were 500 people in the Medina pilgrimage caravan, 72 of which were Muslims. <sup>[50]</sup>

### G. The Mushriks Follows the Ansar

When the Quraysh realized that some of the people of Yathrib gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet (pbuh), the Yathribs had already left Mecca. They immediately followed behind them and began to look for those who gave their pledge of allegiance, and they caught up with two of the Ansar. These people were Mundzir b. Amr and Sa’d b. Ubadah, the representatives chosen by the Prophet. They could not catch Mundzir, but Sa’d was captured by the mushriks and brought him back to Mecca, dragging him by his long hair and beating him. Sa’d was subjected to several pressures and tortures. Finally, a man took pity on him and asked if there was anyone from Quraysh who owed him a favor of good neighbourliness or had a covenant between them. If there was such a person, he could provide assurance of safety to Sa’d and avoid further persecution. Sa’d said that he had a commercial agreement with two people. This man went to the people whom Sa’d mentioned and found them near the Kaaba. He told them, “A man of Khazraj, who says that there is a bond of protection between you, was being beaten in the valley and is calling upon you.” They asked who was beaten. When they learned that he was Sad b. Ubadah, they said, “He used to protect us against oppression his own country.” Together they went to Sa’d and saved him. <sup>[51]</sup> When the Muslims realized that Sa’d was not in the caravan, they were consulting about going back and looking for him. Then Sa’d arrived at the caravan. Thus, the entire caravan reached Medina. <sup>[52]</sup>

### H. Life in Medina

Besides the Arabs, a large number of Jewish communities were living in Medina. Aws and Khazraj, the Arab tribes, were always at war with one

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[48] Ibn Hibban, 94; Ibnü'l-Athir, *Kamil*, 2/217-218.

[49] Ibn Sa'd, 1/210.

[50] Ibn Sa'd, 1/208; Hamidullah, *Muhammed, Islam Peygamberi*, trans. Mehmet Yazgan, (İstanbul: 2003), 1/142.

[51] İbn Hisham, 206.

[52] İbnü'l-Jawzi, 3/73.

another, and the tribe of Aws generally won against the Khazraj. This group of six people, who met the Prophet for the first time, was also from Khazraj. The Prophet had a matrilineal kinship to Khazraj. Therefore, there was always a relationship between Mecca and Medina. For example, Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, knew the people of Medina closely as he had commercial relations with its people. In fact, when he was with his nephew in Aqaba, he stated that he could not recognize the people who would give the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet and said that they were young. The Prophet's father was buried in Medina, and he came to these lands to visit his father's grave together with his mother. The Jews of Medina constantly underestimated the Aws and Khazraj tribes due to their lack of knowledge about the Prophet and emphasized that a Prophet would emerge from among them. The Jews of Medina constantly underestimated the Aws and Khazraj tribes due to their lack of knowledge about the Prophet and emphasized that a Prophet would emerge from among them. The mushriks of Madina felt very uncomfortable with this situation of the Jews. As mentioned before, these kinds of reasons inclined the people of Medina to the Prophet. So, they wanted to get an edge over the Jews.<sup>[53]</sup>

There had been the war of Bu'ath between Aws and Khazraj not long ago. Therefore, the parties still nurtured hostility towards each other. They did not even dare to enter each other's neighborhood. The tension between them did not come to an abrupt end even after Islam. These tribes did not want to pray behind each other. When the Prophet (pbuh) came to Quba, those who hosted him were the sons of Amr b. Awf from the Aws tribe. When the Prophet asked where As'ad b Zurarah was, they said, "He killed someone from our tribe in the battle of Bu'ath. That is why he cannot dare to come here". A few hours later, at the end of the night, the arrival of As'ad by covering his face surprised the messenger of Allah. As'ad expressed his love for the Messenger of Allah by saying to the Prophet: "You are in a place, but how can I not come to greet you even if it costs my life?" The Prophet asked the people of Aws for assurance of safety for As'ad, who spent the night with him. In the face of this unexpected request, the people of Aws hesitated. The Prophet (pbuh) made great efforts. In the end, they all together said that they gave him an assurance of safety. After that day, As'ad was able to visit the Prophet comfortably whenever he wanted. <sup>[54]</sup>

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[53] Hamidullah, 1/137-138.

[54] Hamidullah, 1/139.

### I. The Quraysh Gather against the Prophet (pbuh) and Muslims

When the Muslims began to migrate secretly, a group of Meccans soon gathered to discuss the situation because the mushriks were very afraid that the Muslims would become stronger in Yathrib and take Mecca out of their hands. Assassination attempt on the Prophet was accepted among many ideas. The task was also given to a group with one member from each tribe.<sup>[55]</sup> Thus, the entire tribe would have taken responsibility, but it did not go as it planned. The Prophet's aunt Ruqayyah Bint Abi Safiyy Hashim, who learned about the assassination attempt, notified the Prophet. The Prophet immediately went to Abu Bakr and brought forward the date of migration and said that they should leave Mecca as soon as possible. Because the Prophet did not say anyone other than Abu Bakr, did not choose the route followed by the mushriks, and hid for a while in the Cave of Thawr, they could be able to reach Medina safely.

### J. First Steps for Hijrah

The Messenger of Allah and many Companions, such as Abu Bakr, emigrated at night. Some of them did not feel the need to hide it. For example, Omar, Ayyash ibn Rabi'ah and Hisham b. Abi'l as agreed to set out together. Since Abu Jahl could not say anything to Omar, he confronted Ayyash and said that his mother had vowed that she would not comb her hair, nor take shelter from the sun until she saw him. Ayyash was very upset when he learned this. Although Omar said it was a ruse, Ayyash, who loved his mother very much, gave up emigration. Having reached his goal, Abu Jahl immediately caught Ayyash and had him chained. Hisham, too, was chained and imprisoned by the mushrik family, who learned that he was preparing for the hijrah. These two Companions were imprisoned, chained to their feet until the Prophet secretly sent a man to rescue them.<sup>[56]</sup>

While powerless Muslims were committed to prison to prevent them from hijrah, the properties of some Companions were confiscated by the mushriks. When Suhaib al-Rumi accepted Islam and wanted to migrate to Medina, the Meccan mushriks went to him and said, "You were very poor when you came to us, then you became rich because of us. Now you want to go with this fortune. No, you can never do this". Suhaib asked if they would let him go if he left all his property. The mushriks allowed him to go. This attitude of his was very pleasing to the Prophet (pbuh).<sup>[57]</sup> Even a verse was revealed about him.<sup>[58]</sup>

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[55] al-Tabari, 3/117.

[56] Hamidullah, 1/144-45.

[57] Hamidullah, 1/145-46

[58] And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of Kindness to (His) slaves. al-Baqarah 2/207.

### G. Ansar Waits for the Messenger of Allah

The Prophet (pbuh) stayed in Quba for a while during his journey in strict confidence and built the first mosque there in Islamic history during his stay. Albeit the broiling hot of the sun, the people of Yathrib waited for the Prophet outside the city for days. When they first saw him and his companion, there was great enthusiasm in the city. They rushed to him with great longing. At first, they were not sure who the Messenger of Allah was, as most had never seen the Prophet (pbuh).<sup>[59]</sup> They understood who the Prophet was, who was shaded under the date tree with Abu Bakr, because Abu Bakr got up to shade him.

The Prophet entered Medina in 622 on the 12th day of Rabiul-Awwal.<sup>[60]</sup> Ansar competed with each other to have the honor of hosting the Prophet (pbuh) in their house, and they embraced both the Messenger of Allah and the Meccan Muslims who emigrated.

### Conclusion

The treaties of Aqaba have great importance in Islamic history, as they are the first steps for Hijrah. With these steps, Muslims would be able to establish a city-state in a short time, command many places and increase their population. In this context, the tribes of Aws and Khazraj are of great value in the eyes of Islam. The Prophet (Pbuh) and the Muslims will leave behind the years of Mecca, which passed with persecution, torture, and deprivation, migrate to a place they have never known and will become brothers with people they did not know before.

The Prophet (Pbuh) had been inviting different tribes to Islam for a long time. However, the time spent in Mecca was getting harder for the Messenger of Allah and the Muslims after the death of his wife Khadija, who supported him the most, and his uncle Abu Talib, who patronized him by protecting. The Prophet (Pbuh) resorted to going to a new place and demanded protection from people alongside conveying the message. Although these talks were sometimes prevented by the mushriks and remained inconclusive due to the refusals, he patiently continued his search. Again, a meeting at night with people he didn't even know who they were, ended up a result that would change the fate of all Muslims. This meeting, which was considered as protection for one side and salvation for the other, enabled the people of Yathrib to be passionately attached to the Messenger of Allah, and as a result of the pledge of allegiance and the guarantee they gave to the Prophet (Pbuh), the Muslims decided to emigrate altogether. Thus, Muslims will no longer be an oppressed, despised, and excluded minority and will become a state that can make decisions, dominate, and be obeyed.

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[59] Khalife b. Khayyat, *Tarihu Halffe b. Hayyât*, trans. Abdulhalik Bakır, (Ankara: 2001), 79.

[60] Khalife b. Khayyat, 80.

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# The Life of the Prophet Muhammad in Terms of Battles and Expeditions

Gazve ve Seriyeler Açısından Hz. Peygamber'in Hayatı

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**Abstract**

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) set an example for Muslims in all aspects. He showed believers how the Qur'an should be understood in different areas of life. Undoubtedly wars, or more generally, the collective struggle of people, is a phenomenon that will continue until the end of the world. The Prophet, in his own words, was a prophet of war and mercy. Islam is a religion of peace, but allowed to fight when necessary, and the prophet Muhammad (pbuh), took part in some wars himself. Therefore, the rules he set about war or how he understands the verses of the Qur'an about war are of vital importance for Muslims. Claiming that the Prophet never fought is inconsistent with historical facts. However, his battles are not similar to the wars of the great warrior emperors. There is no example in history of such great success with so few wars and losses. For this reason, he is unique too in finding solutions without fighting. He is the owner of a great strategy, such as sowing peace into wars. This article throws a little light on how societies should defend themselves or how warring societies should reconcile.

As peoples who have seen devastating wars in the name of peace in the east and west in recent centuries, we need to retrospectively reanalyze Prophet's (pbuh) wars. Quantitative information about the number of soldiers, historical records of where and when his wars were made, events reported in hadiths and theoretical rules in the fiqh literature are available in all details. Without going into unnecessary details, we evaluated the objectives, reasons, strategies and tactics of his battles, the methods of motivating his soldiers and his believers, the rules he set during the wars, the way he behaved towards his enemies and the results of all these. We will try to understand whether wars may have a peace goal or whether moral and legal rules can restrain the conflicts.

**Keywords:** Islamic History, Military History, Prophet Muhammad, Ghazwa, Sariyya.

## Öz

Hız. Muhammed'in (sav) hayatı pek çok yönüyle Müslümanlar için örnektir. O, Kur'an-ı Kerim'in nasıl anlaşılması gerektiğini tüm detaylarıyla kendisini takip eden ashabına öğretmiştir. Kuşkusuz savaşlar ya da genel manada insanların topyekûn mücadele içinde olması dünyanın sonuna dek devam edecek bir olgudur. Hız. Peygamber (sav) kendi ifadesiyle hem bir rahmet hem de bir savaş peygamberidir. İslam, bir barış dini olmakla beraber gerektiğinde savaş yapmaya da izin vermiştir. Bu sebeple Hız. Muhammed (sav) de çeşitli savaşlarda bizatihi yer almıştır. Böylece Müslümanlar için hayati bir öneme sahip cihad olgusunun vahiyle birlikte nasıl algılanması gerektiğiyle ilgili kurallar sünnetle birlikte ortaya konmuştur. Peygamberin hiç savaşmadığı iddiası tarihi gerçeklerle uyuşmaz. Ancak onun savaşları, tarihin şahit olduğu büyük komutanların savaşlarına benzemez. Onun döneminde savaşlar sonuçlarının büyüklüğü ve zayıflığın azlığı; savaşız çözümler bulmak bakımlarından tarihte eşsiz bir yere sahiptir. Savaşların içinde bile barış kapıları açan bir stratejist olan Hız. Muhammed'in hayatı, büyük bir örneklığe sahiptir. Bu makale, saldırı altındaki insanların kendilerini nasıl savundukları ve savaşan toplumların nasıl uzlaştıkları konusuna ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Asırlardır dünyanın doğusunda ve batısında barış adına yapılan yıkıcı savaşlara şahitlik edenler insanlar olarak Hız. Peygamber'in savaşlarını geriye dönük yenden incelememiz gerekmektedir. Asker sayıları, savaşlarının nerede ve ne zaman yapıldığına dair tarihi kayıtlar hakkında hadis ve fıkıh literatüründe detaylı bilgilere ulaşabilmekteyiz. Gereksiz ayrıntılara girmeden, Hız. Peygamber'in (sav) savaşlarını amaçları, nedenleri, strateji ve taktikleri, motive yöntemleri, savaş kuralları, düşmanlara karşı davranış şekilleri yönlerinden değerlendirdik ve çeşitli sonuçlara ulaştık. Savaşların bir barış amacı olup olmadığını; ahlaki ve hukuki kuralların çatışmaları sınırlamaya katkı sağlayıp sağlamadığını anlamaya çalıştık.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam Tarihi, Savaş Tarihi, Muhammed (sav), Gazve, Seriyeye.

## Introduction

There are several terms such as insurgency, counterinsurgency, asymmetric, and irregular warfare commonly used in the military historical literature to explain how small forces vanquished stronger ones.<sup>[1]</sup> On the other hand, powerful empires have large armies, and those irresistible armies often defeat weaker troops. In terms of tactics and operational techniques, we may have several interpretations and clarifications for the victories and defeats recorded some hundreds of years ago from today. For a historian, it is pretty easy to write causes and consequences for complex historical events. No historical event can be understood by simple deductions and reductions. No event in history can be known precisely, just as we do not see the present entirely and accurately. But the situation is a little unconventional when it comes to Muhammad (pbuh). The details of his life as a prophet are not just general ordinary historical records. Every single detail of his life was carefully observed during his period. For this reason, we have abundant and detailed information in the early sources. The general and academic interest in the Prophet's wars has continued to increase from the early narrations to current publications.

Legitimate wars are prohibited neither in Christianity and Judaism nor in Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. War is ancient and an unchangeable phenomenon like human nature; regardless of when, how and why, every war is an event worth taking a lesson from. The wars that Muhammad (pbuh) led are among the most noticeable, advanced, and tolerant of many wars of the past and present. He had fought the enemy three times or even twelve more times larger than his men, and he was practically always victorious.<sup>[2]</sup> In the period of Rashidun Caliphate (632-661), the conquests took place in line with his goals, teachings, and directions. So, there are traditional principles of warfare that distinguish Muslim commanders from Alexander the Great (d. 323 BC) or Genghis Khan (d. 1227 AD). However, there are differences between the concepts of jihad and war, both historically

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[1] Russ Rodgers, *The Generalship of Muhammad: Battles and Campaigns of the Prophet of Allah* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012).

[2] Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Battlefields Of The Prophet Muhammad* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1992). 2.

and conceptually. For example, historically, the spread of Islam along with jihad and the expansion of sovereignty areas by wars are not exactly alike. Jihad is not totally dependent on any personal charisma, army strength, deterrent rules, or great rewards. In addition, jihad is not a periodic event, it is actually a phenomenon.

The word jihad is derived from the Arabic root jahd جهد, which means to make an effort, to strive, to have a great zeal referring to all methods of struggle, including war. For example: "O Prophet! Struggle against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm with them. Hell will be their home. What an evil destination!" [3] "Those who were allowed to stay behind rejoiced at remaining behind and not accompanying the Messenger of Allah. They were averse to striving in the Way of Allah with their belongings and their lives and told others: "Do not go forth in this fierce heat." Tell them: "The Fire of Hell is far hotter!" Would that they understand!" [4] "Permission to fight back is hereby granted to those being fought, for they have been wronged. And Allah is truly most capable of helping them prevail." [5] "O Prophet, strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them. And their refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination." [6]

Similarly, jihad, as used in the hadith literature, refers, above all, to war. However, it is also noteworthy that the word jihad is used when talking about shouting the truth to the cruel ruler [7], about the struggle of a young man who cannot join a battle because his parents are in need of care [8], and about the struggle of human beings against their own self-development. [9] However, these statements are only an emphasis made due to the importance of the subject. As can be seen in the phrase "war on drugs," the word jihad is used to mean "to make a great effort" in a figurative sense. Jihad, overall, refers to collective warfare. Indeed, the word jihad in numerous hadiths such as "when the girls, who had lost their fathers in the Battle of Uhud, are introduced as

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[3] At-Tawbah, 9/73

[4] At-Tawbah, 9/81

[5] Al-Hajj, 22/39

[6] At-Tahrim, 66/9

[7] Sulayman al-Sijistani Abu Dawud, Sunan Abi Dawud (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah). "Malahim", 17.; Abu 'Abdullah Ibn Majah, Sunan Ibn Majah (Beirut: Dār Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabi, 1951), "Fitān", 20.

[8] Muḥammad b. Isma'īl al-Bukhari, al-Jami' al-Sahih (Beirut: Dar Tawq al-Najat, 2001), "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 138., "Adab", 3.; Abu al-Husain Ibn al-Hajjaj Muslim, al-Jami' al-Sahih (Cairo, 1956), Muslim, "al-Birr", 5.; Abu Dawud, "Jihad", 33. Abu Abdurrahman an-Nasai, Sunan Al-Nasai (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1981), "Jihad", 5.; Muhammad bin Isa al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami' al-Tirmidhi (Cairo: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1933), "Jihad", 2.

[9] Al-Tirmidhi, "Fedailu'l-Jihad", 2., Abu Dawud, "Jihad", 16.

‘their father died in Uhud while fighting by your side’<sup>[10]</sup>; “Umm Salama’s reproach to the Prophet (pbuh), saying ‘men go to jihad, why do not women?’<sup>[11]</sup> “A person who wishes to go to jihad in the way of Allah will receive rewards of a martyr no matter whether he is martyred or dies later”<sup>[12]</sup> mainly refer to fighting in battles.

The fact that it derives from the root of “vigorous effort” indicates the richness of the Arabic language. The term “war campaign” in English, albeit with minor differences in meaning, may be used to refer to this struggle undertaken collectively by the military, politics, media, industry, and public opinion, which can be easily observed in all societies, although their principles, methods, and goals may vary.<sup>[13]</sup> Other words such as “war,” “guerre,” or “krieg,” which are derived from Latin “werra” and Frankish “guerra” and Germanic “krigaz,” have meanings such as causing disturbance, rioting, and disorder which are not the exact equivalent of the word “jihad”.

The Arabic word “qital,” which is a part of jihads, derives from the word *قتل*, meaning to kill, and is rarely used in the main sources.<sup>[14]</sup> Qital takes place when two groups confront each other. It does not have to be aimed at a goal or a broader plan. Similarly, words such as *ba’ath* (sending), *nuzul* (taking position), *mubaraza* (duel) are all parts of jihads besides the actions in many areas such as diplomacy, intelligence, economy, bureaucracy, education, public relations, etc.

There are two special terms used for the wars or confrontations that took place in the era of the Prophet (pbuh). The first is *ghazwa* (pl. *ghazawat*). This term is used particularly for the wars involving the Prophet (pbuh) himself against the infidels.<sup>[15]</sup> The other term, *sariyya*, is the expedition sent by order of the Prophet (pbuh) but without the Prophet (pbuh). *Ghazwas* and *sariyyas* occupy a very central position for Muslims to understand the detailed dimensions and legal orders of the jihad. For this reason, many works and narrations about his wars have reached today.

The writings about Muhammad’s (pbuh) wars consist of two parts. The first is the early sources, and the second is the late works made through sources.

[10] Abu Dawud, “Faraid”, 4., Al-Tirmidhi, “Faraid”,3.

[11] Al-Tirmidhi, “Tafsir”, 5.

[12] Al-Tirmidhi, “Fadail al-Jihad” 21, Abu Dawud, “Jihad”, 42., Al-Nasai, “Jihad”,25.

[13] “War alone presents man with the opportunity of employing all his faculties, putting everything at risk, and testing his ultimate worth against an opponent as strong as himself.” Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York : Toronto : New York: Free Press, 1991). 118.

[14] Elşad Mahmudov, *Sebepleri ve Sonuçları Açısından Hz. Peygamberin Savaşları* (Istanbul: İSAM, 2010). 39.

[15] T. M. Johnstone, “*Ghazw*”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition (Brill, 24 Nisan 2012).

Our primary sources are the Qur'an<sup>[16]</sup>, hadiths<sup>[17]</sup>, siyar-maghazi-biography books<sup>[18]</sup>, and classical history books written about the history of Islam in the first period.<sup>[19]</sup> Secondary sources are also important for us in that they shed light on primary sources and establish various connections with the present. In this context, several studies were conducted in the 20th century. The most famous researcher who independently brought up the subject of the Prophet's wars was Muhammad Hamidullah. His book "The Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad" was translated into many languages and shed light on subsequent studies and reminded Muslim researchers that the life of the Prophet should also be considered in terms of military history. Russ Rodgers<sup>[20]</sup> as a command historian at U.S. Army is interested in wars that took place in the 7th century because of his interest in successful asymmetrical wars while Marsden Jones<sup>[21]</sup> as the founder of the Center for Arabic Studies at the American University in Cairo dealt with the dates of the wars. Mahmudov's PhD study<sup>[22]</sup> is one of the most comprehensive studies on this subject. He has facts, figures and good analysis on the causes and consequences of wars. Another scholar who studies the history of Islam in terms of military organization is Mustafa Zeki Terzi<sup>[23]</sup>. He has produced important works that examine not only the wars of the Prophet but also the military establishments of the Rashid Caliphs, Umayyads and Abbasids.

The Prophet not only fought personally but also sent small troops or large armies to many regions. City defence, city siege and field battles took place in his life. He did not go to war unless he had to. He was not defeated in any of the wars he found himself in. Muslims suffered minimal losses in the conflicts that took place throughout Prophet's (pbuh) life. He did not kill the enemy soldiers

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[16] Surah Ali 'Imran, Al-Anfal, Al-Ahzab

[17] Hadith scholars like Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhi etc. reported wars and expeditions of the Prophet (pbuh) in dedicated chapters named Jihad, Maghazi, Kharaj and Siyar. To give an idea, in maghazi chapter of al-Bukhari there are 464 hadiths. Abu Dawud reports over 266 hadiths and Al-Tirmidhi reports over 100 hadiths directly on the subject. Also, indirectly, there are several narrations for the Prophet's wars in other chapters as a collateral subject.

[18] Kitab al-Maghazi by Al-Waqidi, Al-Sirah Al-Nabawiyah by Ibn Hisham, Tabaqat by Ibn Sa'd. might be mentioned in these works.

[19] e.g., Tarikh (History) by Khalifah ibn Khayyat, Tarikh al- Ya'qubi by Ya'qubi, Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk (History of the Prophets and Kings) by Al-Tabari.

[20] Rodgers, Russ. The Generalship of Muhammad: Battles and Campaigns of the Prophet of Allah. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012.

[21] John Marsden Beaumont Jones, "The Chronology of the Maghāzī—A Textual Survey", Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 19/2 (1957), 245-280.

[22] Elşad Mahmudov, "Sebeb ve Sonuçları Bağlamında Hz. Peygamber'in Savaşları (Gazve ve Seriyeleri) Üzerine Bazı Notlar ve İstatistikler", Bakü Devlet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesinin İlmî Mecmuası II/2 (2005), 55-96.

[23] Mustafa Zeki Terzi, Hz. Peygamber ve Hulefâ-yi Râşidîn Döneminde Askeri Teşkilat (İstanbul: Siyer Yayınları, 2017).

even if he had the opportunity or strong reasons to do so. He continued his success on the battlefields in the diplomatic and social fields as well. He showed that wars are not fought only with swords. We will now take a closer look at his battles and expeditions by revisiting the facts, figures, causes, consequences, strategies, tactics, weapons, equipment, orders, directives, motives, and goals.

### A. Facts, Figures, Causes and Consequences

Muhammad (pbuh) stayed in Mecca for 13 years since his prophethood. During this time, he and his followers were subjected to various pressures and tortures. Despite all this, they did not respond to the attackers due to the verses about defending against oppressors had not been revealed yet. In the second and last period of his prophetic life, after migration to Madina, Muhammad (pbuh) participated in more than 20 wars<sup>[24]</sup> and against his opponents and dispatched 35-70 troops (sariyya) for several reasons.<sup>[25]</sup> The number of soldiers in the early sariyyas was around 30-40 men, and in the first ghazwas, it was around 200-300 men. Few military campaigns were organized against the Jews in Medina, Khaybar and Wadi al-Qura, and against the Christians in Mutah, Tabuk and Dumat al-Jandal. All other wars were against pagan Arabs. In only nine of Muhammad's (pbuh) military activities shed blood. These are Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Qurayza, Banu Mustaliq, Khaybar, Mecca, Hunayn and Taif.<sup>[26]</sup> In his direct battles, about 140 Muslims were martyred, and about 335 men from the enemy were killed. During his life, approximately 300 Muslims and 800 enemies died in total.<sup>[27]</sup>

Soldiers in the first Islamic armies consisted of infantry, archers, and cavalry. The infantries were called mushat or rajjalah, the archers were called rumat, and the cavalrymen were called fursan. Apart from these, there were also medics and intelligence agents. The Muslims did not need much cavalry for the wars in Arabia. However, they began to increase their horse numbers in preparation for encounters with the Romans and Persians outside Arabia. In the Tabuk campaign, the Muslims reached a cavalry unit of 10,000 people.<sup>[28]</sup>

Muhammad (pbuh) himself spent about a year and a half in total, including travelling to the wars he participated in. In the second year of Hijra, Muslims were allowed to fight back. The Prophet died in the eleventh year of Hijra. This period of 9 years has been chiefly spent with peace or peace initiatives. His

[24] Hamidullah, 3.

[25] Abu Muhammad Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sirah Al-Nabawiyah* (Cairo: Maktabat wa Matbaat Mustafa al-Babi, 1955). 2/209. Ali ibn Husain Al-Mas'udi, *Kitab al-Tanbih wa al-Ishraf* (Cairo: Dar al-Sawi). 1/242.

[26] Ibn Hisham, 2/609.

[27] Mahmudov, 72-73.

[28] Terzi, 73.

furthest war journey was for Tabuk, which is about 700 km from Medina. One of his most difficult journeys was for Dhat al-Riqa towards the Najd desert. During this expedition, the feet of the Muslims were cracked due to walking for a long time, and their nails began to fall. The closest military operation was the siege on Jewish communities in Medina.

Fifteen battles and fifty expeditions were planned and implemented to respond to the enemy. These wars took place for standing against those who attacked directly, blocking the tribes that were preparing to attack, pursuing the enemies, or deterring the tribes that were helping the enemies. In addition, threatening the border security of Medina or using the trade routes illegally without making an agreement with Medina were also considered as grounds for disagreement. When we look at other military mobilizations, what we see is more of the troops sent after the conquests to break idols or fight against false prophets. Whether or not the clashes took place, 28 of the 29 battles were successful. In the Battle of Uhud, however, there was no gaining party.

Hamza, Ali, Abu Bakr, Ubaydah ibn al-Harith, Abdullah ibn Jahsh, Abdurrahman ibn Awf, Khalid ibn al-Walid, Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, Zayd ibn Harithah, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, Abdullah ibn Rawaha and Usama ibn Zayd are among the commanders appointed by the Prophet (pbuh). Also, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh, Muhammad ibn Maslama, Zubair ibn al-Awwam, Abbad b. Bishr and Mughira ibn Shu'ba can be counted among the close guards of the Prophet (pbuh).<sup>[29]</sup>

A significant number of Muslim women, such as Nusaybah bint Al-Harith, Umm Sulaym, Umm Waraqa, participated in wars.<sup>[30]</sup> In fact, the Prophet's daughter Fatima and some of her wives like Aisha were present in the wars. Likewise, some names, such as her aunt Safiya or Ummu Umara, fought with their swords. Women, in general, were found in the fronts as auxiliary forces and dealt with treating the wounded. No Muslim women died in wars.<sup>[31]</sup> The number of women known to have participated in wars is around 10. However, it is not difficult to guess that the unrecorded numbers are higher. In general, Muhammad (pbuh) advised women not to participate in the war while answering Aisha's request to join the war, "your jihad is a pilgrimage".<sup>[32]</sup>

The ultimate goal of Islam is not war but peace. Ethics and rules are required for even wars in order not to fight for no reason. Also, unnecessary blood should not be spilt, and civilians and even soldiers should not be persecuted during

[29] al-Jawziyya Ibn Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 1994). 1/123.

[30] Muslim, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 142, Ibn Majah, "Jihad", 37.

[31] Abdurrazzaq al-San'ani, *Musannaf* (India: Al-Majlis al-Ilmi, 1982). 5/298. Al-Bukhari, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 67. Muslim, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 142. Ibn Majah, "Jihad", 37.

[32] Al-Bukhari, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 62

wars. Islam guarantees human rights with specific rules and the morality of war. The rules of war, like the rules of prayer or ablution, were laid out in detail throughout the life of the Prophet (pbuh).

Religions, similar to ideas, wants to spread. However, Islam does not hesitate to make peace with those who do not show hostility towards Islam. Muslims do not have the belief and tradition of total hatred towards a society in the form of an obsession like anti-Semitism. In Islam, wars are not declared for wealth or the unbridled ambitions of a charismatic leader. Wars must have real and lofty causes. There are general reasons and actual reasons for war in Islam. The general war reason of Islam is to pave the way for this religion against those who want to prevent the free movement of Islam and to prevent those who put obstacles between peoples and Islam. Another common cause of war is self-defence. The state has the right and duty to protect its citizens. For this reason, if Muslims were under attack, then, of course, the state had to have a response. This is a natural state reaction seen throughout history. Similarly, the people willingly oppose an attack against the state or the system of the state or the borders of the state. As in the Battle of the Khandaq, individuals take action and protect the state's borders. Sometimes the protection of borders can start a little further away. As in the military campaign against the people of Ghatafan, an operation can be organized in a preventive and deterrent way. All of these are for the purpose of protecting individuals, society and the state, and this trio is interconnected. To put it more precisely, the causes of the wars that took place during the reign of Muhammad (pbuh) were as follows.

1. Protecting people's lives.
2. Protecting people's estates and honours.
3. Protecting assured allies.
4. Stopping border violations of enemies, even if it's a trade caravan.
5. Punishing crimes against the state, such as killing ambassadors or delegations.

Of course, every state can put forward valid and reasonable reasons when the war is required. For this reason, it is necessary to look at the objectives of the wars as well, rather than the causes of the wars. When we read the Quran and the hadiths along with the wars of Muhammad (pbuh), we deduce that the following goals were pursued.

1. Spreading Islam<sup>[33]</sup>
2. Removing the barriers preventing Islam from reaching the people

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[33] "I have been commanded to fight against people till they testify that there is no god but Allah, that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and they establish prayer, and pay Zakat and if they do it, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah." Muslim, "al-Iman", 8.

3. Liberating oppressed nations<sup>[34]</sup>
4. Convincing enemies not to attack<sup>[35]</sup>
5. Ensuring safety and order<sup>[36]</sup>

While the wars were taking place, some benefits were also obtained for the state and its people. It would not be right to ignore such natural acquisitions. Expressing them as they are will also prevent unnecessary speculation with exaggeration. The following benefits were obtained in the wars that took place in the time of the Prophet (pbuh).

1. Meeting new people and inviting them to Islam.
2. Exploring new places, gathering news and intelligence.
3. Generating income and reducing the enemy's revenues.
4. Showing strength to the enemy and motivating the believers.
5. Uniting and keeping people together around a common goal.

## B. Strategies, Tactics, Weapons and Equipment

If we consider Muhammad's (pbuh) wars in the context of strategy, operation, and tactics, we can say that he was a superior commander. The strategy of the Muslims was to spread Islam. All operations and tactics are planned to serve this overall strategy. Operations were open to consultation. The opinions of only those with knowledge and experience were taken, not everyone's. Also, sometimes the time and direction of the operation were hidden. For example, when they set out for the conquest of Mecca, the majority of the army did not know where they were going. Tactics were also flexible. Commanders were variable, and a different commander gained experience in each battle. In case the commander was killed, the second and third commanders were also predetermined. Everyone was taking part in all processes in a short period of time and undergoing rapid training.

Prophet's wars were on land, not at sea. For this reason, from a tactical point of view, troop movements became the main issue. Military mobilizations required detailed planning. Because there was always the possibility of facing the enemy any minute. The army dispatch plan was made as follows: Preplanning, map

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[34] "And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, Let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression." al-Baqara 2/193.

[35] Prepare against them what you 'believers' can of 'military' power and cavalry to deter Allah's enemies and your enemies as well as other enemies unknown to you but known to Allah. Whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be paid to you in full and you will not be wronged. al-Anfal, 8/60.

[36] Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. at-Tawbah, 9/29.

exploration, route and checkpoints selection, marching speed determination, stop-overs regulation and, the establishment of intelligence flow during the journey.<sup>[37]</sup>

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) preferred to fight after sunrise in the morning. In the heat of the afternoon or in case of worsening weather conditions, he postponed the hot clashes.<sup>[38]</sup> He controlled the army one by one, put them in line, and ensured that they were lined up in an orderly manner.<sup>[39]</sup> Before the war started, he would talk to his soldiers and pray to Allah abundantly after the preparations were completed. When the war started, he would fight by taking a position close to the enemy.<sup>[40]</sup> In the war, he allowed the Muslims to swagger on the enemy. In non-war times, it was forbidden because it was arrogance. As a tactic in war, he also allowed deceiving the enemy, saying “war is deception”.<sup>[41]</sup>

Arabs were able to find out who went where and when, from footprints, camel dung, date seeds or leftovers.<sup>[42]</sup> During the Battle of the Khandaq, he told his men who would bring news from Bani Qurayza, “Give your news in a coded language, do not put fear in the hearts of the people by saying it openly.”<sup>[43]</sup> In addition, Muslims used a different motto in each war. For example, in the Battle of Badr, they used the motto “Ahad Ahad (one, one)” to emphasize monotheism against the polytheistic enemy. This usage was for motivation rather than getting to know each other. Because the enemy Arabs also knew this usage style. It was also used in wars in pre-Islamic times and was not difficult to decipher the motto of the Muslims. For this reason, we can say that these passwords are mostly used to establish nervousness and control each other. Aws and Khazraj from Ansar also used different mottos.<sup>[44]</sup> They used to utter takbir (Allahu akbar) when attacking the enemy or at the moment of victory.<sup>[45]</sup>

The tactic of deceiving the enemy about the size of the army was also used in the wars of the Prophet (pbuh). The night after the Battle of Uhud and the nights just before the conquest of Mecca, they lit hundreds of campfires, and in both cases, Meccans had an incorrect estimate of the number of Muslims.<sup>[46]</sup> The Meccans thought that reinforcements had arrived to help the Muslims and decided to return to Mecca instead of attacking Medina.

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[37] Terzi, 101.

[38] Al-Bukhari, “Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar”, 112.

[39] Al-Bukhari, “Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar”, 97.

[40] Muslim, “Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar”, 28.

[41] Al-Bukhari, “Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar”, 157.

[42] Al-Bukhari, “al-Maghazi”, 40.

[43] Al-Waqidi, 2/459.

[44] Al-Waqidi, 1/71.

[45] Al-Bukhari, “Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar”, 130.

[46] Al-Waqidi, 1/338.

The Prophet used offensive weapons and equipment such as swords, daggers, spears, arrows, and catapults in his wars. They donned armour such as shield, armour, helmet, tanner.<sup>[47]</sup> As for the personal belongings he used in battles, he had nine known swords, seven armours and six bows. He liked to name his items. The names of his swords were Ma'sur, Adb, Zulfiqar, Qali, Battar, Khatf, Rasob, Mehzam, Qadib. The names of his armour were Dhat al-Fudul, Dhat al-Wishah, Dhat al-Hawashi, Sadiyyah, Fidida, Batra and Hirneq. His bows were Zawra, Rawha, Bayda, Ketoom and Sadad.<sup>[48]</sup> He wanted Muslims to fight with the weapons they were accustomed to. Therefore, he recommended that Persian bows not be used.<sup>[49]</sup>

Banners and flags were waved in wars. The Commander-in-Chief was carrying the banner. In addition, unit commanders have their own flags. The Prophet's banner was white, and his flag was black. He had the word "Tawhid" written on them. While Ansar used green and red flags, Muhajir preferred black and white. The unfurling of the flags meant war. It was also useful to see the location of the divisions.<sup>[50]</sup> Muslims would also have personal turbans or signs they wore on their helmets. For example, Hamza wore a feather from an ostrich or eagle's wing. The turban tail of Ali was white, Zubayr's black, Abu Dujana's red, and Hubab bin Mundhir's was green.<sup>[51]</sup> Armies travelled on foot or on horses and camels. Heavy items such as tents, tanners and rams could be carried on camels.<sup>[52]</sup> The alternative to camels was ox carts. However, this was a technique mostly used by the Romans. Using camels was the only way to make a solid way through the desert, even in the African deserts and Australia, until the emergence of modern war vehicles.<sup>[53]</sup>

### C. Orders, Directives, Motives and Goals

Analysis of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as a military commander and understanding his battles by putting the modern conceptual frames aside would be a good starting point to see him from the other way around. He was preaching the religion in wars rather than giving tactics. He was trying to teach the morals of war, knowing that wars would last until the end of the world. Rather than romantically rejecting war, he accepted this reality and

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[47] Terzi, 221-239.

[48] Ibn Qayyim, 1/126.

[49] Ibn Majah, "Jihad", 18.

[50] Al-Waqidi, 2/804; Hamidullah, 35.

[51] Al-Waqidi, 1/76, 259.

[52] Terzi, 215.

[53] Philip G. Jones - Anna Kenny, *Australia's Muslim cameleers: pioneers of the inland, 1860s-1930s* (Kent Town, S. Aust: Wakefield Press, 2010).

shed light on sustainable peace by proposing to limit and frame wars. His advice to Muslims regarding the war is summarized as follows.

1. Fight in the name of Allah and for the sake of Allah.
2. Do not betray each other, do not be unfair to others.
3. Do not touch women, children, elders, clergies, mentally ill persons, and other non-military civilians.<sup>[54]</sup>
4. When you meet the enemy, first invite them to Islam.
5. Do not act with revenge. Treat the dead bodies of your enemies well.<sup>[55]</sup>

According to Islamic law, it is not right to kill not only unarmed civilians but also servants, administrators, bureaucrats, and kings. Monks, priests, farmers are also considered non-combat civilians.<sup>[56]</sup> It is also forbidden to cut down trees, demolish buildings and kill animals.<sup>[57]</sup> A person who gives a peaceful salute cannot be treated with hostility. The call to prayer heard from a city besieged for conquest meant that any war plan had to be cancelled. The prisoners should be treated well. The Prophet (pbuh) divided the captives among the Muslims, and each person would have taken the responsibility of meeting the needs of the captive, such as giving food to them, dressing them etc. The captives were released, sometimes free of charge, sometimes for ransom. He did not take anyone prisoner while entering Mecca and declared a general amnesty.<sup>[58]</sup> Considering the fact that the Prophet (pbuh) also buried the dead and treated the wounded,<sup>[59]</sup> we can understand that the moral principles of Islam were shown to the enemy during wars. Because at war, people's perceptions are at a high level. They remember in detail the events that took place during the crisis. Because Muslims behaved respectfully towards their enemies, people who once fought against Muslims continued to fight in the name of Islam after they became Muslims and did not hold grudges because of what happened in the past.

After the victory is achieved, the loot is collected. First of all, those who show benefits during the war and deserve it or those who are new to Islam are given the share determined by the commander. One-fifth of the remainder is reserved for government spending. Women, children, and the elderly who are not in the war are given a share of this part. The remaining booty was distributed among the Muslim soldiers, considering the costs of horse care, a little more, and a little less for the infantry, but an equal share for everyone.<sup>[60]</sup>

[54] Muslim, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", 8, 48.

[55] Al-Tirmidhi, "Siyar", 48, Abu Dawud, "Jihad", 90.

[56] Abul Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad Mawardi, *Al Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Hadith, 1994). 94.,212.

[57] Abdurrazzaq, 5/198.

[58] Al-Waqidi, 2/835.

[59] Muslim, "Jannah", 17.

[60] Al-Bukhari, "Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar", Muslim, *Al-Jihad wa al-Siyar*", 17.

Even when the Prophet had no power, and the Muslims looked like a handful of adventurers from the outside, they were talking about big goals and never losing their motivation. What motivated Muslims was the Hereafter rather than this world. Because human beings want to be happy, but more than that, they want happiness to be permanent. In the Qur'an, the devil deceived Adam, who was already in heaven, with the promise of eternity.<sup>[61]</sup> The biggest motivation for Muslims was that they were fighting for a goal in the name of Islam, hoping the eternal happiness.

In the most challenging times, the Prophet was giving his friends the good news that the most difficult goals would be achieved. Those who heard the prophecies did not laugh, saying that it was just a dream or keeping quiet as not to offend him. On the contrary, they followed these glad tidings and reminded each other of the relevant hadiths when they came true. For example, while emigrating from Mecca to Medina, with a bounty placed on their heads, he told Suraqa b. Malik that "I see you wearing Kisra's bracelet, and I feel as if I was with you at the time."<sup>[62]</sup> In the Battle of Khandaq, at a time when all the Arab tribes came to besiege Medina while digging a trench, he was breaking a hard rock with his own hands, giving the news of the conquest of Yemen, Rome and Iran in the near future.<sup>[63]</sup>

When we look at the Prophet's rules, practices, goals and motivations in general, we see harmony. Because most of the time, leaders compromise their principles to achieve big goals. Sometimes they do injustice to the people with whom they have achieved success together and destroy the motivation of the soldiers. The rules laid down by the Prophet were both just, merciful, and sensitive enough to not leave a grudge even after the war. None of his commanders rebelled in his life. After he died, the people he educated did not change the rules of war he set.

## Conclusions

The first meaning of the concept of jihad is a collective struggle. The Prophet (pbuh) stated that he was the Prophet of both mercy and war. The main goal of Muslims is to spread Islam, and war is the last resort. Muslims have not had a strategy to impose war as an art and to impose their domination on other societies, to carry out exemplary massacres to intimidate the next society, and to leave the enemy helpless by deliberately touching civilians. For this reason, they did not fight those who did not attack Muslims, and they did not

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[61] But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, "O Adam! shall I lead thee to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?" Taha, 20/120.

[62] Tahir Al-Maqdisi, *Kitab al-bad' wa-l-ta'rikh* (Port Said: Maktabat al-Siqafah al-Diniyyah). 5/41.

[63] Al-Waqidi, 2/450.

take revenge on those who gave up fighting. It is evident that early Muslims learned from the Prophet (pbuh) how to understand war and peace.

The war came to the fore in Medina. There Muslims became citizens of a city-state where they were independent. Thereby, the previous forms of relations with the Meccans of the same status have changed. This new situation brought many things with it. The individual, social and institutional situations of Muslims are regulated. Muslims have entered the phase of establishing new economic, social, political, and military institutions and using them effectively. For example, Muslims built a mosque in the heart of the city, established their own marketplaces, made a deal with the Jews, and started to send intelligence officers and military units out of Medina. The Meccans, who did not understand the new situation, continued border harassment, unauthorized commercial crossings, and various attacks. As a part of this new status, a conflict took place in Batn al-Nakhla and then Mecca and Medina came face to face with the Battle of Badr. These are more than a simple and accidental war; it is a war driven by the Meccans' rejection of the sovereignty of Medina, the actions of sending their caravans to Damascus by violating the lands dominated by the Muslims without the need to make an agreement, and not recognizing them as a challenge and interlocutor. Therefore, the permission verses for war are related to the new situation of the Muslims in Medina. Before that, The Prophet always advised patience while Muslims were persecuted in Mecca.

The wars of the Prophet are divided into three groups. The first is the special operations units, where the commander and the soldiers are determined one by one. Secondly, non-compulsory, voluntary wars are declared by a general invitation. The third is the wars in which all Muslims are expected to participate in mobilization. He commanded some of these wars by participating directly (ghazwa); in others, he only sent troops but did not participate directly (sariyya). In all these wars, about a thousand people from all sides lost their lives. As a result, Arabia was united for the first time in its history. It is difficult to find an example of such bloodless and significant changes in history. Wars took place in the last nine years of his life, and he fought for a total of about one and a half years. His life has generally been spent with peace and peace initiatives. Additionally, during his wars, the laws and morals of war were revealed in detail, and an extensive literature has emerged on the rules to be followed in wars. Because of his wise compassion, his enemies joined him instead of continuing to be hostile to him.

His basic strategy was to spread Islam with the least harm. The Arabs were not accustomed to the tactics he used. He was working with different commanders, using different tactics, and acting out of the ordinary. He kept the motivation of the army at a high level. They were not discouraged when

they were defeated or made decisions out of their expectations. Weapons of war, on the other hand, were traditional, familiar to the warriors, and easy to supply. However, he did not hesitate to use unusual war tools such as catapults. Muslim warriors were limited to harsh rules of war rather than tactics and weapons. They were forbidden to kill women, children, the elderly, farmers, clergy, and animals. They could not cut down trees and they could not wash houses. Due to the practical application of many such rules, Muslims did not face the enemies' quest for revenge after the victories. These detailed moral warfare orders were the main reason why wars had lasting results. Consequently, Muhammad (pbuh) and his wars left a legacy of a balanced morality policy that offers absolute peace by accepting human realities, not rhetoric that set the world on fire with the rhetoric of peace talks.

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# Understanding Muslim - Jewish Relationship in Medina during the Era of Prophet Muhammad

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Müslüman-Yahudi İlişkilerini Anlamak

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### Abstract

From the first years of Islam, the Jews had been regarded as the most important non-Muslim community for the Muslims because they represented the majority of the communities in Medina. Although their knowledge of prophethood, the Jews are known for their denial of Prophet Muhammad. This paper explains how Prophet Muhammad treated the Jewish in Medina during his era by reviewing narrations in early sources, verses about Jews, and related modern studies. It is shown that Prophet Muhammad practices kindness towards others, including the enemies, as well as practicing firms in his decision and actions. It should be emphasized that the article is not seeking a new claim on the treatment of the Jews in Medina. However, the critical points by reviewing the related traditions were presented in order, and the historical data about the Medina era has been evaluated to reach some findings. The most important one of the findings was that the Prophet intended to keep the agreement with the Jews until the last moment, and he avoided war. However, in three independent examples which are given in the article, the party that broke the agreement was the Jews. Once the contract was broken, they were treated harshly; the Muslims showed their strength by expelling them from their lands and dooming their men to death.

**Keywords:** Islamic History, Muslims, Jews, Prophet Muhammad, Medina Treaty

### Öz

İslamiyet'in ilk yıllarından beri Yahudiler, Müslümanlar açısından en önemli gayrimüslim topluluk olarak sayılmaktaydılar. Çünkü İslam'ın erken döneminde Medine'deki toplulukların çoğunluğunu temsil ediyorlardı. Nitekim Yahudiler, peygamberlik hakkında ön bir bilgiye sahip olmalarına rağmen, Hz. Peygamber'in peygamberliğini reddetmişlerdir. Bu makale, erken dönem İslam Tarihi kaynaklarındaki rivayetleri, Yahudiler hakkındaki ayetleri ve ilgili çalışmaları gözden geçirerek Medine'deki Yahudilerin nasıl muamele gördüğünü açıklamak üzere yazılmıştır. Makalede, Hz. Peygamber'in, karar ve eylemlerinde net duruşunun yanı sıra düşmanları da dahil olmak üzere başkalarına karşı iyi muamelesi ortaya konulmuştur. Makale, Hz. Peygamber'in Yahudilere muamelesi konusunda yeni bir yaklaşım ortaya koymayı iddia etmeksizin rivayetlerin gözden geçirilmesi neticesinde öne çıkan hususları belirli bir düzen içinde sunmayı ve tarihi kayıtları Medine dönemi özelinde değerlendirerek birtakım sonuçlara ulaşmayı hedeflemiştir. Yahudilerle olan ilişkiden çıkarılan en önemli sonuç ise Hz. Peygamber'in onlarla yapılmış olan anlaşmayı son ana kadar koruma niyetinde olduğu ve savaştan kaçındığıdır. Nitekim makalede verilen birbirinden bağımsız üç örnekte de görüldüğü üzere anlaşmayı bozan taraf Yahudiler olmuştur. Bir kez anlaşma bozulunca onlara karşı katı muamele sergilenmiş; yurtlarından sürülüp ölüme mahkûm edilmek suretiyle Müslümanlar güçlerini göstermişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam Tarihi, Müslümanlar, Yahudiler, Hz. Muhammed, Medine Sözleşmesi

## Introduction

The arrival of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)<sup>[1]</sup> in Medina was well celebrated by the people of Medina. The Arabs in Medina understood and acknowledged divinity and his prophethood because they mingled with the Jews who professed their faith to Prophet Musa (AS). The Jews had also reminded them regarding the coming of a prophet and messenger.<sup>[2]</sup> Ibn Ishaq narrates the conversation between the Prophet and some Jews before the Hijrah. According to the narration, the Jews were curious about his prophecy and asked some key things that they already knew by means of Tawrāt. They asked firstly about spirit, and Prophet Muhammad answered them as soon as a revelation came about it. Their other question was about Tawrāt, and in the answer, he had implied the lack of this book compared to the knowledge of Allah.<sup>[3]</sup> After such conversations, the Jews had some clue for the authenticity of prophethood as they were informed about an expected prophet. However, most of them were unwilling to accept this new Prophet because he was not among the Jews.

The migration of Prophet Muhammad and the Muhajirun had changed the composition of residents in Medina. The composition of residents in Medina had become three large clusters. The immigrant Arabs from Mecca (the Muhajirun), the Arabs from Medina (the Helpers or Ansar), and the Jews.<sup>[4]</sup> Before the arrival of the Prophet in Medina, he had planned and formed the Medina Charter to ensure the unity between the Muhajirun and Ansar<sup>[5]</sup>, as well as all the communities in Medina. This Medina Charter must be adhered to by all the people of Medina, including the Jews. The Jews were the majority of the community during the early era of Prophet Muhammad in Medina.

Some of the Jews anticipated the arrival of Prophet Muhammad and recognized him as the awaited one. They accepted the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad and joined him as followers. However, most Jews who origin from Medina did not join the community. They did not consider him a prophet of

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- [1] Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him, Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam (SAW), for the rest of the article wherever His name comes.
- [2] Embong Zaleha et al., "Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter", *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 10/10 (2020), 24; Embong Zaleha, "Conflict Management in the Constitution of Medina: An Analysis", *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8/12 (2018), 400.
- [3] Muhammad b. Ishāk b. Yasār, *Siyar Ibn Ishāq*, trans. Muhammed Hamidullah (İstanbul: Düşün Yayıncılık, 2012), 268-269. Unfortunately Ibn Ishāq does not give any further detail which reflects Muslim-Jews relationship. Hamidullah emphasizes that the Sirah literature is not helpful to understand the policy of the Prophet against the Jews. Muhammed Hamidullah, *İslam Peygamberi* (İstanbul: Beyan Yayınları, 2013), 462.
- [4] Zaleha et al., "Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter"; Zaleha, "Conflict Management in the Constitution of Medina: An Analysis", 25.
- [5] Al-Jawhary Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, ed. Mohd Nor Masniza (Batu Caves, Selangor, Malaysia: Must Read Sdn. Bhd., 2020), 189.

God even though they heard the stories about some other Jews who did believe in his prophetic status. These were the major of the Jews, and it seems to reflect the historical reality.<sup>[6]</sup>

As the denial of most of the Jews towards the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad, this study is conducted to find out the treatment of the Prophet towards the Jewish in Medina.

### A. The Jewish in Medina

During the Era of Prophet Muhammad in Medina, Banū Qaynuqa', Banū Qurayza, and Banū Nadir were the three main tribes of Jewish. Banū Qaynuqa' was an ally of the Khazraj Tribe living in Yathrib, while Banū Qurayza and Banū Nadir were the allies of Aws Tribe, and they were living out of Yathrib. These three main tribes had been one of the reasons for the disputes between the Banū Aws and the Banū Khazraj, as they were the ones that incited both the Arab tribes in Medina into war since long before.<sup>[7]</sup>

The Hijra of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muhajirun awaken the Arab Tribes in Medina on the Jewish domination. This domination was cultural and social as well as economic. Even though Medinans use Arabic in their daily life, the names of some places in Medina were in Hebrew.<sup>[8]</sup> On the other hand, they had economic domination because of their wealth.<sup>[9]</sup> The arrival of Prophet Muhammad and the Muhajirun had helped them in escaping from the Jewish hegemony. Meanwhile, the advent of Prophet Muhammad dismayed the Jewish as they felt his arrival as a catastrophe and a threat to their current position. Therefore, they disliked and hostiles Islam but never had enough courage to show their true colours until the upcoming days.<sup>[10]</sup>

### 1. The Treaty: A Desire or a Necessity?

A treaty was prescribed in Medina to create a peaceful relationship as the Medina community consisted of a plural society.<sup>[11]</sup> Hence, the Medina Charter (or Constitution of Medina)<sup>[12]</sup> was enacted to ensure that the relations among

[6] Reuven Firestone, "Muhammad, the Jews, and the Composition of the Qur'an: Sacred History and Counter-History", *Religions* 10/63 (2019), 4.

[7] Hamidullah, *Islam Peygamberi*, 475.

[8] Nuh Arslantaş, "Hz. Peygamber'in Çağdaş Yahudilerin Sosyo-kültürel Hayatlarına Dair Bazı Tespitler", *İSTEM* 11(2008), 20.

[9] Mark R. Cohen, Islamic Policy toward Jews from the Prophet Muhammad to the Pact of 'Umar, Meddeb, Abdelwahab, and Benjamin Stora, (eds.) *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the origins to the present day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 59.

[10] Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, 184.

[11] Zaleha, "Conflict Management in the Constitution of Medina: An Analysis", 401.

[12] See Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Constitution of Medina", *Encyclopedia Britannica*, (Accessed 4 December 2021).

the community were well organized as well as to restructure the political and social system of Medina. It contained 47 Clauses and was divided into two parts. The first part constituted Clause 1 to Clause 23, related to the Muhajirun and Ansar relations, while the second part, which constituted from Clause 24 to Clause 47 concerned with the rights and obligations of the Jews. The first part was completed before the Battle of Badr, while the second was subsequently completed after the Battle of Badr.<sup>[13]</sup> In this Constitution, Muhajirun and Ansar articles were satisfactory for their Arab tribe understanding because of emphasizing the Muslim brotherhood. On the other hand, Jews were counted only as allied with Muslims in accordance with their conception for a treaty. There are some discussions about the content of the charter and the reasons of Jews for having a treaty with Muslims.<sup>[14]</sup> It seems that the Jews did not have a desire to make an agreement with Muslims, but it was a necessity for them. Although their unwillingness and “conditional yes” to the treaty, they were regarded as in the one community with Muslims as having equal rights.

Clause 25 in the Medina Charter mentioned, *“And the Jews (Banū Awf) shall be considered as one community (Ummah) along with the believers –for the Jews their religion, and for the Muslims, theirs, be one client or patron. He, however, who is guilty of oppression or breach of treaty, shall suffer the resultant trouble as also his family, but no one besides.”* It was also mentioned one by one in Clause 25 to Clause 34 on the position of the Jewish Tribes being one Ummah together with the Muslims.<sup>[15]</sup>

Some other passages mentioned on the Jews in the Medina Charter were:

- i. Whoever among the Jews embraced Islam, and they will receive aid and defense as long as they were no longer together with them, collaborating and doing cruel things.
- ii. The Jews can collaborate with the Muslims in certain things, even though they remain anti-religion.
- iii. The Jews and the Muslims must agree as long as they do not battle.
- iv. This ruling cannot be amended; whoever is free to come in and out to live in Medina, except those who did cruel things and committed sins. Indeed, Allah is with those who did good and pious, as well as Prophet Muhammad.

[13] Zaleha et al., “Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter”, 26.

[14] Hüseyin Yılmaz, “Medine Sözleşmesi Bağlamında Birlikte Yaşama Kültürü”, *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 25 (2021), 239-258. Mustafa Yayla, “Islam and Tolerance: A Need for a Contemporary Madinah Constitution”, *Journal of Human Sciences* 13 (2016), 2431-2440.

[15] Zaleha, “Conflict Management in the Constitution of Medina: An Analysis”, 403.

As it was mentioned before, the Jews were the majority in Medina during that time. Despite secretly harboring hostilities towards Islam, they did not express any enmity yet. Hence, Prophet Muhammad immediately agreed with them, ensuring peace, not hostile or expelling them.<sup>[16]</sup>

The Jews were recognized as citizens per the Medina Charter as long as they contributed to their responsibilities.<sup>[17]</sup> The concept of Ummah was implemented in the Medina Charter, which resulted in the formation of the love and justice relationship among the society. This situation proved that Prophet Muhammad practiced the principles of tolerance, love, respect, justice, and responsibilities. However, the three main Jews Tribes, Banū Qaynuqa', Banū Nadir, and Banū Qurayza, breached out their treaty and thus were expelled from Medina.

## 2. The Breaking out the Treaty

Banū Qaynuqa' was the first amongst the three Jewish Tribes expelled from Medina because of their betrayal.<sup>[18]</sup> The expulsion of Banū Qaynuqa' happened after the Battle of Badr. Two factors are narrated that led to them breaking out of the treaty. The first factor was the dissatisfaction with the victory of the Muslims in the Battle of Badr. Their discontent and hatred were shown when Prophet Muhammad told them, *"O the tribes of Jewish, fear the wrath of Allah as what happened to the Quraish. (Come and) embrace Islam as you know that I am the Prophet sent to you as stated in your book and Allah's promise to you."* As they heard the speech of Prophet Muhammad, they replied arrogantly, *"O Muhammad, do not be proud of your victory killing the Quraish (as they) are not well in the battle. If you are brave enough, face us (and) you will know that we are the people that you have not ever met yet."* The second factor was when a Jewish man had made fun of a Muslim woman and tied her garment. When the Muslim woman got up from her seat, her back was exposed. Therefore, the Jewish laughed at her. The Muslim woman shouted for help. One Muslim man across quickly came. Due to his anger as the honor of Islam had been insulted, he killed the Jewish. As the Jewish friends saw the incident, they attacked the Muslim man and killed him. Therefore, the conflict between the Muslims and the Jewish occurred. Banū Qaynuqa' had violated the peace treaty in the Constitution of Medina.<sup>[19]</sup>

[16] Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, 190-192.

[17] Ahmad Ibrahim - Dzafir El-Qasimy, *Piagam Madinah: Pandangan Dan Ulasan* (Kuala Lumpur: Gelanggang Kreatif, 1985); Zaleha, "Conflict Management in the Constitution of Medina: An Analysis", 403-404.

[18] Ibn Jarir al-Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, trans. Cemalettin Saylık (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2019), 2/464.

[19] Hamidullah, *Islam Peygamberi*, 166.

Banū Nadir was the second of the Jewish Tribe to breach out their treaty. This event occurred in the 4th year of Hijrah. As the Battle of Uhud ended, they exposed their courage to betray the Muslims. Banū Nadir secretly conspired with the Mushriks of Mecca to defeat the Muslims even to the plan of killing Prophet Muhammad after the event of al-Raji' and the Well of Ma'unah that many of Muslims had been martyred.<sup>[20]</sup>

As per the constitution of Medina, the Jewish must pay the ransom. Prophet Muhammad and his sahāba met them in collecting the ransom for the two men from Banū Kilab who were killed by Amr b. Umayya al-Damri. While accumulating the ransom from the Jews, Prophet Muhammad was requested to wait outside of their house. Meanwhile, the Jews had planned to crush a big rock on the head of the Prophet. Amr b. Jihash was the one who was preparing for this assassination.<sup>[21]</sup> Sallam bin Mishkam, one Jewish, advised them to cancel this plan as it was a betrayal of the treaty between them and Prophet Muhammad. However, they were determined to continue their evil plot. Jibril met Prophet Muhammad and told him about the Jews' plan. Prophet Muhammad quickly left to Medina and notified his sahāba about the Jews' scheme.<sup>[22]</sup>

Banū Qurayza, the last Jewish Tribe in Medina to breach out their treaty. During the preparation of The Battle of Khandaq (Ghazwah of Khandaq; means ditch, trench, or moat), the leader of Banū Nadir, Huyay b. Akhtab met Ka'ab bin Asad, the leader of Banū Qurayza. He suggested they breach their treaty with Prophet Muhammad. Ka'ab initially refused and expressed his loyalty to Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims, but Huyay urged him to the point that Ka'ab prepared to breach out their treaty and had conspired with Quraish. They gathered and promised to beat Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims together. Prophet Muhammad received the news of their betrayal; thus, he urged Sa'd b. Mu'adh to investigate the truth of this news. He told Sa'd to use figurative language during the conversation until he knew the truth. As the betrayal of Banū Qurayza was confirmed, Sa'd met Rasulullah. He welcomed him with Takbir and his speech, "O Muslims, be happy with the help of Allah and the promise of victory." As the Muslims already know about the betrayal of Banū Qurayza, the Munāfiqūn spread doubts among Muslims and frightened them with the news that the enemies would come from every corner. One of them said, "Muhammad promised us before that we will be consuming the wealth of Kisra and Qaisar, but now even to defecate, we do not feel safe."<sup>[23]</sup>

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[20] Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, 259-260.

[21] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/529.

[22] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/531.

[23] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/547 ff.

The Muslims won the Battle of Khandaq without going through any battle. Nu'aym b. Mas'ūd, a former Mushrik who had a good relationship with Quraish and the Jews, embraced Islam. He offered himself to Prophet Muhammad, and he gave him the task to break the enemies' forces. As the news of Nu'aym b. Mas'ūd becomes a Muslim was not well-known yet, he met Banū Qurayza and suggested them not to start the war before they were guaranteed by 70 leaders of Quraish as a bet so that the Quraish would not leave them in Medina to face the Muslims after the war, which Banū Qurayza agreed. Next, Nu'aym b. Mas'ūd went to meet the leaders of Quraish and told them that Banū Qurayza repented their actions and secretly made alliances with Prophet Muhammad to kidnap the leaders of Quraish and Ghatfan to be killed. Therefore, when Banū Qurayza met the Quraish to ask a few of their leaders for the bet, the Quraish did not send anyone of them.<sup>[24]</sup>

## B. The Expulsion of the Jewish

As stated earlier, Banū Qaynuqa' was expelled from Medina due to the two factors of them breaking out the treaty in the Constitution of Medina. Prophet Muhammad had surrounded their village for 15 days from Shawwal to the early of Dhulkaedah on the second year of Hijrah. After being surrounded for so long, the Jewish were fear and depressed. Finally, they surrendered and were ready to accept the decision of Prophet Muhammad.<sup>[25]</sup>

Prophet Muhammad urged for their men to be tied and killed. When the Muslims almost did, Abdallah b. Ubayy b. Salūl<sup>[26]</sup>, one of the allies of Banū Qaynuqa' with the Khazraj Tribes before, begged for the apology from Prophet Muhammad. He forgave and released them with a condition, which they needed to leave Medina and abandon all their belongings. Tabarī gives detail about this ask for the mercy of Abdallah b. Ubayy b. Salūl.<sup>[27]</sup> According to him, Abdallah asked for mercy for the Jews, describing them as his mawālī<sup>[28]</sup>, and he was not kind to the Prophet in this request.

Allah had stated in the Quran,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ  
مِّنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

[24] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/552 ff.

[25] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/363 ff.

[26] One of the leaders of Medina. See Watt, W. Montgomery, "Abd Allāh b. Ubayy", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, (Accessed 3 October 2021).

[27] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/464–465.

[28] Arabic word which is rooted mawlā means being connected with someone or something. See Wensinck, A. J. and Crone, P., "Mawlā", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, (Accessed 3 October 2021).

*“O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.”* (Surah al-Maidah, verse 51)

As mentioned earlier in the above subtopic, Banū Nadir was the second of the Jewish Tribes to breach out their treaty and the second of the Jewish Tribes expelled from Medina. After sending a treatment by the Mushriks of Mecca to the Ibn Ubayy and some of the pagans in Medina as well as Banū Nadir Jews, they started to think about the betrayal to the Muslims. Upon receiving the news on the Jews’ plan by Jibril<sup>[29]</sup>, Prophet Muhammad quickly left to Medina and told his saḥāba about the Jews’ scheme. He sent his people to meet Banū Nadir and strictly told them, “Leave Medina as you should for the aggression you have committed. I will give you ten days. Anyone (of you) I see after those periods will be beheaded.”

Banū Nadir realized they had already breached their treaty, and there were no other ways except to leave Medina in 10 days. However, Ibn Ubayy sent his people to persuade Banū Nadir not to give up and persevered in their fort. He promised that 2000 supporters would join the defences and promised to live and die together with Banū Nadir. The support from Abdullah b. Ubayy restored their confidence to challenge Prophet Muhammad. Huyay b. Akhtab, the leader of Banū Nadir, chose to defend their village and prepared to oppose Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims. Upon receiving this feedback, Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims started preparing a battle against Banū Nadir. They went to the village of Banū Nadir and surrounded them. As Banū Nadir saw the Muslims, they hid in their fort. They throw stones and spears from their fort. Their palm dates grove became their fortress.<sup>[30]</sup>

Prophet Muhammad commanded the grove to be cut down to demonstrate Muslim’s determination. Banū Nadir shouted for Prophet’s action as they said it was Prophet Muhammad who forbids the act of damaging and condemning the perpetrators. Allah defend His Messenger as stated in the Quran,

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَبَنَةٍ أَوْ نَضِيبٍ أَوْ أَصُولٍهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

*“Whatever you have cut down of [their] palm trees or left standing on their trunks - it was by permission of Allah, and so He would disgrace the defiantly disobedient.”* (Surah al-Hashr, verse 5)

[29] Zuhri narrated that a Jewish women informed Muslims. This means not all the Jews came together to break the treaty. Some of them still on the side of Prophet and the Muslims. See, Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri, *al-Maghazī*, trans. Mehmet Nur Akdoğan (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2016), 61-62.

[30] Tabarī, *Ta’rīkh al-Tabarī*, 2/528 ff.

Banū Nadir, however, was not assisted by the other Jewish Tribes as well as by the Mushriks who had promised all lies. After being surrounded for 15 nights, Allah placed the fears in their heart. They sent their people to meet Rasullullah, surrendered, and prepared to leave Medina. The prophet accepted their request with conditions.<sup>[31]</sup>

The last Jewish Tribe expelled from Medina was Banū Qurayza. The battle with Qurayza occurred after the Battle of Khandaq. Upon the return of Prophet Muhammad from the Battle of Khandaq, Jibril told him to go towards Banū Qurayza by pointing to their village. This was stated in a hadith<sup>[32]</sup>,

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها، قالت: لما رجع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من الخندق، ووضع السلاح واغتسل، أتاه جبريل عليه السلام، فقال: « قد وضعت السلاح؛ والله ما وضعناه، فاخرج إليهم قال: فإلى أين؟ قال: ها هنا، وأشار إلى بني قريظة، فخرج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إليهم ”

*Aisha RA narrated,*

*When Prophet returned from Khandaq and laid down his armours and took a bath, Jibril AS came and said, “You have laid down your armours? By Allah, we have not laid them down yet. So set out for them.” The Prophet said, “To where?” Jibril said, “Towards this side,” while pointing towards Banū Qurayza.” So the Prophet went out towards them.*

(Sahih al-Bukhari, no 4117)

Prophet Muhammad urged towards the village of Banū Qurayza. As soon as their arrival, the Muslims surrounded them for 25 nights. Allah placed the fear into the hearts of the Jewish until they surrendered. Ibn Hisham stated that as they saw Prophet Muhammad stand there and did not let them release, Ka’ab bin Asad, the leader of Banū Qurayza, suggested three options to his people by saying:

- i. *“We follow this man (Muhammad) and agree with him. By Allah, it is clear for us that he is the Prophet, His apostle, as (we) can see that in our book and our children and wife will safe.” His followers answered, “We will not leave the Tawrāt.”*

[31] Tabarī narrates this part from Ibn Ishaq. The fear in their hearts obviously was the turning point and shows the help of Allah for the Muslims. Otherwise, it is also given in the Qur’an they had strong castles and could withstand more than fifteen days. Tabarī, *Ta’rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/531–532. They must leave Medina, together with their family and belongings just as a load of their camels and without bringing any weapons. They accepted for the sake of their lives and their family. Before leaving Medina, they destroyed their houses, took the windows and the doors together. They also bring a big amount of gold and silver, drums, and flutes together with 600 camels.

[32] Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari* (Beirut, Lubnan: Dar Tawq al-Najah, no date), 5/111.

- ii. *"If so, let us kill our children and wife and face Muhammad and his saḥāba with (our) swords. If we win, we can marry and have kids again."* His followers replied, *"What is their fault for us to kill them?"*
- iii. *"You rejected this option too. Then tonight is Saturday night. Muhammad and his saḥāba must not expect us to do anything. Let us ambush them."* They said, *"Do we need to ruin our Holy Saturday just as whence the people before we had cursed to be the apes?"*

Ka'ab was in a dilemma. Finally, they let the decision to Prophet Muhammad. As Banū Qurayza was the ally of Aws Tribe, Prophet Muhammad passed the decision to be made by Sa'd bin Mu'adh, one of the leaders from Aws Tribe who was still injured due to an arrow at Khandaq. Sa'd come and decided that those involved in battling the Muslims must be killed, and their family would be enslaved.<sup>[33]</sup> Prophet Muhammad was pleased with the decision made by Sa'd as he mentioned that the decision was made as per the law of Allah. As his wound worsened, Sa'd passed away due to blood loss. (Banū Qurayza was then ordered to leave their fort. Their men were killed, including Huyay bin Akhtab who incited Banū Qurayza to breach their treaty. The women and their kids were enslaved. The booties were 1500 swords, 300 armors, 2000 arrows, and 500 shields. As Banū Qurayza had expelled, all the Jewish Tribes left the Medina. There were no more threats and conspiracies from them.<sup>[34]</sup>)

### C. The Policy against Jews: Between Kindness and Force

During the early Era of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina, most of the community are Jews. Jews started to express their hostility towards Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims after the arrival of Prophet Muhammad due to them being spiteful with the advent of Islam and apostleship of Prophet Muhammad.

The Jews began spreading false information (rumors) about Prophet Muhammad and Islam to prevent this religion from spreading and people's faith towards Islam. Allah mentioned in the Quran,

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَنْ يَنْزِلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
 مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ

*"How wretched is that for which they sold themselves - that they would disbelieve in what Allah has revealed through [their] outrage that Allah would send down His favour upon whom He wills from among His servants. So they returned having [earned] wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers is a humiliating punishment."* (Surah al-Baqarah, verse 90)

[33] Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, 275.

[34] Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Tabarī*, 2/557 ff.

Jews are known for their hostility towards Islam. However, there are some Jews who embraced Islam. One of them is Abdallah b. Salam, or his other name, al-Husayn b. Salam. He was one of the leaders of Banū Qaynuqa'. He had embraced Islam after listening to the recitation of al-Quran. He even invited all his family to embrace Islam. The other Jews were resented his action.<sup>[35]</sup>

The Jews continued with their rude actions and impolite ethics towards Prophet Muhammad, as mentioned in a hadith<sup>[36]</sup>,

أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا - قَالَتْ دَخَلَ رَهْطٌ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا السَّامَ عَلَيْكَ. فَفَهَّمْتُهَا فَقُلْتُ عَلَيْكُمُ السَّامُ وَاللَّعْنَةُ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ « مَهْلًا يَا عَائِشَةُ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ يُحِبُّ الرِّفْقَ فِي الأَمْرِ كُلِّهِ ». فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَوَلَمْ تَسْمَعْ مَا قَالُوا قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ « فَقَدْ قُلْتُ وَعَلَيْكُمْ ».

*Aisha RA narrated,*

*A group of Jews came to Rasulallah and said, "Al-Samu 'Alaika " (Death be on you), and I understood it and said to them, "Alaykum Al-Samu wa al-la'na (Death and curse be on you)." Prophet Muhammad said, "Be calm! O Aisha, Indeed, Allah loves that one should be kind and lenient in all matters." I said. "O Rasulallah! Haven't you heard what they have said?" Prophet Muhammad said, "I have (already) said (to them), 'Wa alaykum (upon you).'" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 6256)*

Then, Allah stated in the Qur'an,

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلاَّ هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلاَّ هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَذْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلاَّ هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيُّنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

*"Have you not considered that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is on the earth? There is no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them, nor are there five but that He is the sixth of them - and no less than that and no more except that He is with them [in knowledge] wherever they are. Then He will inform them of what they did on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, Allah, He knows all things." (Surah al-Mujadalah, verse 7)*

This evidence mentioned in the Quran and stated in the Hadith proved great kindness practiced by Prophet Muhammad in treating the enemies of Islam, particularly the Jews in Medina. This is reasoned by his actions towards the Jews, even though they showed impolite ethics and were rude towards him.

[35] Rohaily, *Muhammad Rasul Terakhir*, 196-197.

[36] Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, 8/57.

The implementation of the Medina Charter effectively managed the conflict in a plural society, as the community of Medina during the Era of Prophet Muhammad consists of the diversity of races, religions, and tribes, including Aws and Khazraj, Christians and Jews, and others. It is a model that meets the needs of a plural society, which is manifested from the Qur'an and practiced in real life. The community of Medina developed by Prophet as one Ummah produced tolerance, respect, and responsibilities towards maintaining the harmony of Medina among each other<sup>[37]</sup>. However, the Jews violated their treaty and actively collaborated with Quraysh in destructing the Muslims instead of helping the Muslims. They revived their old bloody feud, which had been resolved by Prophet to mess up the Muslims, and they even attempted to assassinate Prophet Muhammad several times. The Jews had proven that they could not be trusted or relied on in any situation, as proved by these actions and behavior.<sup>[38]</sup>

Despite expressing kindness towards the Jews at first, Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims in Medina faced the Jews and expelled them from the city. This situation occurred as a result of the Jews' breach of their treaty. Banū Qaynuqa' was the first one who breached the treaty, and they followed by Banū Nadir and Banū Qurayza. As the treaty was breached, the Jews Tribes were commanded to leave Medina. Although some Jews were expelled to Khaybar and had settled down here, Muslims captured this place too in a few years. Prophet Muhammad made another treaty which was based on land tax with the Jews who were engaged in farming. They could stay on these territories by paying half of their profit to the Muslims until they were expelled to an external zone of the Arabian Peninsula by Caliph Omar.<sup>[39]</sup>

## Conclusion

Prophet Muhammad implemented the Medina Charter by referring to the Quran and practicing it in real life to develop harmony among the communities of Medina, including the Muslims and non-Muslims, who among them are the Jews and Christians. Prophet Muhammad had always treated all the communities of Medina very well, including the Jews. He shows kindness and persuades people to be lenient, do good deeds, and spread the good to others. This was shown when he told Aisha (RA) to be kind towards the Jews even when the Jews were rude towards them. However, Prophet Muhammad

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[37] Zaleha et al., "Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter", 26.

[38] S. M. Yunus Gilani - Islam Tazul, "Religious Conflict in Early Islam: A Study of Its Causes from Qur'an Sunnah Perspective", *International Journal of Quranic Research* 6/2 (2014), 17.

[39] Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, critical ed. Muhammad Abdulhafiz al-Manāsir (Amman: Dār Kunūz al-Ma'rifa al-Ilmiyyah, 2009), 233-234.

had also demonstrated his firm side when the Jews breached their treaty. He commanded them to leave Medina as soon as possible if they wanted to be safe.

The acts of Prophet Muhammad have taught the Muslims to follow the principles of Islam, guided by the Quran and his Sunnah. This includes the relationship that should be done between Muslims and non-Muslims. The Muslims must practice kindness all the time, being lenient and spreading good deeds to others. On the other hand, the Muslims must also be firm in certain situations to show pride.

This article expresses the attitude of Prophet Muhammad to the Jewish communities in Medina as well as the relationship between two communities; the Muslims and the Jews. This relationship has several perspectives, such as religious, social, and economical. Jews were non-Muslims, but they were regarded as *ahl al-Kitab*, which means they were heralded by a prophet and a testament. Obviously, they were close to Islam compared to pagans. However, they showed misbehavior to the Muslims even though they agreed in the very first days of the Medina life of the Prophet. If they had not violated the agreement, Muslims would have tolerated them and continued their lives in Medina. However, we know that they were the party who broke the deal, as is expressed clearly in Qur'an. In addition to this, we have significant details of their betrayal as all the sources agree on it. Muslims changed their attitude after these betray. Thus, their punishment had been given in different ways; as expel or execution.

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## SİYER ARAŐTIRMALARI DERGİSİ

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# Prophet Muhammad's Relations with Christians (An Islamic Perspective)

Hz. Peygamber'in Hristiyanlarla İliřkisi

Seyfettin Erřahin\*



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**Abstract**

As far as Prophet Muhammad's relations with the Christians is concerned, there is a great deal of lay approaches that proved to be controversial, and a limited number of scientific studies conducted by both Muslim and Christian scholars. However, most of these studies demonstrate Christians to take an accusatory and aggressive approach, while Muslims to present an apologetic attitude as if there is an underlying feeling of inferiority complex that stems from feelings around inadequacy and insecurity.

In this article, we present an Islamic perspective to the topic with references to the main Islamic sources, while also communicating a descriptive approach that is vary of the ongoing tensions that either defends or attacks the matter. The Islamic sources the article utilised hereby are the Holy Qur'an, canonicals of hadiths and sirah literature. In addition, there are refutations argued by the Christians, dates back to the 8th century. The scope of the framework also covers Muslim relations with Jews and Christians through the concept of *ahl al-kitāb* (People of the Book/ Scripture, later including Sabians, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Assyrians etc.), and moves its emphasis on Christians alone. To note, members of divine religions such as Jews and Christians are called Ahl al-Kitab in the Islamic civilization. Although this group is not in the category of infidels who deny Allah, yet they are considered non-Muslims as they do not accept Muhammad as a prophet. The Qur'an contains several provisions related to People of the Book. Some verses are directly related to the beliefs of People of the Book, while others regulate the legal and human relations with them. Here, current work explores the dynamics of these relations from religious, humanitarian, political-military etc. aspects.

**Öz**

Hiz. Muhammed'in Hristiyanlarla ilişkileri dünya barışı için önemlidir. Konu hakkında tartışmalı çok sayıda yaklaşım yanında hem Müslüman hem de Hristiyan bilim insanlarıncaya yapılan sınırlı sayıda bilimsel çalışma bulunmaktadır. Ancak bu çalışmaların çoğu, Hristiyanların suçlayıcı ve saldırgan bir yaklaşım sergilediklerini, Müslümanların ise yetersizlik ve güvensizlik duygularından kaynaklanan kompleksle savunmacı bir tutum izlediklerini göstermektedir. Oysa her konu gibi bu da nesnel yaklaşımla ele alınmak durumundadır.

Bu makalede, biz konuya ana İslami kaynaklar Kur'an-ı Kerim ve hadisler ile tarih ve siyer kitaplarının "İslami bakış açısı" sunarken, aynı zamanda savunan ya da saldıran yaklaşımlardan uzak durduk. Konuyu Ehl-i kitab kavramı çerçevesinde değerlendirdik. Zira, İslam medeniyetinde Yahudiler ve Hristiyanlar gibi ilahi din mensuplarına Ehl-i Kitap denir; sonraları Sabiler, Hindular, Mecusiler, Asuriler vb. de bu kategoride değerlendirilmiştir). Her ne kadar bu kesimler Allah'ı inkâr eden kafirler kategorisinde olmasa da Hiz. Muhammed'i peygamber olarak kabul etmedikleri için gayrimüslim sayılırlar. Kur'an, Ehl-i Kitap ile ilgili çeşitli hükümler içermektedir. Biz Hiz. Muhammed'in Hristiyanlarla ilişkilerini Mekke ve Medine dönemlerine ayırıp hem teorik/teolojik hem de pratik yönleriyle söz konusu ettik. İstisnalar dışında, ilişkilerin insani ve karşılıklı sorumluluk ve saygı içinde geliştiğini tespit ettik.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam, Hiz. Muhammed, Hristiyanlar, ilişki, birlikte yaşama, çoğulculuk.

*“...And thou wilt find the nearest of them in affection to those who believe (to be) those who say: Lo! We are Christians.” (al-Maida, 5/82)*

### Introductory Remarks

The world's population constitute nearly 2.3 billion Christians (31.1%) and 1.9 billion Muslims (24.9%) that accounts for more than half of the total number (7.79 billion) according to the latest statistics.<sup>[1]</sup> (2050'de 2.9 billion 31.4 Christian, 2.7 billion 29.7 Muslim) The relations between them decisively influence the world from religious, intellectual, political, economic and social aspects. The origins of these relations go back to the relations that Muhammad established with Christians during his time according to the Qur'an. The determination of the quantity and nature of Muhammad's relations keeps making a great contribution to world peace, prosperity and tranquility since his days.

There is a great deal of lay approaches that proved to be controversial, and a limited number of scientific studies conducted by both Muslim and Christian scholars. However, most of these studies demonstrate Christians to take an accusatory and aggressive approach, while Muslims to be following a defensive/apologetic attitude as if there is an underlying feeling of inferiority complex that stems from feelings around inadequacy and insecurity.

In this article, we present an Islamic perspective to the topic with references to the main Islamic sources, while also communicating a descriptive approach that is vary of the ongoing tensions that either defends or attacks the matter. The Islamic sources the article utilized hereby are the Holy Qur'an, canonicals of hadiths and sirah literature. In addition, there are refutations argued by the Christians, dates back to the 8th century. The scope of the framework also covers Muslim relations with Jews and Christians through the concept of *ahl al-kitāb* (People of the Book/Scripture), and moves its emphasis on Christians alone. To note, members of divine religions such as Jews and Christians are called Ahl al-Kitab in the Islamic civilization. Although this group is not in the category of infidels who deny Allah, yet they are considered non-Muslims as they do not accept Muhammad as a prophet. The Qur'an contains several provisions related to People of the Book. Some verses are directly related to the beliefs of People of the Book, while others regulate the legal and human relations with them. Here, current work explores the dynamics of these relations from religious, humanitarian, and political-military aspects.

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[1] PEW, "Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2050", Pew Research Center. 2 April 2015. Archived from the original on 15 June 2020. Retrieved 5 May 2020. (04.10.2021); <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Dunya-Nufus-Gunu-2021-37250> (08.10.2021)

### A. Christianity among the Arabs

Scholars argue that in the years Islam was born, there were 15 million Christians among Eastern Arabs.<sup>[2]</sup> A variety of sects/groups, including the Nestorians/Assyrians, Monophysites, and Dyophysites/Malkites had a strong chance that Muhammad may encountered them. Considering the relations with Christians, the first encounters we recall are among the Eastern Roman Empire and its satellite/vassal states. The reason might rely heavily on the fact that this empire held massive power and symbolized a flagbearer of Christianity on both religious and political-military fields. In the time, the Ghassanids in Syria, the Copts in Egypt, and even the Christians of Abyssinia and Najran were directly or indirectly connected to the Eastern Rome. Perhaps it was only the Hiran Christians were vassals of the Sassanid Empire that did not identify their faith in accordance with the Roman Empire.<sup>[3]</sup>

After abandoning the creed of Monotheism, the Jews, who had come under the rule of the Romans, began to expect the arrival of a new prophet, a savior, a Messiah who would save them. God brought Jesus into the world through the Virgin Mary. Although Jesus showed miracles from his birth, and although there were very few who believed in him, his message spread afterwards through his apostles. Over time, various sects were born among the descendants. Christianity had the status of an official religion in Eastern Roman Empire. Although Orthodoxy Christianity was the predominant religion in Eastern Rome, there were other forms of different religions that existed. In Constantinople, the Nestorian-Syriac, Abyssinian and Coptic Armenian churches were represented independently and engaged in activities freely. Egypt and Abyssinia, neighboring the Arabian Peninsula and in which the Arabs had relations, were dominated by the Monophysite, and Jerusalem was dominated by the Trinity doctrine. To create a common ground, the Eastern Roman Emperor Constantine ruled all his Christian subjects to join the sect Dyophysitism during a council held in Chalcedon/Kadıköy with the underlying purpose of unifying different sects blooming under his rule.<sup>[4]</sup> This religious-political project did not interest many followers, since it required absolute subordination to the king, and the idea itself being a by-product of the King himself. Muqawqis was appointed by the Eastern Roman Empire as governor and bishop of Egypt to spread this sect, and meanwhile the Ghassanis

[2] İbrahim Kalın, Ben, Öteki ve Ötesi İslam-Batı İlişkileri Tarihine Giriş, (I, the Other and Beyond: An Introduction to the History of Islamic-Western Relations), İnsan pub., İstanbul, 2016, p. 74.

[3] Neşet Çağatay, İslam Öncesi Arap Tarihi (Pre-Islamic Arab History), Ankara Üniversitesi pub., Ankara, 1963, p. 68-74; Salih Kesgin, Hz. Muhammed ve Öteki (Muhammad and the Other), İnsan pub., İstanbul, 2016, 32-34.

[4] Mehmet Aydın, "Hıristiyanlık: Mezhepler ve Tarikatlar" (Christianity: Sects and Orders), DİA, v. 17, p. 353-355.

who adopted this new sect followed a policy of establishing good relations with Egyptians. Additionally, the Kalb, Taghlib, Lahm, Cüzam, Kayn Baliyy, Kuda and some other Arab tribes living in the same region had also partially or completely converted to Christianity.<sup>[5]</sup>

As a matter of fact, there is none solid documents that records Christianity to gain a strong foothold among Arabs of Arabia back in the time. Furthermore, Marcus Julius Philippus (244-249), known as Philip the Arab, who took the Roman throne in the middle of the 3rd century, accepted Christianity only to remain private and did not identify himself with it in the public domain. In the 5th century, some of the Ghassanids that were in the buffer zone on the Syria-Jerusalem route on the Eastern Roman-Arabian border accepted a form of Christianity called Monophysite. The members of the sect Nestorianism, founded by the patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, were also known as Assyrians or Syrians. When Nestorianism was excluded by Eastern Romans and subjected to prosecution, it retreated to the territory of the Sasanids. Hire was one of them. Copticism was an Eastern Church based in Alexandria, which also had an influence on Abyssinia. Even though the kingdom of Aksum was run independently, they still accepted the authority of the Coptic Church. Christianity also gained adherents among the Lakhmids-Hirans. Numan bin Munzir, the head of the Lakhmids, was converted to Nestorian Christianity between 583 and 602. Essentially, Hira, the capital of the Lakhmis, had been the centre of Nestorianism since the 4th century. In fact, this sect even had a base further south, on the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf. So much so that there were Nestorian bishops in Bahrain, which is considered to be the eastern coast of Arabia. In addition, there was a Monophysite community that accepted Christianity through Abyssinia in the Najran region on the border with Yemen. There are no clear records about when Christianity was preached there.<sup>[6]</sup>

When Prophet Muhammad began to transmit the message of Islam, the Christians in Mecca consisted of foreigners, slaves, and locals without a church. There are no exact records on the religious nature of the few Christians of Hejaz and their relations with the Eastern Rome. They also did not have a temple or church.<sup>[7]</sup> Moreover, most of the Christians to whom Prophet Muhammad

[5] Nadir Özkuyumcu, "Hıristiyanlarla İlişkiler" (Relations with Christians), *İslam Tarihi ve Medeniyeti v. 1: Hz. Peygamber Dönemi*, ed. Hüseyin Algül, Rıza Savaş, Siyer pub. İstanbul, 2021, p. 543.

[6] Adnan Demircan, "İslam Öncesi Arap Yarımadasının Dini, Siyasi, Sosyo-Kültürel ve Ekonomik Tarihi" (Religious, Political, Socio-Cultural and Economic History of the Pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula), *İslam Tarihi ve Medeniyeti v. 1: Hz. Peygamber Dönemi*, ed. Hüseyin Algül, Rıza Savaş, Siyer pub. İstanbul, 2021, p. 146.

[7] Özkuyumcu, p. 547.

received an interlocutor for his invitation were of Arab origin. In addition, to fulfil his divine duty, he contacted several rulers of states (kings) through envoys including the Eastern Rome and Abyssinia. However, it is also fair to suggest that they also had a Monophysite understanding of Christianity, which was rather derived from Syria.

## B. General Principles of Prophet Muhammad's Relations with Non-Muslims

In the Qur'an, Muhammad b. Abdullah is called to be the last prophet (al-Ahzab, 33/40) and mercy whom is bestowed upon the worlds (al-Anbiya, 21/107). The underlying framework of his relations with members of other religions or non-Muslims is defined in the Quran. The provisions or principles of this framework comprise basic human rights and the freedom of conscience. The following provisions are found in the verses sent down during the period of Mecca:

*"Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance."* (al-Nahl, 16/125)

*"Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just."* (al-Mumtahina, 60/8)

*"Say: O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine."* (al-Kafirun, 109/1-6)

*"Say, "The truth is from your Lord": Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it)."* (al-Kehf, 18/29)

In the verses of the Medina period, these provisions are expressed in a different manner, as follows;

*"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things."* (al-Baqara, 2/256)

*"Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus, have We made alluring to each people its own doings. In the end will they return to their Lord, and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did."* (al-Anam, 6/108)

### C. Prophet Muhammad's Theological Approach to Christianity

The method and content of Prophet Muhammad's invitation/communiqué relevant to Christianity and Christians for both Mecca and Medina period, are covered in the Qur'an. From these verses we also gather information about his relations with Christians in the early years of the communiqué.

Following the provisions of Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad behaved to People of the Book as the creation of Allah regardless of their path. He treated those who were not hostile with a measure of humanity; ate at their tables; visited their patients, provided material and moral assistance to the needy of them, paid respect at their funerals. He sent invitation letters to the leaders of the Christians, explaining that "there is no God but Allah and he is servant and messenger of Allah", and invited them "to worship Allah, who is the only one and has no partner". He emphasized that he believed in the prophets before him, especially Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and that Jesus was the spirit and word that Allah gave to Maryam, pure and pure, untouched by him. He also expressed his closeness to Jesus with the following statement "I am the closest to Jesus, the son of Mary, in this world and in the hereafter with people." (Bukhari, "Anbiya", 48) Meanwhile the Qur'an affirmed that it was wrong for People of the Book to believe in some of the prophets and deny others:

*"Those who deny Allah and His messengers, and (those who) wish to separate Allah from His messengers, saying: "We believe in some but reject others": And (those who) wish to take a course midway, They are in truth (equally) unbelievers; and we have prepared for unbelievers a humiliating punishment. (al-Nisa, 4/150-151).*

Verses of 15-37 of chapter 19/Surah Maryam, which was revealed in Mecca, details the birth of Mary to Jesus without a father. When Mary was accused of defiling chastity, she instead asked his accusers to talk to him, pointing to Jesus. Upon this, Jesus in the cradle spoke out and said:

*"16: Relate in the Book (the story of) Mary when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East. 17: She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them: then We sent to her Our angel and he appeared before her as a man in all respects. 18: She said: "I seek refuge from thee to (Allah) Most Gracious: (come not near) if thou dost fear Allah." 19: He said: "Nay I am only a messenger from thy Lord (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son." 20: She said: "How shall I have a son seeing that no man has touched me and I am not unchaste?" 21: He said: "So (it will be): thy Lord saith 'That is easy for Me: and (We wish) to appoint him as a Sign unto men and a Mercy from Us': it is a matter (so) decreed." 22: So she conceived him and she retired with him to a remote place. 23: And the*

*pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree: she cried (in her anguish): "Ah! would that I had died before this! Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!" 24: But (a voice) cried to her from beneath the (palm-free): "Grieve not! for thy Lord hath provided a rivulet beneath thee; 25: "And shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm-tree: it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon thee. 26: "So eat and drink and cool (thine) eye. And if thou dost see any man say 'I have vowed a fast to (Allah) Most Gracious and this day will I enter into no talk with any human being.' " 27: At length she brought the (babe) to her people carrying him (in her arms). They said: "O Mary! truly an amazing thing hast thou brought! 28: "O sister of Aaron! thy father was not a man of evil nor thy mother a woman unchaste!" 29: But she pointed to the babe. They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?" 30: He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah: He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet; 31: "And He hath made me Blessed wheresoever I be and hath enjoined on me Prayer and Charity as long as I live; 32: "(He) hath made me kind to my mother and not overbearing or miserable; 33: "So Peace is on me the day I was born the day that I die and the Day that I shall be raised up to life (again)"! 34: Such (was) Jesus the son of Mary: (it is) a statement of truth about which they (vainly) dispute. 35: It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it "Be" and it is. 36: Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord: Him therefore serve ye: this is a Way that is straight. 37: But the sects differ among themselves: and woe to the Unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgment of a momentous Day!" (Maryam 19/16-37)*

In some surahs of the Mecca period, the reason behind Jesus to be sent as a prophet to the children of Israel is explained as follows:

*"When Jesus came with Clear Signs, he said: "Now have I come to you with Wisdom, and in order to make clear to you some of the (points) on which ye dispute: therefore, fear Allah and obey me." (al-Zuhruf 43/63)*

The verse that was sent down during the Hijra frames the policies Messenger of Allah followed in Medina towards People of the Book, as follows:

*"And dispute ye not with People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, "We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your Allah is one; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)." (al-Ankabut, 29/46),*

The following verse also emphasize the invitation methods of Messenger of Allah further:

*"Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance." (en-Nahl, 16/125)*

Prophet Muhammad tried to establish good relations with People of the Book. He designated the direction of worship (Qibla) to Jerusalem, which also is the Qibla of the Jews, as well as being the holy place Jesus ascended to heaven. He respected to Jews on issues that did not come in revelations to him.<sup>[8]</sup> As an example, on the tenth of the month of Muharram, he fasted the Ashura fast Jews traditionally followed.<sup>[9]</sup> He allowed Muslims to eat what they slaughtered and marry their chaste women (al-Maida, 5/5), and told the stories of Israel.<sup>[10]</sup> In accordance with Quran, he accepted that it was mandatory for Jews to believe in the religion of Torah and invited them to Islam.

Prophet Muhammad remained true to this method also after his emigration to Yasrib/Madinah.

*"The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah -(4541) the which We have sent by inspiration to thee - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein: to those who worship other things than Allah, hard is the (way) to which thou callest them." (as-Shura, 42/13).*

The provisions regarding People of the Book were quite lenient in the verses of Madinah. It was recalled that among them there are believers and followers of the truth:

*"And there are, certainly, among People of the Book, those who believe in Allah, in the revelation to you, and in the revelation to them, bowing in humility to Allah. They will not sell the Signs of Allah for a miserable gain! For them is a reward with their Lord, and Allah is swift in account." (Al-i Imran, 3/199)*

*"But those among them who are well-grounded in knowledge, and the believers, believe in what hath been revealed to thee and what was revealed before thee: And (especially) those who establish regular prayer and practice regular charity and believe in Allah and in the Last Day: To them shall We soon give a great reward." (al-Nisa, 4/162)*

In the context of theological-social relations, getting married with Christian women and eat from the food of the Ahl al-Kitab are also allowed:

[8] al-Bukhari, "Menakib al-ansar", 52.

[9] al-Bukhari, "Savm", 69.

[10] Abu Dawud, "Ilim", 11.

*"This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among People of the Book, revealed before your time, - when ye give them their due dowers, and desire chastity, not lewdness, nor secret intrigues if any one rejects faith, fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter, he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good)." (al-Maida, 5/5)*

The Qur'an also distinguishes among People of the Book with regards to their attitudes towards Muslims:

*"You will find the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe (to be) the Jews and the idolaters. And thou wilt find the nearest of them in affection to those who believe (to be) those who say: Lo! We are Christians. That is because there are among them priests and monks, and because they are not proud." (al-Maida, 5/82)*

However, the Quran reveals the state of moral and material corruption of Christianity faced after Jesus; call such faiths as "blasphemy". First of all, the Qur'an point out the role of Christian clerics for corruptions:

*"They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Allah, and (they take as their Lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One Allah. there is no god but He. Praise and glory to Him: (Far is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)." O ye who believe! there are indeed many among the priests and anchorites, who in falsehood devour the substance of men and hinder (them) from the way of Allah. And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah. Announce unto them a most grievous penalty." (al-Tawba, 9/31, 34)*

We summarize the corruptions in detail through the following paragraphs.

1. The Bible is corrupted: The Qur'an declares the original versions of the ancient holy books reliable and invited both Muslims and the People the Book to believe in them (al-Maida 5/44; al-Anam 6/91; al-Anbiya 21/48). Nevertheless, it also points out the Ahl al-Kitab to falsify some of the verses in the holy books. With regards to the matter, the Quran constitute either a response or warning to Ahl al-Kitab who reacted to the revelation of the Qur'an with a negative attitude, that the Quran is a revelation like the other holy books and they should believe in it; or it simply warns believers on their so-called righteous path. The following verses exemplify those:

*"From those, too, who call themselves Christians, We did take a Covenant, but they forgot a good part of the message that was sent them: so we estranged them, with enmity and hatred between the one and the other,*

to the day of judgment. And soon will Allah(715-A) show them what it is they have done." (al-Maida, 5/14)

"And remember Allah took a covenant from People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And vile was the bargain they made!" (Al-i Imran: 3/187)

2. 'Trinity' Means Three Gods: The Qur'an states that Christians worship three gods, and them to view the Christian Trinity consisting of the Father, the Son, and Mary:

"In blasphemy indeed are those that say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary. Say: "Who then hath the least power against Allah, if His will were to destroy Christ the son of Mary, his mother, and all every - one that is on the earth? For to Allah belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He createth what He pleaseth. For Allah hath power over all things." (al-Maida, 5/17)

"They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One Allah. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them." (al-Maida, 5/73)

3. God Cannot Have a Son: The Qur'an objects Christians in believing God has a son:

"The Jews call 'Uzair a son of Allah, and the Christians call Christ the son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouth; (in this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the Truth!" (al-Tawba 9/60)

The Qur'an affirms that having a Son would entail physical procreation and would violate God's Tawheed, or oneness.

"Say: 'He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him'" (al-Ikhlās 112/1-4).

4. Jesus is Not God: Islam declares that Jesus is among prophets of Allah Almighty. According to Islam accepting Jesus a God is blasphemy. Islam asserts that Jesus was born of a virgin and he was of the righteous:

"She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?" He said: "Even so: Allah createth what He willeth: When He hath decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be,' and it is!" (Al-i Imran 3:47)

"He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous." (Al-i Imran 3/46)

Jesus was God's Messenger and His Word:

"O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) a messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary,

*and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His messengers. Say not "Trinity": desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is one Allah. Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs." (al-Nisa 4/171)*

5. Jesus was Not Crucified: The following two verses inform us on Jesus's last moments on the earth and his prospective future:

*"That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah;- but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not, Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise." (al-Nisa, 4/157-158)*

*"Behold! Allah said: "O Jesus! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and clear thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject faith, to the Day of Resurrection: Then shall ye all return unto me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute." (Al-i Imran, 3/55)*

#### D. Social, Political and Religious Relations

Residing in the Hejaz region (Macca, Madinah and Taif), Muhammad always had ongoing social relations with Christians. While he kept daily contact with indigenous Christians in the Hejaz and he also established business with those Christians to the outside of the region. We could explore such relations in two distinct timelines; pre-prophetic and prophetic periods. The theoretical basis of the relations of the second period, was ruled out by the Qur'an. Next paragraphs go in detail with regards to these timelines.

#### E. Pre-Prophetic Period

There is a strong argument on whether those Christians Muhammad was in contact conveyed a Biblical influence on his faith and the Quran. Accepting this argument would falsely lead us to suspect his prophethood rather than appointed by God Himself. Among those Christians who were in contact with Muhammad they were either locals or of foreign origin. The following verse, which was revealed in response to the claims of idolaters of Mecca, sheds light into this argument:

*"We know indeed that they say, "It is a man that teaches him." The tongue of him they wickedly point to is notably foreign, while this is Arabic, pure and clear." (al-Nahl 16/103)*

However, following the early invitations of Prophet Muhammad to Islam, the Meccan polytheists insisted on denying the divine revelation, claiming that he received this information from a Christian slave who was not an Arab, and whom he worked as a blacksmith in Mecca.

## F. Relations with the Priests of Busra-Syria

### 1. Matter of Bahira: The Reverend Priest

During his pre-prophetic years, scholars suggest Muhammad to go on two commercial expeditions to Syria and met a priest in every each of them. However, others argue on him meeting with the same priest during these two expeditions.

According to a narration that is widely accepted, the first one occurred when Muhammad was a child (at the age of 8-9, or 12) accompanied by his uncle Abu Talib, and he met with the Nestorian priest Bahira at his monastery near Busra in Syria. In fact, the real name of this priest is Sergius. Bahira or Behira is the title of this priest and has the meaning of "chosen" in the Aramaic language. Sources note that he was from the Abdulkays tribe, and one rumor claims him to be from the Teyma Jews, and him to convert to Christianity later on. Bahira was excommunicated by the Church for rejecting the submission of Jesus to the divinity, the "Father-Son-Holy Spirit" and advocating monotheism. Having acquired a monastery on the Busra road, he lived an ascetic life and kept inviting passengers to Tawhid. Alas, he died before the prophethood of Muhammad. According to Muslim sources, Bahira is a priest who recites the texts/booklets/suhufs of past prophets. From these texts, he deciphered some knowledge on a prospective prophet of the Arabs, and his prophetic signs. He witnessed those signs in the aura of little Muhammad, including the seal of the prophethood on his back. Then he warned Abu Talib on some members of People of the Book were expecting a prophet of the same origin and they will harm him. As narrated, he also prevented Muhammad from three men among People of the Book. Immediately Abu Talib took action and left with Muhammad back to Mecca.<sup>[11]</sup>

While Muslim scholars record that Muhammad also encountered him when he went with Khadija's caravan at the age of 25, other sources suggest him to meet with the priest Nestor at this expedition.<sup>[12]</sup>

However, some Muslim scholars argue this narrative to be not in line with the authenticity requirements with regards to the criteria of chain/sanad and

[11] Mustafa Fayda, "Bahîrâ", *DÎA* (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi), v. 4, p.486-487.

[12] Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, translated by: A. Guillaume, Oxford Uni Press, Oxford, 1998, p.79-81.

narrator/ravi. In particular, contemporary Muslim researchers emphasize the Bahira event to be off significant to Muhammad's personality or Islam itself. Even if so, they challenge the notion of young child to recall such theological thought he acquired during a short exchange when the time comes in almost 30 years. On the other hand, the Christian version of the narration falsifies Muhammad's prophetic claim. Even more, Bahira is assaulted to be a perverted Nestorian or Jacobite. Thus, they attribute the inspiration of the Qur'an and even its author to this perversion. The first version of the narration, the apocalypse of Bahira, allegedly belongs to Isho'yabh, who met with Bahira. English Arabic and Syriac copies of this text were published by the British-born Jewish American orientalist R.J.H. Gottheil (d.1936). He then suggested these texts seem to be purposefully created to fuel a hostile attitude towards Islam, arguing the origins of Islam or Muhammad's inspiration was Judaism.<sup>[13]</sup> These sorts of acclaims still have room in the current agenda of some orientalists, while Muslim scholars criticize and reject the narrative, as mentioned above. Regardless, the Muslim tradition utilizes the narrative in favour of the fact that there will be a prophet in the future; which could be taken as a heralded event which was deciphered from those texts of the Ahl al-Kitab.<sup>[14]</sup>

The matter has always maintained its vitality in Muslim-Christian relations. Narration works bilaterally. The Qur'an informs that prophet Muhammad is in the footsteps of the past prophets of People of the Book, emphasizing that their prophets also remained in the path of truth. This is mainly in response to the arguments of John of Damascus (d.750) who claims Muhammad was a false prophet as he had received all of his information from heretics and Christians with very little understanding.<sup>[15]</sup>

## 2. Matter of Nestor: The Reverend Priest

In this narrative, at the age of twenty-five, Muhammad lead Meccan business woman Khadija's caravan to the Syria with her slave Maysara. They

[13] Richard James Horatio Gottheil, *A Christian Bahira Legend*, Published by Facsimile Publisher, 2016, p 215, Turkish trans. Bir Hristiyan Bahîrâ Efsanesi - Bir Tahrîf Örneği (XI-XII. yüzyıl), tr. Fatmatüz Zehra Kamacı, İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım pub., 2008.

[14] Ibn Ishaq- Guillaume, pp.79-81; İbn Hisham, es-Sîre, v. I, pp. 180-183; İbn Sa'd, al-Tabakâtü'l-Kübrâ, Dâru Sâdir, Beyrut, 1985, v. I, pp. 121, 153-155; Hamîdullah, İslâm Peygamberi, çev. Salih Tuğ, İstanbul, 1980, v. I, p. 50-51; Mustafa Fayda, "Bahîrâ", DÎA, v. 4, pp. 486-487; Halis Demir - Recep Tayyip Gedikli - Mikail Şeker, "İslâm Tarihindeki Bir Vakanın Yorum Kritiği: Rahip Bahira Olayı" (Criticism of the Interpretation of a Case in the History of Islam: The Case of the Priest Bahira), Ağrı İslâmi İlimler Dergisi, 2018 (2); Ahmet Erçetin, "Rivâyetler ve Farklı Yorumlar Işığında Rahip Bahîrâ Olayı" (In the Light of Narrations and Different Interpretations, the Priest Bahira Incident. Yüksek Lisans tezi, Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2008.

[15] İbrahim Sarıçam, Mehmet Özdemir, Seyfettin Erşahin, İngiliz ve Alman Oryantalistlerin Hz. Muhammed Tasavvuru, (The Mohammedan Conception of the British and German Orientalists) Nobel pup. Ankara, 2011, p. 55-57.

stayed at the same monastery of Busra again. However, in the meantime, the priest Bahira was deceased and replaced with a priest named Nestor. While Muhammad was resting under an olive tree next to the monastery, he caught Nestor's attention and called Maysara, whom he had met before, and asked who he was. Maysara said, "He is a person from the Quraysh of Mecca". Nestor was deeply absorbed in thought for a moment. Then he said, 'No one has ever come down under that tree but the prophet.' Next, he asked Maysara 'Is there a little red in his eye?'. Upon receiving a nod, he expressed "He is a prophet. He is the last of the prophets" with confidence.<sup>[16]</sup>

This narration reminds us the Bahira event in many aspects. That is, the prophetic announcement of Muhammad, and his refusal of the oath to Lat and Uzza during the exchange of communication are narrated in the same manner. Therefore, some Muslims raise questions to these records. Firstly, these narrations only strengthen our belief of a prophet who kept revealing miracles or been surrounded by miracles since his birth. However, these arguments are not supported by the Quran itself. Moreover, when the first revelation came to him, both Muhammad and his wife Khadija were surprised and turned to Waraqa b. Nawfal for him to explain them what was happening. For these reasons, we assume these narrations may not be authentic at all.<sup>[17]</sup>

## G. The Prophetic Period

Islamic accounts inform about those relations the Prophet had with Christians during the Macca period as follows.

## H. Relations with Christians of the Hijaz Region

There are still discussions around whether Muhammad was also recognized as a Prophet by People of the Book residing in Mecca.

### 1. Relations with Waraqa of Macca

Actually, there seems to be an existing relationship between Muhammad and Waraqa b. Nawfal who was competent in Hebrew, read the Torah and the Bible, and was also a Nestorian Christian scholar. Some Muslim authors record that Muhammad also met with Waraqa when he immediately married Khadija. According to Ibn Ishaq, Maysara told Khadija about their meetings with the priest Nestor during their expedition to Busra. Khadija conveyed this news to her uncle's son Waraqa. Hearing this news, Waraqa responded as

[16] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, p. 82.

[17] Muhammed Hamidulah, "Hz. Peygamber'in Risâlet Öncesi Seyahatleri" (Pre-Propethood Travels of Muhammad), tr:Abdullah Aydınli, İslâmî İlimler Fakültesi Dergisi, Ankara, 1980, p. 331.

follows “If this is true Khadija, Verily Muhammad is the prophet of this people. I knew that prophet of this people was to be expected. His time has come.”<sup>[18]</sup>

When Muhammad received the first revelation, he consulted with his wife Khadija in awe. Khadija then took Muhammad to Waraqa. He, upon hearing the story, told Muhammad that the angel who appeared before him was Namus (archangel Gabriel or Torah), who also appeared to Moses (Jesus in some narrations). He informed Muhammad that he was the last prophet expected by the Jews and Christians, and when he makes his announcement of prophecy eventually, him and his followers will be ostracized. In the face of an adversity, he reassured Muhammad that he will help him as best as he could provide providing that he is still alive and healthy. Waraqa died soon after.<sup>[19]</sup> Some Muslim scholars believe that Waraqa was among many other Christians residing in Mecca who knew about the future of Muhammad (al-Qasas, 28/51-52). The following verses also point to this:

*“Those to whom We have given the Book know this as they know their own sons. Those who have lost their own souls refuse therefore to believe.”*  
(al-Anam, 6/20)

*“Those to whom We have given the Book rejoice at what hath been revealed unto thee: but there are among the clans those who reject a part thereof. Say: “I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to join partners with Him. Unto Him do I call, and unto Him is my return.”* (er-Rad, 13/36)

## 2. Relations the Priest Abu Amir al-Rahib of Madinah

Yasrib (later named Madinah) was mainly composed of polytheistic Arabs and Jews before Islam. However, just like Mecca, there were also individuals who belonged to the Christianity or Hanif religion, such as Abu Amr al-Rahib of the Hazraj tribe. He was also a relative of Abdullah b Ubay b Selul, the head of the Medina hypocrites. According to some sources, he had previously adopted the Hanif religion and become a Christian. Although Abu Amr al-Rahib opposed to the emigration of Muslims to Madinah, he did not have the power to prevent it. Muhammad called him “Abu Amir al-Fasiq” (perverse, sinful). He then migrated to Mecca with fifty young people. Here he provoked the polytheists and encouraged them to attack to the Muslims. As a matter of fact, he was one of the instigators of the Badr conflict. He had participated in this battle with some of his men to fight alongside the Meccans.<sup>[20]</sup>

[18] Ibn Ishaq- Guillaume, p. 83.

[19] al-Bukhari, Bad’ al-wahy, 3; Ibn Ishaq- Guillaume, p. 107

[20] Ibn Sa’d, III, 540-541.

Even after facing a failure here, he maintained the same attitude in future military encounters and invited his compatriots of Madinah to rebel during the Ghazwa of Uhud, and took part in the ranks of the Maccan polytheists. When Macca was conquered by Messenger of Allah, he took refuge in Taif and fled to Syria after the successes of the Muslims in the Ghazwa of Hunayn (Havazin) and the Taif Campaign. However, during the Tabuk expedition, he sent a letter to the Hypocrites and opponents of Madinah, requesting an army to be prepared in the best possible way. Abu Amr had promised that he himself had contacted Eastern Roman Empire, that they would provide troops and clear Madinah of Muslims. In this context, the Hypocrites needed an alternative place / shrine to the Masjid al-Kuba where they could both get organized, and meet with Abu Amr in secret. They opened a masjid in the district of Salim b Avf, called Masjid-i Dirar (the mosque of harm); justifying this move with the rationale suggesting people were experiencing difficulties in reaching Masjid al-Kuba and Masjid al-Nebi on cold and rainy nights, and that the elderly could not keep up with the congregation. They also asked Prophet Muhammad to open this place or pray there before the Tabuk expedition. In the meantime, the Prophet received the following verses related to the subject:

*“And there are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity - to disunite the Believers - and in preparation for one who warred against Allah and His Messenger aforetime. They will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good; But Allah doth declare that they are certainly liars. Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of the standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure. Which then is best? - he that layeth his foundation on piety to Allah and His good pleasure? - or he that layeth his foundation on an undermined sandcliff ready to crumble to pieces? and it doth crumble to pieces with him, into the fire of Hell. And Allah guideth not people that do wrong. The foundation of those who so build is never free from suspicion and shakiness in their hearts, until their hearts are cut to pieces. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise. (al-Tawba 9/107-110)*

In line with the verses, when Messenger of Allah returned from the expedition, he ordered a group to destroy the mosque in question.<sup>[21]</sup> The destroyed structure is sometimes referred to as Masjid al-shikak/discord or Masjid al-nifak/dissension. Abu Amr al-Rahib has always maintained a good relationship with Eastern Roman Empire and died in the palace of Emperor Heraclius (H. 10/A.D. 632).<sup>[22]</sup>

[21] Waqidi, Kitab al-Magāzi, edit. Marsden Jones, Oxford Uni press, 1966, III, 1046; Ibn Hisham, es-Sīretü'n-Nebevi, 1955, IV, 530.

[22] Ibn Hisham, IV, 530.

## I. Relations with Native Christian Communities

### 1. Relations with the Najran

Najran is a region of Arabia near the border of Yemen, almost 1200 miles from Medina. Today it is known as Ukhdud. It is at the junction of important trade routes. Christianity appeared in the region through Hannan (Hayyan), who traded with Hire in the 5th century, and then became the centre of the Eastern Church in Southern Arabia. He was a Monophysite refugee who fled the persecution of the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian (527-565 A.D). In the following years, the king of Himyarite, Zunuvas, converted to Judaism and threw Christians into ditches and burned them. Quran informs us about these events, calling the victims as believers”:

*“Woe to the makers of the pit (of fire), Fire supplied (abundantly) with fuel: Behold! They sat over against the (fire), And they witnessed (all) that they were doing against the Believers. And they ill-treated them for no other reason than that they believed in Allah, Exalted in Power, Worthy of all Praise! - Him to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is Witness to all things.” (al-Buruj 85/4-9)*

Whereupon the East Roman-Abyssinian alliance sent an army to dethrone him and put an end to the Himyarite kingdom in A.D 525. The people of Najran also had connections with the Abyssinian kingdom, which led them to open up to the sphere of influence of Eastern Roman Empire. In Najran region, the largest tribe was the Beni Haris b. Ka’b (Belharis). During this period, a large number of churches and monasteries were built there. For example, a monastery-church called Ka’betu Najran (Deiru Najran) was built in the memory of Christians who were burned in the city. Meanwhile, the Church of Najran declared Haris b. Ka’b, the head of the martyrs, a saint and blessed him at Ka’betu Najran. Thus, the temple was transformed into one of the pilgrimage sites of Christians. Messenger of Allah invited various regions to Islam in the year of the delegations (Senetu’l-Wufud) of Medina (H. 9/A.D. 631). In this regard, he also sent a letter to people of Najran offering them to either convert to Islam or pay a jizya:

*“From Muhammad, the messenger of Allah, to the priests of Najran.*

*In the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’s God.*

*I call you to worship Allah instead of worshipping creatures. Again, I urge you to make an alliance agreement with Allah instead of your alliance with creatures. If you do not accept this, you will give the jizya, and if you refuse the jizya, I will fight you.*

*Wa’s-Salam”<sup>[23]</sup>*

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[23] Özkuyumcu, p. 556.

In response, the Christians of Najran sent a delegation of 60 people to Medina, including the emir / president “aqib” Abdul-masih” of the Kinde tribe, the religious leader “uskuf” Abu Harise b. Alkama and the finance and travel officer “sayyid” al-Ayham. The delegation arrived to Madinah, just after the Prophet and his companions had performed the afternoon prayer. So, they entered the Masjid and headed in the eastern direction, as it was time for their own worship. The Prophet let them to perform. The meeting lasted for three days in peace, and predominantly religious matters were discussed throughout. Meanwhile, the meeting came to a significant moment called “mubahala”, which means “to curse and curse together with the decoy and the cruel one”, according to the Quran (Al-i Imran 3/61). Abu Harisa, the head of the delegation, greets the Messenger of Allah by saying, “We have become Muslims before you”. However, the Prophet informs them that they cannot be considered Muslims since they consume pork, worship the cross, and accept Jesus as the son of Allah. In response, the delegation asks who the father of Jesus was. Muhammad does not answer immediately until the first eighty verses of Surah Al-Imran were revealed. These verses inform about Christianity, Jesus to born without a father, and the creation of Adam without a mother and father, including the verse of mubahala:

*“If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after (full) knowledge Hath come to thee, say: “Come! let us gather together;- our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!” (Al-i Imran 3/61)*

Thereupon, after gathering his daughter Fatima, son-in-law Ali, grandchildren Hassan and Hussein; Muhammad invited the delegation of Najran to the exchange and recited the revealing verses. Soon after a short consultation between themselves, the Najranids did not dare to decamp.<sup>[24]</sup>

Both sides agreed to disagree - that they acknowledge each other's religions but will stay committed to their own. Finally, they signed a treaty and returned to Najran. The Prophet told Abu Ubaidah b. al-Cerrah, “Go with them and judge decently between them on the issues they are in dispute with” and asked to arbitrate especially on financial issues. The treaty covered protection of Najranids' property, life and religious freedom, while issuing them to pay with 2,000 clothes of a jizya per year. Following statements constitute the treaty:

*“In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent.*

*This is what Muhammad, the Prophet and God's Messenger, has written down for the people of Najran when he has the authority over all their fruits, gold, silver, crops and slaves. He has benevolently left them all that*

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[24] Mustafa Fayda, “Mübâhale”, DÎA, v. 31, p. 425.

*in return for 2,000 hullas every year, 1,000 to be given in the month of Rajab and 1,000 in the month of Safar. Each hulla is equal to one ounce (a measure equal to 4 dirhams). The Najran are also required to provide accommodation and expenses for my messengers, for up to 20 days. None of my messengers shall be kept in Najran more than one month. They are also required to give, as a loan, 30 shields, 30 horses and 30 camels, in case of any disorder and treachery in Yemen. If anything is loss of the shields, horses or camels they loan to my messenger, it will remain owing by my messenger until it is given back. Najran has the protection of God and the pledges of Muhammad, the Prophet, to protect their lives, faith, land, property, those who are absent and those who are present, and their clan and allies. They need not change anything of their past customs. No right of theirs or their religion shall be altered. No bishop, monk or church guard shall be removed from his position. Whatever they have is theirs, no matter how big or small. They are not held in suspicion and they shall suffer no vengeance killing. They are not required to be mobilized and no army shall trespass on their land. If any of them requests that any right of his should be given to him, justice shall be administered among them. He who takes usury on past loans is not under my protection. No person in Najran is answerable for an injustice committed by another.<sup>[25]</sup>*

In the following years, Prophet Muhammad sent Khalid b. Walid with a force of 400 men, to Najran of Beni Haris b. Ka'b for another invitation to Islam (10 H/631 A.D). He gave the order to wait three days before using force. Upon the majority of the tribe converted to Islam, Najran became a member of the Madinah administration without using force. Khalid b. Walid stayed behind to teach religious provisions. He returned to Madinah with a Najran delegation and Prophet Muhammad himself gave treats and gifts to this delegation.

## 2. Relations with the Taghlib Tribe

The Beni Taghlib or Taghlib tribe, an Adnanian branch of the Northern Arabs, was amongst those well-recognized communities in the Thema region of Arabian Peninsula. Some of the sub-branches of the Taghlib tribe migrated to east and kept moving from Hejaz to Najid and Bahrain, and then from Iraq and Syria to the land of al-Jazeera, especially around Mosul, Sinjar and Nusaybin. Such movement lasted even after Islam was sent down. Thus, they became neighbors of the East Romans and the Sassanids, as well as their allies which were the Ghassanids and the Lakhmids at the time. Many of the members of

[25] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, p. 271-277; M. H. Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, American Trust Publications, 2005, p.54.; Mustafa Fayda, *İslamiyetin Güney Arabistan'a Yayılışı*, (Spread of Islam in Southern Arabia), Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi pub., Ankara, 1982, p. 29-30.

Beni Taglib also converted to Christianity there. In an incident back at the time, they also appeared in the Yemen region. In fact, during the period of the Ignorance/Jahiliyya, Beni Taghlib was a renounced tribe with its aggressive and warrior identity.<sup>[26]</sup>

In the Year of the Delegations (9 H/631 A.D) the Christians of Beni Taglib came to Madinah with a delegation of 16 people and appeared before the Prophet, declaring some of the tribe to become Muslims and follow his lead, and some others to remain in Christianity. In response, Muhammad included the following provision in the agreement between them: "The Christians of Beni Taghlib will remain in their religion (that is, Christianity). They will not baptize their children born after this agreement."<sup>[27]</sup>

To our knowledge, there are no further incidents that is recorded with regards to Beni Taghlib's relations to the Messenger of Allah.

## J. Relations with the Neighbouring Christian States

### 1. Relations with Abyssinia

It is noted that the first foreign citizens who became Muslims in the history of Islam were Abyssinian Christians. After hearing about Muhammad was designated as a prophet, the negus/najashi/king sent twenty Abyssinian Christians to Mecca to discuss the matter. Delegation found Prophet Muhammad in the Kaaba raised questions about the content of the invitation. The Prophet responded back with some verses from the Qur'an. The delegation, who listened the Qur'an wept, accepting Islam. In the Qur'an, this event is pointed out as follows:

*"Those to whom We sent the Book before this,- they do believe in this (revelation): And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe therein, for it is the Truth from our Lord: indeed we have been Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will) from before this. Twice will they be given their reward, for that they have persevered, that they avert Evil with Good, and that they spend (in charity) out of what We have given them. And when they hear vain talk, they turn away therefrom and say: "To us our deeds, and to you yours; peace be to you: we seek not the ignorant." (Kasas 28/52-55)*

When Messenger o Allah started his invitation, he and his followers were subjected to severe oppression and torture by the idolaters of Mecca. After a while, with the divine permission, the emigration of some Muslims to Abyssinia took place. The verses that were revealed in this regard are as follows:

[26] Casim Avci, "Tağlib (Beni Tağlib)", DİA, v. 39, pp. 374-375.

[27] Ibn Sa'd, I, p. 316; Özkuyumcu, p. 561.

*“To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression. We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater. If they only realised (this)! (They are) those who persevere in patience, and put their trust on their Lord.” (Nahl 16/41-42)*

Some scholars suggest there had been contacts between the Arabian Peninsula and ancient Christian homeland Abyssinia; including political, military and commercial relations with the Arabs in general, the Arabs of Mecca in particular. The leader of the Meccan Quraysh tribe, Hashim b. Abdimenaf received a concession from Negus to trade with Abyssinia. The incident of Negus’ arbitration towards the conflict between Abdulmuttalib b. Hashim and Harb b. Umayya indicates a close relationship between Mecca and Abyssinia.<sup>[28]</sup>

It is also possible to suggest Prophet Muhammad might also kept a positive attitude and confidence with Abyssinian Negus Ashama in the turn of these events. When the oppression and persecution of the Polytheists increased towards Muslims in Mecca, Messenger of Allah suggested those oppressed with the following statement of “a ruler who has never been wronged in his country is at work there; go and stay in the land of righteousness until Allah shows you a way out of the situation you are in”.<sup>[29]</sup> Besides, 15 people migrated to Abyssinia under the leadership of Jafar b. Abi Talib, the son of Muhammad’s uncle (615 A.D). During this occasion, the Prophet sent a letter to Ashama expressing his thoughts sincerely: *“I am sending Ca’fer, my nephew by my uncle, to you immediately with a small Muslim community with a small number of Muslims. Show them hospitality as soon as he gets to you.”* The letter was well received by Ashama. In the meantime, an interesting incident happened in Mecca, called as the Gharaniq incident. During this incident, the polytheists assumed Prophet Muhammad accepted their religion so they would also accept Islam in peace. Upon receiving the news, Muslims returned to Mecca from Abyssinia. However, when they realized that this was not the case, the second Abyssinian migration took place, which was attended by 103 Muslims, 18 of whom were women. Idolaters who got worried about these developments sent Amr b. al-As and Abdullah b. Abi Rabia to Abyssinia with some gifts and asked for the deportation of the muhajirs. Amr b. al-As responded as follows:

*“Some foolish fellows from our people have taken refuge in the king’s country. They have forsaken our religion and not accepted yours, but have brought in an invented religion which. neither we nor you know anything about. Our nobles have sent us to the king to get him to return them, so*

[28] Belazuri, Ansâbu’l-Aşrâf, tk., Süheyl Zekkâr- Riyad Zirikli, Beirut 1417/1996, I, 73.

[29] Ibn Hisham, I, 321-322.

*when we speak to the king about them advise him to surrender them to us and not to speak to them, for their own people have the keenest insight and know most about their faults.*"<sup>[30]</sup>

Ashama also wanted to hear the Muslims. Jafar b. Abi Talib took the lead and expressed his frustration with their ignorance, and then explained the goodness and beauty that Prophet Muhammad had offered them with Islam, and concluded his words as follows:

*"O King, we were an uncivilized people, worshipping idols, eating corpses, committing abominations, breaking natural ties, treating guests badly, and our strong devoured our weak. Thus we were until God sent us an apostle whose lineage, truth, trustworthiness, and clemency we know. He summoned us to acknowledge God's unity and to worship him and to renounce the stones and images which we and our fathers formerly worshipped. He commanded us to speak the truth, be faithful to our engagements, mindful of the ties of kinship and kindly hospitality, and to refrain from crimes and bloodshed. He forbade us to commit abominations and to speak lies, and to devour the property of orphans, to vilify chaste women. He commanded us to worship God alone and not to associate anything with Him, and he gave us orders about prayer, almsgiving, and fasting (enumerating the commands of Islam). We confessed his truth and believed in him, and we followed him in what he had brought from God, and we worshipped God alone without associating aught with Him. We treated as forbidden what he forbade, and as lawful what he declared lawful. Thereupon our people attacked us, treated us harshly and seduced us from our faith to try to make us go back to the worship of idols instead of the worship of God, and to regard as lawful the evil deeds we once committed. So when they got the better of us, treated us unjustly and circumscribed our lives, and came between us and our religion, we came to your country, having chosen you above all others. Here we have been happy in your protection, and we hope that we shall not be treated unjustly while we are with you, O King."*<sup>[31]</sup>

When Ashama inquired about the approach of the Prophet towards Jesus, Jafar read the following verses:

*"But she pointed to the babe. They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?" He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah: He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet; "And He hath made me Blessed wheresoever I be and hath enjoined on me Prayer and Charity as long*

[30] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, p. 150; İbrahim Sarıçam, Hz. Muhammed ve Evrensel Mesajı, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı matbaası, Ankara, 2001, p. 81.

[31] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, p. 151-152.

*as I live; "(He) hath made me kind to my mother and not overbearing or miserable; "So Peace is on me the day I was born the day that I die and the Day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!" (Maryam 19/29-33)*

The king Ashama listened and "...wept until his beard was wet and the bishops wept until their scrolls were wet, when they heard what he read to them. Then the Negus said, 'Of a truth, this and what Jesus brought have come from the same niche. You two may go, for by God, I will never give them up to them and they shall not be betrayed.'<sup>32]</sup>

Muslims who were sent to Abyssinia lived there in peace and security. This situation caused dissatisfaction among some administrators in Abyssinia, and as a result, an internal rebellion broke out. Sources report that Muslims sided with Ashama during this civil war, and after peace and stability were restored, they were rewarded with many gifts. Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad sent Amr b. Umayya ad-Damrî to Negus Ashama with two letters and some gifts (7 H/629 A.D). In the first letter, he invited Ashama to Islam. In the second one, he asked Ashama to marry him with one of the muhajirs in Abyssinia, Umm Habiba, the daughter of Abu Sufyan, and also asked him to send the muhajirs to Medina subsequently. Ashama responded positively to the invitation and converted to Islam. As for the second request, he sent the muhajirs to Medina with a companion of seventy people, as well as with a gift package consisting of three short spears (cargoes), a ring, a pair of boots, an Egyptian dress, turban, underwear and a mule for Prophet Muhammad. Negus Ashama also sent a letter to him:

*"By Najashi to Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.  
And the Messenger of Allah! Peace be upon you, and the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you! Allah, who is no god but Himself, guided me to Islam. And the Messenger of Allah! I have received your letter in which you mention the condition of Jesus. I swear by the Lord of the earth and the sky that His Holiness Jesus has not said much about himself other than what you have mentioned. And His message is the same as what you command. We have learned the principles of Islam, which you have been the officer of conveying to us. We have invited your uncle's son and his companions who emigrated to our land. I bear witness that You are the Messenger of Allah. You're true to your word. You are the truth and the truthful.  
And the Messenger of Allah! I have declared my allegiance to you through your uncle, who is Your representative. I have submitted myself before him to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. I'm sending you my son Erha. I have only my own property, and if you want me to come to you, O Messenger*

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[32] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, p. 146-153.

*of Allah, I will come immediately. I bear witness that what you say is true.  
O Messenger of Allah, Peace be upon you!..”<sup>[33]</sup>*

Muhajirs of Abyssinia returned to Medina during the conquest of Khyber (7 H/629 A.D). Upon sending the muhajirs back to Mecca, Ashama also had his son Erha escort them with a group of sixty men in another ship. Unfortunately, this ship sank, and all the passengers were drowned. When the Muhajirs and the Abyssinian delegation came to Medina, Prophet Muhammad himself gave them a blessing and a treat. In addition, he recited Surah Yasin after those who were drowned.<sup>[34]</sup> According to an account, the 82nd verse of the Maida surah was revealed upon the incident to signify the love Abyssinians had for Islam in their hearts.<sup>[35]</sup>

However, during these years Negus Ashama experienced troubled days. Muhammad had performed funeral prayers in absentia after the deceased Ashama.

Prophet Muhammad kept to continue contact with the Abyssinia. Sources mention another insincere letter sent to Abyssinia:

*“In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful  
From the Messenger of Allah Muhammad, king of the Abyssinians to  
Najashi;  
I inform you of the praise of Allah, the true Ruler, the Protector, the Savior,  
who is no god but himself. I confirm and bear witness that Isa, the son of  
Mary, is the Spirit and the Word of Allah, and (this word) is left to Mary,  
chaste, honest, no man has touched her. So She became pregnant with  
Jesus, and Allah created her just as He created Adam, both from his own  
Soul and from His own Soul.  
I call you to Allah, the Only One, with no partner to Him. Follow me and  
believe in what has come to me. Because I am the messenger of Allah.  
Accordingly, I invite you and my soldiers around you to Allah, who has  
Power and Perseverance. I advise you to accept my advice and words.  
Peace be upon those who follow the path of true guidance.”  
“And Peace unto whoever follows the guided path.” (Ta-Ha, 20/47)  
Seal: Muhammad, Messenger of Allah.”<sup>[36]</sup>*

After this letter, recordings do not mention of any other relations between the Prophet and the Abyssinian Negus in the available sources.

[33] Ibn al-Sa'd, I, 259; Hamidullah, al-Vesaik, p. 100, 104-105.

[34] Beyhaki, Delailün-nübuvve, ed. Abdulmu'ti Qal'aci, Beirut 1405/1985, II, 307

[35] Yusuf b. Ismail an-Nebhani, Hüccetullah 'ale'l-'alemin, Diyarbakır, no date, al-Maktabat al-Is-lamiyya, p. 156.

[36] Özkuyumcu, p. 556.

## 2. Relations with the Coptic Egypt

During the time Messenger of Allah Muhammad began his invitation, Egypt was dominated by Eastern Rome. It was led by Muqawqis as the governor-general, who was also the patriarch of Alexandria. The Eastern Roman Empire's Heraclius appointed him to this post after the victory over the Sassanids in Nineveh (6 H/ A.D. 627A.D). Messenger of Allah has sent an invitation letter to the Muqawqis with Khatib b. Ebi Beltea in the same year. Some Western historians have suggested that the letter in question is a fabrication. However, Muslim historians and contemporary researchers note that the letter was genuine.

Prophet Muhammad's letter, to our knowledge, follows as such:

*In the name of God, the Gracious One, the Merciful*

*From Muhammad, servant of God and His apostle to al-Muqawqis, premier of Egypt:*

*Peace unto whoever follows the guided path! And thereafter, verily I call you to the call of Submission [to God] ("Islam"). Submit (i.e., embrace Islam) and be safe [from perdition, as] God shall compensate your reward two-folds. But if you turn away, then upon you will be the guilt [of delusion] of the Egyptians. Then "O People of the Scripture, come to a term equitable between us and you that we worship none but God and associate [as partners in worship] with Him nothing, and we take not one another as Lords apart from God. [Then God says] But if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are Submitters [to God] ("Muslims")." (Āl-i Īmrân, 3/64)<sup>[37]</sup>*

The Muqawqis hosted Khatib for five days. During this stay he learned about Prophet Muhammad and his invitation. He then sent over two sisters named Mary and Sirin, two of his concubines, a eunuch slave, a thousand muskals (approximately 4.5 gram) of gold, beautiful dresses and fabrics, perfumes, a donkey and a mule, as gifts to Prophet Muhammad and wrote a letter with the answer to his invitation:

*"From Muqawqis to Muhammad bin Abdullah, Greetings from the governor of Copt, Muqawqis!*

*I read your letter. I understood what you were saying and invited me to do. I know that another prophet is coming, but I thought he was coming out of Damascus. I have received your messenger. I am sending you robes with two high-ranking concubines in the Copts. And I am giving you a mule to ride. Greetings to you!"<sup>[38]</sup>*

[37] Casim Avcı, İslam Bizans İlişkileri (Relations between Islam and Byzantine), TTK (Türk Tarih Kurumu) pub. Ankara, 2015, p. 50-51.

[38] Özkuyumcu, p. 555.

Regarding the attitude of Muqawqis, Khatib informed Prophet Muhammad: "Muqawqis did not do much more than that, nor did he become a Muslim. He said to me: "Don't you dare! Let the Copts not hear a single word from your mouth!". The Messenger of Allah said, "The naughty man has not come to his reign! And the reign that he has spared will not remain with him!" Two sisters Mariyah and Sirin became Muslims upon Khatib's suggestion on the way. Messenger of Allah wed Sirin to Hassan bin Sabit and Mariyah to himself. Mariyah then became the mother of his son Ibrahim. There are also many political aspects of this marriage. During the wars with Eastern Roman Empire in the following years, conquests held with less effort as Egyptians took a side in favour of Eastern Rome.<sup>[39]</sup>

### 3. Relations with the Eastern Rome Empire

One of the issues related to Christians the Holy Qur'an mentions is the war between the Eastern Roman and Sassanids. During this fight for dominance, the Qur'an foreshadowed that People of the Book of Eastern Rome would prevail in the near future against the pagan Sassanids. There is a surah revealed in Mecca called "Rum", that mentions about Romans, which takes its name from the word er-Rum, and touches on the subject as follows:

*"Alif. Lãm. Mîm. The Roman Empire has been defeated - In a land close by; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious - Within a few years. With Allah is the Decision, in the past and in the Future: on that Day shall the Believers rejoice- With the help of Allah. He helps whom He will, and He is exalted in might, most merciful. (It is) the promise of Allah. Never does Allah depart from His promise: but most men understand not." (al-Rum, 30/1-6)*

These verses also indicate the approach of Messenger of Allah and Muslims to People of The Book in general and Christians in particular. The content of these verses points out the following: in the sixth year of Muhammad's prophethood in 616, Christian Eastern Rome suffered a series of military defeats during the war against the polytheist Sassanids. They've subsequently lost their rule on Syria, Anatolia, and Egypt. These developments were treated as the victory of polytheism by the Meccan polytheists. They started the propaganda of "Just as the Sassanids defeated the Romans of the Book, we will defeat you" against Muslims. According to common interpretation, Allah Almighty sent down these verses and informed Muslims with the news of victory of Romans over the Sassanids. As a matter of fact, Eastern Rome defeated the Sassanids and regained all the lands that were lost in 619.

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[39] Ibn S'd, I, 260-261; Muhammad Hamidullah, al-Wasaiqi's-siyasiyya, Bairut, 1969, p. 135-136.

Muslim sources record that Prophet Muhammad sent an invitation letter to the Eastern Roman Emperor Heraclius with Dihyah al-Kalbi (628 A.D). At that time, the emperor had come to Jerusalem to celebrate his victory at Nineveh over the Sassanids and to replace the Holy Cross that he had taken back. Prophet Muhammad's envoy appeared before the emperor through the governor of Busra. The emperor summoned Abu Sufyan, who was in Jerusalem at the time, to his presence to get more information. From him, he received information about Prophet Muhammad's ancestry, family, environment, personality, social position. Subsequently he believed that Muhammad had prophetic signs. Then the envoy Dihya al-Kalbi entertained him according to diplomatic rules and sent him off with gifts.<sup>[40]</sup> The letter is as follows:<sup>[41]</sup>

*"In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.*

*From Muhammad, servant of God and His Messenger to Heraclius, premier of the Romans:*

*Peace unto whoever follows the guided path!*

*Thereafter, verily I call you to the call of Submission [to God] ("Islam").*

*Submit [to God] and be safe, then God shall compensate your reward two-folds. But if you turn away, then upon you will be the guilt [of delusion]*

*of the peasantry. Then "O People of the Book, come to a term equitable*

*between us and you that we worship none but God and associate [as partners in worship] with Him nothing, and we take not one another as Lords*

*apart from God. [Then God says] But if they turn away, then say: Bear*

*witness that we are Submitters [to God] ("Muslims")."[Al-i Imran 3/64]*

*Seal: Muhammad, Apostle of God."*

Another phase of relations with the East Romans was military. Muslims organized military expeditions directly or indirectly towards to the East Roman Empire or its vassals. Two of them were Muta and Tabuk.

#### a. The Muta Expedition

According to historical accounts, Muslims and East Roman Christians had their first military encounter at Muta (8 H/629 A.D). The developments that lead to this encounter are as follows: The Ghassanids decimated Syria between 200 and 636. Over time, they became vassals of the Eastern Roman Empire. Rather, they adopted Christianity, which was subordinate to the Monophysite church or sect. They were given the title of Phylarkhos, "grand emir", which was the highest title after the emperor in Eastern Roman Empire. In the years

[40] Ibn Sa'd, II, 88; Avci, İslam Bizans İlişkileri, p. 45.

[41] al-Bukhari, "Badu'l-Wahy," 6; "Cihad", 102; Hamidullah, al-Wasaiq, p. 109; Avci, İslam Bizans İlişkileri, p. 44.

Muhammad started the Islamic invitation, the Ghassanids continued their residency relying on their relationship with Eastern Romans. However, the central authority was weak, and disagreements and struggles between the Ghassani tribes and tribal orders/chieftains, were substantial. The Ghassanids took part in the battle at Nineveh between Eastern Rome and the Sassanids. In process of contact Prophet Muhammad sent an invitation letter to the head of the Ghassanids, Haris b. Abi Shamir:

*"In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful*

*From Muhammad, Apostle of God to al-Ḥaris the son of 'Abu Shamir:*

*Peace unto whoever follows the guided path and believe in God and is sincere!*

*Thereby I call you to [this] that you believe in the one God with no partner to Him [and] your kingship remains yours.*

*Seal: Muhammad, Apostle of God."<sup>[42]</sup>*

The Head of Ghassanids Haris b. Abi Shamir received the letter got infuriated and martyred the envoy of the Prophet This meant both a flagrant violation of the international law and diplomatic practices, as well as defying the rule of Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Upon this development, Messenger of Allah sent an army of 3,000 soldiers to Mute, which was located in the 11km south of the lake of Lot, 50 km to Jerusalem. Prophet Muhammad's son in law Zayd b. Harisa was the commander. During the takeoff, the Prophet said, "If Zayd falls, Jafar b. Abi Talib is your commander if he too becomes a martyr, so does Abdullah b. Ravaha is your commander. And if he becomes a martyr, then bring someone to the command whom you will be pleased with." In addition, he ordered them to invite the enemy to Islam first, and providing that they receive a refusal, they are then allowed to fight. In particular, he insisted that children, women, the elderly and people around the monasteries should not be touched, palm trees that are a source of food and livelihood should not be damaged, trees should not be cut down, and buildings should not be destroyed, since they are already vulnerable and unlikely to be attacked.<sup>[43]</sup>

To resist to Muslim army, the Ghassanids asked for help from the Eastern Roman emperor Heraclius, who was in Jerusalem for a ceremony / celebration at the time. The emperor sent help with an army under the command of Theodoros. There are records that the Christian forces with the participation of Shurahbil and the Christian Arab tribes found 100,000-200,000 people. The two armies met at Mute. Three commanders of Muslims were martyred. Khalid b. Walid led the army and managed to break out of the circle with a splitting

[42] Hamidullah, Wasaiq, p. 126; Avci, İslam-Bizans, p. 51.

[43] Waqidi, II, 757-758, Sarıçam, p. 202-203.

operation and save his remaining troops. Among the Muslims in Madinah, some spread rumours about the army to escape and desert the war-zone. Thereupon the Prophet corrected the rumour by explaining the movement to aim regrouping and confronting the enemy again, and the rumours died down. Khalid b. Walid who shattered nine swords in his hand, in the way of Allah, was nicknamed “Saifullah: the sword of Allah” by the Prophet.<sup>[44]</sup>

#### b. The Tabuk Expedition

This is the last ghazwa of Prophet Muhammad, which took fifty days. Messenger of Allah launched his last Ghazwa expedition (H. 9/A.D. 630) to Tabuk, against Eastern Roman Empire in a city located on the Medina-Syria trade route, 700 km from Medina. Preparations for this expedition was particularly difficult as it took during the summer time, and harvesting season. The challenges are referred in the Qur’an as “saat al-usra” (time of hardship) (al-Tawba 9/117). For this reason, the army was also called “jaysh al-usr” (army of hardship), and “Ghazwat al-usr” (Battle of hardship). There are many verses related to this topic in the Surah of al-Tawba that came down during the Tabuk ghazwa.

The rationale behind this expedition were argued by Muslim scholars. Some of them believed that one of the main reasons, the bitterness of the defeat of the Mute and the concern over an unexpected attack from Eastern Rome. Another reason that was pointed out “the jizya ayah” in the following line discussed.

Sources record that the Christian Arabs in Syria wrote a letter to Heraclius, noting that Muhammad had died, that Muslims were in financial and spiritual decadence, that they were experiencing famine, and that it was the right time to send an army and subject them to his religion. According to these accounts, Nabatean merchants from Syria were receiving news that the Eastern Roman king Heraclius was preparing to attack the Muslims, more specifically to Medina. It is believed that those Christian Arab tribes including the Ghassan, Lahm, Cuzam, and Amila also supported Eastern Romans with their finances, military, and spiritual forces. Their pioneer troops reached Belka on the border of the Arabian Desert. After that, Muhammad began his preparations for the Tabuk ghazwa.<sup>[45]</sup> The army of about 30,000 soldiers got ready in great difficulty, and later arrived in Tabuk after a long and exhausting journey under the command of Prophet Muhammad. He stayed here for about fifteen to twenty days. However, there were no signs of an attack from

[44] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, pp. 531-540; Waqidi, II, 755-765; Ibn Sa’d, III, 129; Avci, Islam-Bizans, s. 53.

[45] Waqidi, I, 990; Ibn Sa’d, II, 165

Eastern Rome or its ally, the Arabs. It was understood that the news was unfounded. Some sources suggest the enemy retreated upon hearing the news of Muslims coming for them.<sup>[46]</sup>

As we mentioned, some Muslim scholars suggest another justification for the Tabuk gahazwa, that is "verse of the jizyah":

*"Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of People of the Book, until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued."* (al-Tawba 9/29)

The second justification stems from the following verse:

*"O ye who believe! fight the unbelievers who gird you about, and let them find firmness in you: and know that Allah is with those who fear Him."* (al-Tawba 9/123)

The Jizyah/poll-tax means both submission to the rule of Islam and Muslims, and payment of tax, which is a civic duty. In return, Muslims are obliged to pay zakah, which is classified for worship and tax purposes. The people who pay jizyah has got the status of "ahl al-zimmah" the protected people. The Mamluk historians and mufassirs Ibn Kathir (d.774/1373) argues that when these verses were revealed, Prophet Muhammad decided to organize an expedition towards the Eastern Rome, as the people of these lands lived nearby and were considered as the worthiest to be called to the truth because they were People of the book.<sup>[47]</sup>

After having break at Tabuk, in accordance with the jizyah verse, Messenger of Allah sent troops to the Port of Ayla/Aqaba, Ezruh, Jarba, Makna and Maan in the north side of the Gulf of Aqaba, and to Dumatu'l-jandal on the Iraqi road. In addition, a second invitation letter was sent to Heraclius, which states that the Prophet was staying in Homs or Damascus at that time.<sup>[48]</sup> The departing troops offered to the people of the region to choose either jizya or Islam. Subsequently, the representatives of the region appeared before Muhammad and informed him that they had accepted the jizyah. And He gave them his word, assuring their lives and properties were safe and signed an agreement (ahid-nama).<sup>[49]</sup>

From a military-political point of view, going on an expedition with a massive army in the face of harsh conditions also led neighboring states to be more

[46] Sariçam, p. 207.

[47] Ibn Kasir, Tafsiru Kur'ani'l-Azim, Daru'l-Marife, Bairut, 1400/1980, v. II, p. 346-348.

[48] Ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad, III, 441-442; IV, 74-75; Hamidullah, al-Vesaiq p. 110-115.

[49] Sariçam, p. 208.

cautious towards Muslims. Indeed, it was an indicator of the power Medina held back in the time. In this aspect, without throwing a fist Muslims considered the Tabuk expedition as victory. The army was greeted with joy in Madinah.<sup>[50]</sup>

We believe these approaches and interpretations have a historical background as described in detail. After the conquest of Macca, almost all of the Arabian Peninsula accepted either Islam or the rule of Muslims. However, Muhammad's task of prophethood was not limited to the Arabs or the Arabian Peninsula. Some neighboring states or tribes were also considered as potential receivers. One of these regions, which is indicated in the verse by the phrase of "those that are in your immediate vicinity", was the Arab tribes in Syria and the Ghassanid region dominated by Eastern Rome. Prophet Muhammad organized an expedition to this predominantly Christian region to deliver a message and also to eliminate the threat.

### Final Remarks

The heavenly duty and responsibility of the Last Prophet Muhammad to mankind was to communicate the religion that was sent to all prophets from Adam onwards and was finally completed with him. Within the framework of this mission, he also appealed to Christians of the Ahl al-Kitab. Although he did not receive a positive response, he kept his social relations with those who did not pose a threat to Islam and Muslims. He granted them with a zimmi status to keep his end of the agreements. Shortly after his arrival in Medina, he signed an agreement with non-Muslims under the Madinah document (al-wasiqa), based on the principle of providing the parties with mutual good relations, as well as freedom of religion and conscience.

In the meantime, he also responded to armed struggle or resistance, but did not show a hostile attitude towards biblical values during and post conflicts. After any sorts of disagreement / conflict, he acted fairly and reminded Muslims that it was forbidden to encroach on the property of those who had an agreement with them. We should consider Prophet Muhammad's relations with Christians as an act of harmony, cohesion and pluralistic grounds.

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[50] Ibn Ishaq-Guillaume, pp. 602-610.

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# The Wives and the Children of the Prophet Muhammad

Hız. Peygamber'in Eşleri ve Çocukları

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**Abstract**

The wives of the Prophet Muḥammad were in the status of the mothers of the believers. Therefore, their life stories and the position they occupy in the sirah of the Prophet are of great importance to Muslims. Because they were close to the Prophet during most of their daily lives, they had a chance to listen to his words and observe his behaviors. Thus, they played an important role in transmitting these words and actions, considered as the sunnah of the Prophet to the next generations. In some cases, these ladies who were the household of the Prophet, caused the verses of the Qur'an to be revealed. They contributed to Islamic knowledge in many ways. This means that their recognition is necessary for the correct understanding of the Prophet's sunnah and sirah. Except for 'Ā'isha, all other wives of the Prophet were widows and some of them had children from their previous husbands. But the Prophet's children were born from only two wives, Khadija and Māriya. In this article, the Prophet's wives and children are introduced in general terms; the Prophet's family life, the relations of his wives with each other and the reflections of these relations in the verses are briefly mentioned.

**Keywords:** Sirah, Mothers of the Believers, The Pure Wives, The Prophet's Children, Taḥrīm

**Öz**

Hiz. Muhammed'in eşleri müminlerin anneleri konumundadır. Bu nedenle onların hayatı ve Hiz. Peygamber'in siretindeki yeri Müslümanlar için büyük önem taşır. Onlar, gündelik hayatlarının büyük bir bölümünde Hiz. Peygamber'e yakın olmuşlar, onun sözlerini dinlemişler ve davranışlarını gözlemlemişlerdir. Ayrıca onlar Hiz. Peygamber'in sünneti olan bu söz ve davranışları sonraki nesillere aktarmada önemli roller üstlenmişlerdir. Hiz. Peygamber'in ev ahalisi olan bu hanımlar, bazı durumlarda ayetlerin nazil olmasına sebep olmuşlardır. Onlar birçok şekilde İslamî birikime katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Bu husus onların tanınmasının, Hiz. Peygamber'in sünneti ve siretinin doğru anlaşılması için gerekli olduğu anlamına gelir. Hiz. Peygamber'in bu hanımları Hiz. Aişe haricinde dul hanımlardır ve bazıları önceki eşlerinden çocuk sahibi olmuşlardır. Fakat Hiz. Peygamber'in sadece iki hanımdan, Hiz. Hatice ve Hiz. Mariye'den çocukları dünyaya gelmiştir. Bu makalede, Hiz. Peygamber'in eşleri ve çocukları genel hatlarıyla tanıtılmış; Hiz. Peygamber'in aile hayatı, hanımların birbirleri ile münasebetleri ve bu münasebetlerin ayetlerdeki yansımalarına kısaca değinilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Siyer, Ümmehâtü'l-Mü'minîn, Ezvâc-ı Tâhirât, Hiz. Peygamber'in Çocukları, Taḥrim

## Introduction

The term “ummahât al-mu'minîn” used for the Prophet’s wives means “mothers of the believers” and is based on the verse “The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers.”<sup>[1]</sup> Muḥammad (pbuh) lived happily and peacefully with his wives, who differed from each other in many aspects, such as age, character, culture, family view and level of understanding. The punishment of the sin committed by the mothers of the believers was twice compared to ordinary people because they were close to the prophet. And for their obedience, double reward was given to them as well. In addition, they were ordered to be more careful compared to other women because they were closely witnessing the process of revelation, knew the Messenger of Allah more closely, and were referred to as the mothers of the believers.<sup>[2]</sup> It was because of this special position that the Prophet’s wives lived an extremely modest and humble life paying utmost attention not to violate the divine consent. Each one of them stood out with their own special virtues.

According to popular opinion, the Prophet married eleven women. Nine of them were alive when he passed away. Some sources also contain the information that he had concubines besides his wives. We will introduce them all based on the order of their marriage with the Prophet.

### A. The Prophet’s Wives

#### 1. Khadīja bint Khuwaylid

The first wife of the Prophet was Khadīja bint Khuwaylid. Sources say that Khadija was born in Mecca some 68 years before the Hijra.<sup>[3]</sup> Her father was Khuwaylid b. Asad from the clan of Asad, the subclan of Quraysh. Fāṭima bint Zāida from the clan of ‘Āmir b. Lu’ayy was her mother. Before her marriage to Muḥammad she had been married twice. From her first marriage with Abū Hāla Hind b. Nabbāsh, she had two children named Hind and Hāla.<sup>[4]</sup> From her second marriage with ‘Atīq b. ‘Ā'idh, she had a daughter named Hind.<sup>[5]</sup> After

[1] al-Aḥzāb 33/6.

[2] al-Aḥzāb 33/30-31.

[3] M. Yaşar Kandemir, “Hatice”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1997) 16/465.

[4] Muhammed b. Yesar Ibn Ishâk, *Kitâbü's-Siyer Ve'l-Meğazî- Hz. Peygamber'in Hayatı ve Gazveleri*, critical ed. Süheyl Zekkâr, trans. Ali Bakka (İstanbul: İlk Harf Yayınevi, 2013), 118; Muḥammad b. Sa'd b. Mani el-Hāshimî el-Basrî, *Kitâb at-Ṭabaqât al-Kabîr*, critical ed. Dr. 'Alî Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo, 2001), 10/15.

[5] Ibn Ishâk, *Kitâbü's-Siyer*, 337; Umar b. al-Hasan Ibn Zebâle, *Ezväcü'n-Nebî*, nar. Zübeyr b. Bekkâr (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2018), 35; Ebû Cafer Muhammed Ibn Habîb, *el-Muḥabber-Arap Kültürü*, trans. Adem Apak-İsmail Güler (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2018), 70.

her second husband's death, some of the notables of Quraysh asked for her hand in marriage because she was rich, beautiful, and noble. But she did not accept these proposals.

Mecca was an unsuitable place for agriculture due to its hot climate, rocky terrain, and lack of water. For this reason, people of the Quraysh were trading in order to earn their living. Having inherited a relatively great deal of wealth from her deceased husbands, Khadija was also a part of the Meccan business elite. She would either hire men to work for her or would enter into partnerships with people she trusted. She made a partnership agreement with Muḥammad, a reliable person and put her slave Maysara into his service. The trade caravan led by Muḥammad went to Damascus and returned with a great profit. Khadija learned about Muḥammad's work ethics, reliability and honesty from her slave Maysara and then proposed to Muḥammad because she admired him.<sup>[6]</sup> Muḥammad accepted the offer. He was barely twenty-five when they tied the knot. Khadija on the other hand was forty years old, according to the majority of scholars. Nevertheless, some rumors would downgrade her age to thirty-seven or even to twenty-eight,<sup>[7]</sup> a reasonable number in our opinion as well. Their marriage had lasted for about twenty-five years. They had two sons named Qāsim and 'Abd Allāh and four daughters named Zaynab, Ruqayya, Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭima.

The marriage of the Prophet and Khadija, founded on love, respect, and devotion, has been seen as an exemplary marriage throughout the history of Islam.<sup>[8]</sup> Khadija supported her husband in all sorts of difficulties and troubles. She took care of Muḥammad and met his needs during his periodic contemplating sessions in the Cave of Ḥirā' before the Prophethood came. When Jibrīl (Gabriel) brought the first revelation to him, he took refuge in her house struck by a great deal of fear. Khadija comforted him with the following words: "I swear that Allah will never embarrass or upset you. Because you take care of your relatives and speak the truth, help the incapable, support poors, entertain guests and assist oppresseds." Khadija then took the Prophet to her cousin Waraqa b. Nawfal, a rare scholar of both Bible and the Torah (The New and the Old Testaments). Waraqa heralded that the angel appeared to Muḥammad was none other than the angel of revelation, and that he was also appointed as the last awaited Prophet.<sup>[9]</sup> It was Khadija who believed in

[6] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 116-118; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 70.

[7] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/18.

[8] Aişe bintü'ş-Şâti' Abdurrahman, *Rasulullah'ın Annesi ve Hanımları*, trans. İsmail Kaya (Konya: Uysal Kitabevi, 1994), 205.

[9] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 176-177; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/165; Muḥammad b. Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *al-Cāmi u'ş-şahih*, (s.n., 1315 H.), "Bad'al-vahy", 3; Abu 'l-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Muslim, *el-Cāmi u'ş-şahih*, critical ed. Muḥammad Fuad Abdulbāqī (Egypt, 1955), "Imān", 252.

Muḥammad before anyone else and threw her weight behind him. She had never left the Prophet alone in the face of the ruthless persecution of the polytheist population of Mecca. During the years of boycott when Muslims were groaned under the cruel pagan embargo she stood firmly by Muslims and did not hesitate to spend her wealth assisting them.

Khadija died three years before the Hijra.<sup>[10]</sup> Since his uncle Abū Ṭālib passed away three days before Khadija's death, the Prophet lost two important supports. The Prophet had not married another woman until she died. Although he married many women after Khadija, he had never forgot her. He commemorated her sacrifice and sincerity at every opportunity. 'Ā'isha, the young wife of Muhammad, admitted that she was most jealous of Khadija in her life.<sup>[11]</sup>

## 2. Sawda bint Zam'ā

Sawda whose father was Zam'ā b. Qayyis from the clan of 'Āmir b. Lu'ayy, the subclan of Quraysh and her mother was Shamūs bint Qayyis from Banū Najjār of Medina<sup>[12]</sup> was one of the early converts to Islam. She first married Sakrān b. 'Amr, her uncle's son, who was one of the first Muslims like herself. Both were subjected to the torture at the hands of Meccan polytheists and forced to emigrate to Abyssinia with the second caravan. Sakrān passed away as a Muslim after the couple returned to Mecca.<sup>[13]</sup> Sawda, who was over fifty years old at the time, was left alone with her five children.<sup>[14]</sup>

Meanwhile, the Prophet had lost his beloved wife Khadija, with whom he was happily married for many years. He needed some one to look after his children and take care of the household. Upon the advice of a female companion, he proposed to Sawda. They got married in Mecca, three years before the Hijra, in the tenth year of his prophetic mission.<sup>[15]</sup> Sawda had been the Prophet's only wife for three years until he married 'Ā'isha. During this time, she had been also a mother to Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭima, who were very young when their mother died.

The Prophet married several other women in the following years. Sawda, who was kind-hearted enough to be almost naive,<sup>[16]</sup> got on well with these ladies, especially 'Ā'isha. 'Ā'isha loved her too. She even said about her: "The woman

[10] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 347; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/19.

[11] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 336; Bukhārī, "Manāqib al-Ansār", 20; "Nikāḥ", 108; Muslim, "Faḍāil as-Sahāba", 12.

[12] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/52.

[13] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 347; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/53.

[14] Aynur Uraler, "Sevde", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2009) 36/584.

[15] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/53.

[16] Aişe Abdurrahman, *Rasulullah'ın Annesi ve Hanımları*, 229.

I most want to be like is Sawda, because she has anger (imperishableness).”<sup>[17]</sup> From these expressions, it is possible to deduce that ‘Ā’isha loved Sawda, as well as that Sawda was a woman who expressed her feelings, thoughts and demands without hesitation.<sup>[18]</sup> In the case of honey syrup, causing the revelation of the first verses of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm, Sawda implemented what ‘Ā’isha told her, but later regretted it.<sup>[19]</sup>

In the later periods, the Prophet wanted to divorce Sawda. But she said that she wanted to be resurrected as the Prophet’s wife in the hereafter, otherwise she granted the alignment spending the night with the Prophet to ‘Ā’isha. In this way, she remained as the Propet’s wife.<sup>[20]</sup> In this regard, the following verse was revealed: “ *If a wife is worried about her husband’s disagreement or turning away from her, there is no blame on them to make peace between them...*”<sup>[21]</sup> The benevolent Sawda died in Medina in 23/644. Despite of her being a member of the household and intimate relationship with the Prophet, she narrated only five hadiths.<sup>[22]</sup>

### 3. ‘Ā’isha bint Abī Bakr

‘Ā’isha was born in Mecca in the fourth year of prophethood according to sources. Nevertheless, some sources indicate a prior date claiming that she was either fourteen or eighteen years old when she married the Prophet.<sup>[23]</sup> Her father, Abū Bakr ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Quḥāfa of the clan of Taym of the tribe of Quraysh, was a close confidant of the Prophet and his first successor. Her mother Umm Rūmān was of the tribe of Kināna.<sup>[24]</sup> The Prophet and ‘Ā’isha were married in the month of Shawwal in the first or second year of the Hijra.<sup>[25]</sup>

‘Ā’isha participated in quite a few expeditions such as the Uḥud, Ḥudaybiyya, the Farewell Ḥajj and the Conquest of Mecca. But one of the most important expeditions she participated in was the Banū Mustalik Campaign, which took place in the fifth year of the Hijra. While returning to Medina after the war, ‘Ā’isha got off her camel to meet her needs and went away from the camp in a place where the army was encamped. When she returned to camp, she

[17] Muslim, “Raḍ’ ā”, 14, 47.

[18] Ziya Kazıcı, *Hz. Muhammed’in Aile Hayatı ve Eşleri* (İstanbul: Çamlıca Yayınları, 2019), 126.

[19] Muslim, “Ṭalāq”, 21.

[20] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/54; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muḥabber*, 72; Bukhārī, “Hiba”, 15.

[21] al-Nisā’ 4/128.

[22] Uraler, “Sevde”, 36/ 584.

[23] Mustafa Fayda, “Āişe”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1989), 2/201; Kazıcı, *Hz. Muhammed’in Aile Hayatı ve Eşleri*, 141-142.

[24] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/57-58.

[25] Ibn Zebāle, *Ezvācū’n-Nebī*, 39; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/58; Fayda, “Āişe”, 2/ 201.

realized that she had dropped her necklace and went out to look for it. At this time, the army was ordered to move, considering that ‘Ā’isha was in the palanquin on her camel. When ‘Ā’isha found her necklace and returned to the camp, she found out that the army was gone, and no one was left. She began to wait, hoping that they would notice her absence and come for her. Şafwān b. al-Mu‘aṭṭal, a member of the army coming from behind, saw her and brought her back to the next camp. Hypocrites in the army, however, began to slander and tattle to which some unfortunate Muslims also succumbed. The Prophet was very upset because of this gossip. ‘Ā’isha, who fell ill after returning from the expedition and could not recover for a month, cried for days after hearing this slander. Finally, verses 11-21 of Sūrat al-Nūr were revealed and she was declared innocent by Allah.<sup>[26]</sup> ‘Ā’isha lost her necklace again on another expedition and the army lost time in a waterless place. Since the time for the fajr prayer was approaching and there was no water for ablution in sight, Muslims got upset. Then the verse of tayammum was revealed. Thereupon, those who had got initially mad at her started to express their gratitude and appreciation.<sup>[27]</sup>

The Prophet died with his head resting in ‘Ā’isha’s lap and was buried in her room.<sup>[28]</sup> She lived another forty-seven years after him and died in Medina in 58/678.<sup>[29]</sup> She was the Prophet’s favorite among his wives, except for Khadija. He answered “‘Ā’isha” to ‘Amr b. al-Āṣ who was asked who he loved most in his life.<sup>[30]</sup> The Prophet enjoyed talking to her and answering her questions. ‘Ā’isha gained an exceptional place in his heart thanks to her outstanding qualities such as her sharp intelligence, comprehensive understanding, strong memory, powerful rhetoric and oratory skills, and her zeal for the correct perception of the Qur’ān and the sunnah of the Prophet. Among his wives, it was ‘Ā’isha who was most jealous of the Prophet and made a lot of effort to win his affection decisively. As a result of this jealousy, ‘Ā’isha led the other wives of the Prophet in the event that caused the Prophet to swear not to drink honey syrup and the first verses of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm to be revealed.<sup>[31]</sup>

‘Ā’isha, a pious woman, prayed at night and fasted most of her days.<sup>[32]</sup> It is said that she freed many slaves and concubines. Despite her young age, she

[26] Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, critical ed. Marsden Jones (Bayrūt: Ālem al-Kutub, 1984/1404), 2/ 427-434.

[27] Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 2/426-427.

[28] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Tabaqāt*, 2/228-229.

[29] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Tabaqāt*, 10/76-77.

[30] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Tabaqāt*, 10/67.

[31] Bukhārī, “Talāq”, 7; Muslim, “Talāq”, 20.

[32] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Tabaqāt*, 10/67-68.

was one of the companions known, for their accurate understanding and rigorous preservation of the Qur'ān and the sunnah of the Prophet. She was also one of the seven companions who were famous for issuing many fatwas.<sup>[33]</sup> Thanks to her strong memory, the number of hadiths she had narrated is 2210. She had no children.

#### 4. Ḥafṣa bint 'Umar

Ḥafṣa, who was born in Mecca five years before Muḥammad's reception of Prophetic mission, was the daughter of 'Umar, a close friend of the Prophet and who would become later on the second caliph of Islam. She was from the clan of Adī, the subclan of Quraysh. Her mother was Zaynab bint Maẓ'ūn.<sup>[34]</sup> Ḥafṣa's first husband was Khunays b. Ḥudhāfa, one of the first Muslims to migrate to Abyssinia escaping the persecution of the Meccan Polytheist. Their marriage took place after his return from Abyssina. Ḥafṣa migrated to Medina with her husband. Khunays participated in Badr but fell ill on the way back and died in Medina. In order to marry his widowed daughter to a virtuous person, 'Umar first made an offer to 'Uthmān and then to Abū Bakr. But he did not get a positive response from either of them. Offended 'Umar complained about this situation to the Prophet. The Prophet said that Ḥafṣa would marry someone better than 'Uthmān and 'Uthmān would marry someone better than Ḥafṣa, and he married Ḥafṣa in the third year of Hijra. Later 'Uthmān married Prophet's own daughter, Umm Kulthūm.<sup>[35]</sup>

Ḥafṣa mostly agreed with 'Ā'isha in the Prophet's house. In fact, there were times when both of them collaborated against the other ladies. Ḥafṣa was also mentioned among those who cooperated with 'Ā'isha in the honey syrup incident mentioned above. In another incident related to Ḥafṣa, the Prophet told her a secret, but she did not keep this secret and informed 'Ā'isha. Therewith, Allah informed the Prophet about this situation.<sup>[36]</sup> Different events are told in the sources about what this secret was. Probably because of her failure to keep secrets, the Prophet divorced her. When 'Umar heard about the incident he fell to a deep state of mourning and sadness. The Prophet returned to Ḥafṣa after Jibrīl told him that: "Ḥafṣa is a woman who fasts and prays a lot, and she is your wife in paradise."<sup>[37]</sup>

[33] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 2/322-323.

[34] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/80.

[35] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 349; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/80-81; Bukhārī, "Maghāzī", 12.

[36] al-Taḥrīm 66/3.

[37] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/82; Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Ahmad b. Shuayb al-Nasā'ī, *as-Sunan* (Egypt, 1964), "Ṭalāq", 76.

Ḥafṣa could read and write. Shifā bint ‘Abd Allāh, one of the female companions, taught him to read.<sup>[38]</sup> The copy of the Qur’ān collected during the reign of Abū Bakr was passed on to ‘Umar and then to his daughter Ḥafṣa. Thus, she had the honor of preserving the muṣḥaf.<sup>[39]</sup> She died in Medina in 45/665.<sup>[40]</sup> Sixty hadiths were narrated from her. Sources claim that Ḥafṣa was an unpliant person like her father. It is known that she had some impulsive outbursts against the Prophet in some cases. For this reason, she was warned frequently by her father ‘Umar.

### 5. Zaynab bint Khuzayma

Zaynab was born to the tribe of ‘Āmīr b. Ṣaṣa’a located in the region of Najd. Due to her charitable activities, Zaynab earned the nickname of “Umm al-masākīn” (mother of the needy). Her father was Khuzayma b. al-Ḥārith and her mother was Hind bint Avf. One of her maternal sisters was Maymūne, one of the Prophet’s wives. She first married Tufayl b. al-Ḥārith and then his brother ‘Ubayda b. al-Ḥārith. When Ubayda was martyred in the Battle of Badr, the Prophet asked for her hand in marriage in the third year of Hijra

Among the marriages of the Prophet, the shortest was with Zaynab. Zaynab passed away either eight or three months after the wedding. It was reported that she was thirty years old when she died.<sup>[41]</sup> She was the first of Muḥammad’s wives to demise after Khadija. All others passed away subsequent to his decease.

### 6. Umm Salama

Although her name was Hind, she was tagged with the name of her eldest child, Salama, and was known as Umm Salama. She was from the Makhzūm clan of the noble tribe of Quraysh. Her father was Abū Umayya Hudhayfa b. Mughira and her mother was Ātike bint Āmir.<sup>[42]</sup> Umm Salama first married her cousin, Abū Salama ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Asad. Abū Salama, who was the son of the Prophet’s aunt, was among the first to convert to Islam. Umm Salama and her husband accompanied emigrations of Muslims to Abyssinia.<sup>[43]</sup> Later, she set out with her husband to migrate to Medina, but her family did not allow her to do so. Thereupon, Abū Salama migrated alone leaving her behind. She received another blow when family of her husband separated her from

[38] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/83; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *al-Musned* (Bayrūt, 1398/1978), 4/286.

[39] Bukhārī, “Faḍāil al-Qur’ān”, 3.

[40] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/85; Ibn Ḥabīb, *el-Muḥabber*, 73.

[41] Ibn Zebāle, *Ezváci’n-Nebi*, 48-49; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/112.

[42] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/85.

[43] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū’s-Siyer*, 245; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/85.

her son Salama. For the year to follow she cried and mourned the separation of her husband and child. Banū Makhzūm could not stand her condition any longer and they allowed her to emigrate with her son.<sup>[44]</sup>

Abū Salama became ill after the wound he received at Uḥūd later relapsed. He prayed for Umm Salama to marry someone better than himself.<sup>[45]</sup> When Abū Salama passed away, Umm Salama had cried for days. When her iddah (the period to be waited by a woman after divorce or the death of her husband) was over, she received marriage proposal from Abū Bakr and ‘Umar respectively and she turned down both. Afterwards, The Prophet proposed to her. Umm Salama alleged that she was a jealous woman and had many children. Only after the Prophet told her that he would pray to Allah to remove her jealousy and that he would take care of her children, she accepted the proposal.<sup>[46]</sup>

Umm Salama was an intelligent and a rational woman. Therefore, the Prophet asked her opinion in some of the issues. For example, when the Muslims felt disappointed in Ḥudaybiyya, they demonstrated reluctance to slaughter the animals they brought with them for sacrificing. They thought that the Meccans were given great concessions because of the treaty. Umm Salama advised the Prophet to sacrifice his own animal first. Following her advice, he did so and the believers followed suit.<sup>[47]</sup>

Umm Salama was the lastest passed away among the Prophet’s wives. She died in Medina in 62/681 at the age of eighty-four.<sup>[48]</sup> She had narrated 378 hadiths. Umm Salama’s name was also mentioned among the Qur’ān memorizers. Umm Salama was a very beautiful woman, so ‘Ā’isha was very jealous of her.<sup>[49]</sup> She was also a calm, understanding and experienced lady. Umm Salama, because of her interest in science, asked the Prophet many questions and conduced to revelation of some verses.<sup>[50]</sup> Umm Salama had four children from Abu Salama,<sup>[51]</sup> but none from the Prophet.

## 7. Zaynab bint Jaḥsh

Her father, Jaḥsh, was from the tribe of Asad, a client of the clan of ‘Abd Shams. Her mother was maternal aunt of the Prophet, Umayma bint ‘Abd

[44] M. Yaşar Kandemir, “Ümmü Seleme”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2012), 42/ 329.

[45] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/86; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muḥabber*, 75.

[46] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū’s-Siyer*, 352; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/87-88; Ibn Hanbal, *Musned*, 4/ 27-28; Muslim, “Canāiz”, 3.

[47] Wāqidi, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, 2/ 613; Bukhārī, “Shurūt”, 15.

[48] Kandemir, “Ümmü Seleme”, 42/ 329.

[49] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/92.

[50] Āl ‘Imrān 3/195; al-Nisā’ 4/32; al-Aḥzāb 33/35.

[51] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū’s-Siyer*, 351; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muḥabber*, 74.

al-Muṭṭalib. While her real name was Barra, the Prophet changed her name to Zaynab. Muḥammad gave her in marriage to his freedman and adopted son Zayd b. Ḥāritha. With this marriage, the Prophet wanted to show that there was no harm in the marriage of free and slaves in Islam, to establish the idea of equality among believers, and to make people adopt the fact that superiority was based on piety, not lineage. However, Zaynab was peevish and there was no love between the spouses. The marriage did not bring happiness to either party. Zaynab had been breaking her husband's heart with hurtful words. Zayd complained about this to the Prophet. Although the Prophet advised him to be patient, Zayd divorced his wife. After a while, the Prophet decided to marry Zaynab. This situation is confirmed by the 37th verse of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb.<sup>[52]</sup> With this marriage, the jahiliyyah custom forbade to marry the divorcee of an adopted son was eliminated. The Prophet and Zaynab got married in the fifth year of Hijra.<sup>[53]</sup>

Zaynab boasted to the other wives of Muḥammad, saying, "Allah arranged my marriage in heaven".<sup>[54]</sup> The Prophet loved her because she was very fond of worship. For this reason, his other wives, especially 'Ā'isha, were very jealous of her. She was jealous of them too. When Ṣafiyya's camel fell ill while they were on pilgrimage, the Prophet asked Zaynab to give her spare camel to Ṣafiyya. However, Zaynab said that he did not want to give her camel to a Jewish girl. This condescending reply offended the Prophet so much that he abstained to visit Zaynab for about three months.<sup>[55]</sup> When 'Ā'isha was slandered, the Prophet asked Zaynab what she knew about this subject, and she replied: "I do not know anything but goodness about 'Ā'isha."<sup>[56]</sup> 'Ā'isha said about Zaynab "I've never seen a better woman of pious qualities than Zaynab."<sup>[57]</sup>

Zaynab was a master of handicrafts such leather tanning, sewing, and beading. Moreover, she was by far a generous woman giving away most of the money she earned from handwork.<sup>[58]</sup> Zaynab was the first wife of the Prophet to die after his death. She died in Medina in 20/641 at the age of 53.<sup>[59]</sup> She narrated twenty hadiths.

[52] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/98-99.

[53] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/110.

[54] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/100-101; Bukhārī, "Tavhīd", 22.

[55] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/123; Ibn Hanbal, *Musned*, 4/337-338.

[56] Bukhārī, "Shahadat", 15.

[57] Muslim, "Faḍāil as-Sahāba", 13.

[58] Muhammed Hamidullah, "Zeyneb bint Cahş", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2013), 44/358.

[59] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/110-111; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 77.

### 8. Juwayriya bint al-Ḥārith

Juwayriya was the daughter of Ḥārith b. Abī Dīrār, the chief of the Banū Mustalik tribe. She first married her cousin Musāfi' b. Ṣafwān. Hundreds of captives from this tribe were captured during the Banū Mustalik Campaign and brought to Medina. Juwayriya, whose husband died in the war, was among these captives. She applied to the Prophet for help to pay her ransom. The Prophet did so and proposed marriage to her. She married the Prophet at the age of twenty in the fifth year of Hijra. Immediately after the marriage, Muslims released their captives because they became relatives of the Prophet. Not much later, Banū Mustalik converted to Islam collectively.<sup>[60]</sup>

Juwayriya had narrated seven hadiths from the Prophet. She passed away in Medina at the age of sixty-five in 56/676.<sup>[61]</sup> Juwayriya, a very charitable woman, had no children.

### 9. Umm Habiba bint Abū Sufyān

The name of Umm Habiba, who was reported to be born seventeen years before the advent of Islam, was Ramla. Her father was Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, one of the notables of Quraysh and her mother was Ṣafiyya bint Abū al-Āṣ. Both his mother and father were of the clan of 'Abd Shams of Quraysh. Umm Habiba was initially married to 'Ubayd Allāh b. Jaḥsh, the son of the Prophet's aunt. Umm Habiba and her husband, who were among the first Muslims, migrated to Abyssinia with the second caravan. Umm Habiba, who was pregnant during this journey, gave birth to her daughter, Habiba, in Abyssinia. After a while, her husband converted to Christianity and died as a Christian in Abyssinia.<sup>[62]</sup>

Because Prophet knew Umm Habiba's troubles, he decided to marry her. He sent 'Amr b. Umayya to Abyssinia to both invite Najāshī to Islam and to propose marriage to Umm Habiba. She was overjoyed when she received the offer. The wedding of the Prophet and Umm Habiba was performed in absentia in Abyssinia. Afterwards, she was sent to Medina, to the Prophet's side. She was thirty-five years old when she came to the Prophet.<sup>[63]</sup> This marriage of the Prophet made it easier for Banū Umayya to sympathize with Islam. It is stated that the verse "*Allah may establish friendship between you and those you are enemies of*"<sup>[64]</sup> was revealed on this marriage.<sup>[65]</sup>

[60] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 355; Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, 1/411; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/113; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muḥabber*, 78-79.

[61] Rıza Savaş, "Cüveyriye bint Haris", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1993), 8/ 146.

[62] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 350; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/94.

[63] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/94-97.

[64] al-Mumtaḥina 60/7.

[65] Aynur Uraler, "Ümmü Habibe", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2012), 42/ 318.

Umm Habiba, who narrated sixty-five hadiths, died in Medina at the age of seventy in 44/664.<sup>[66]</sup> Umm Habiba, who had a daughter named Habiba from ‘Ubayd Allāh, had no children from the Prophet.

#### 10. Şafiyya bint Hıyayy

She was daughter of Hıyayy the chief of Banū Nađır, a Jewish tribe. Şafiyya, whose lineage was based on Hārūn, was born in Medina. Her mother was Barra bint Samaw’al who she was of the Banū Qurayza. She married first to Sallām b. Mishkam, one of the leaders of Banū Nađır, and then to Kināna b. al-Rabī’ after divorcing him.<sup>[67]</sup> After the Banū Nađır Jews were exiled from Medina, they settled in Khaybar. Şafiyya, whose husband was killed during the conquest of Khaybar by the Muslims, was taken prisoner. Şafiyya, whose real name was Zaynab, was called Şafiyya when she fell to the Prophet’s share from the spoils of war.<sup>[68]</sup> She was given the choice of returning to her tribe or converting to Islam and marrying the Prophet. She opted for the second one. Thus, the Prophet married her in a stopover while returning from Khaybar to Medina.<sup>[69]</sup>

Şafiyya was influenced decisively by the rivalry between the Prophet’s wives. They were constantly using her Jewish origin against her. Şafiyya was very upset when ‘Ā’isha and Hāfşa took pride in their pedigree stating that they share the same lineage with the Prophet. The Prophet advised Şafiyya to say: “How can you be better than me, my spouse is Muḥammad, my father is Hārūn, and my uncle is Mūsā.” Şafiyya, who narrated ten hadiths from the Prophet, died in Medina in 50/670 at the age of sixty.<sup>[70]</sup> Şafiyya, a beautiful, intelligent, virtuous, mild-tempered, and pious woman, had no children.<sup>[71]</sup>

#### 11. Maymūna bint al-Ḥārith

Maymūna, whose name was changed by the Prophet from Barra to Maymuna,<sup>[72]</sup> was the daughter of al-Ḥārith b. Hazn and Hind bint Avf from the Hawāzin tribe of ‘Āmir b. Şa’şa’a. Among her maternal sisters was the Prophet’s decadent wife, Zaynab bint Khuzayma. Maymūna first married Mas’ūd b. Amr Thaḳafi and after he divorced her, she married Abū Rukm b. ‘Abd al-Uzza. After her husband’s death, she told her sister, the wife of ‘Abbās b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib,

[66] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/98.

[67] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/116-117; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 79.

[68] What the tribal chiefs chose for herself from the booty was called “saffi”.

[69] Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 2/707-708; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/117-119.

[70] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/123-124.

[71] Aynur Uraler, “Şafiyye”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2008), 35/475.

[72] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/132.

that she wanted to marry the Prophet. ‘Abbās conveyed this offer to the Prophet. The Prophet and Maymūna got married in the seventh year of the Hijra, on the way from Mecca to Medina, returning from the ‘Umra al-Qaḍā’.<sup>[73]</sup>

Maymūna, who narrated seventy-six hadiths from the Prophet, died in Mecca in 51/671.<sup>[74]</sup> ‘Ā’isha honored her posthously with the following statement: “ Maymūna was the most pious of us and the most looking out for the ties of kinship”.<sup>[75]</sup>

## 12. The Prophet’s Concubines: Māriya and al-Rayḥāna

Māriya bint Sham‘ūn, whose father was a native of Egypt called Coptic, and whose mother was a Christian Greek, was one of the Prophet’ concubines.<sup>[76]</sup> In the seventh year of Hijra, within the framework of inviting the rulers of neighboring countries to Islam, the Prophet sent Khaṭīb b. Abī Balta’a with an invitation letter to Muqawqis, ruling Egypt as the Byzantine governor. In response, Muqawqis reciprocated with a letter sending his concubines Māriya and her sister Sīrīn along many other precious gifts to the Prophet. The Prophet annexed Māriya to his household and gave Sīrīn to his poet Ḥassān b. Thābit. A year later, Māriya gave birth to a son. Thus, she moved up to the status of umm walad and gained her freedom.<sup>[77]</sup> The fact that Māriya was a very beautiful woman and the Prophet’s interest in her caused the jealousy of her other wives, especially ‘Ā’isha. She died in Medina in the sixteenth year of the Hijra. She had a son named Ibrāhīm from the Prophet.<sup>[78]</sup>

Another concubine of the Prophet was Rayḥāna bint Sham‘ūn, a Jew from Banū Naḍīr. She was married to a member of the Banū Qurayza. Her husband was killed, and she was taken prisoner in the Banū Qurayza siege. The Prophet chose Rayḥāna as “safī”. He said that he would marry her if she became a Muslim, and Rayḥāna agreed. She died in Medina in the tenth year of the Hijra, after the Prophet returned from the Farewell Pilgrimage.<sup>[79]</sup>

[73] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/128; Bukhārī, “Maghāzī”, 43; Muslim, “Nikāḥ”, 48.

[74] M. Yaşar Kandemir, “Meymūne”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2004), 29/506.

[75] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/134.

[76] Aynur Uraler, “Māriye”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2003), 28/63.

[77] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/113.

[78] Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/201-205.

[79] Ibn Zebāle, *Ezvacū’n-Nebī*, 55-56; Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 2/520-521; Ibn Sa’d, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/125-126.

## B. Family Life of the Prophet

While Muḥammad (pbuh) was building the basic principles of social reform and male-female relations, he provided to be taken as example of the relationship between themselves and their spouses. Moreover, his exemplary relations with his wives were taking place before the eyes of all Muslims. The family, which is a blessed institution, should be founded on principles such as love, respect, kindness, trust, loyalty, respect for rights, sincerity, fidelity and chastity. These are the principle championed by the Prophet. At this point, there are very valuable examples in the family life of the Prophet. The Prophet didn't act any verbal or actual behavior that would hurt his wives. Sometimes, some incidents arose with the striving of femininity and jealousy among his wives. However, the Prophet solved the problems and strengthened family ties by taking a fair and tolerant attitude without taking any sides or hurting anyone.

We can cite the following incident as an example of how the Prophet took the sensitive nature of women into account: Once, some of his wives went on an expedition with him. When the cameleer started to make the camels carrying the mothers of the believers move swiftly, the Prophet interfered saying: "Careful, they're like crystal glasses."<sup>[80]</sup>

The Prophet had a peaceful family life. Those who examine his family life can not come across an argument or a scolding of any of his wives. Muḥammad lived happily and peacefully with his wives of different ages, temperaments, cultures, family views and levels of understanding. Although he had a wide variety of responsibilities, he would visit his wives every day, sit with them, chat and listen to their problems. However, in some cases, there were some incidents due to jealousy among the ladies. Most of them were petty jealousies and arguments. However, we also know that the serious events that led to the revelation of the verse, even if just a tad took place. For example, the event that caused the revelation of this verse was one of them: "*O Prophet! Why do you forbid what Allah has made lawful to you, so that you may please your wives?*"<sup>[81]</sup> This event is explained differently in the sources. According to some narrations, Ḥafṣa or Zaynab bint Jaḥsh offered a drink of honey syrup to the Prophet. Other wives charged by 'Ā'isha said that they smelled maghafir<sup>[82]</sup> from the Prophet. So, they strived until the Prophet forbade himself honey syrup.<sup>[83]</sup> According to another narration, the Prophet made Māriya unlawful for himself. One day the Prophet came to Ḥafṣa's room and could not find her.

[80] Bukhārī, "Adab", 90.

[81] al-Taḥrīm 66/1.

[82] Foul-smelling gum running from oak trees.

[83] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/83-84, 104; Bukhārī, "Ṭalāq", 7; Muslim, "Ṭalāq", 20.

Then Māriya came to the Messenger of Allah, and they had stayed together in Ḥafṣa's room for a while. Ḥafṣa got offended by the matter and confronted the Prophet in anger. Thereupon, the Prophet promised that he would never touch Māriya again to please her.<sup>[84]</sup> In addition it is mentioned that this was the secret which the Prophet gave to Ḥafṣa and she could not keep and shared with 'Ā'isha.<sup>[85]</sup>

At this point, we should also mention the following verse: *"Behold, the Prophet gave a secret to one of his wives. However, she shared it (with one of the other women), and Allah informed the Prophet about this situation. Then the Prophet told part thereof to his wife and did not tell a part. When he told her this, she said; 'Who told you about this?'. He said, "My Lord, who knows everything and is aware of everything, informed me about this."*<sup>[86]</sup> The event that caused this verse to be revealed was that the Prophet gave a secret to Ḥafṣa and she could not keep this secret. There are various rumors in the sources about what this secret was given to Ḥafṣa. According to some, this secret was that the Prophet took an oath that he would never drink honey syrup again. According to some, it was that he promised to approach Māriya. There are also those who say that this secret was information that the state administration will be left to Abū Bakr and 'Umar after the Prophet.<sup>[87]</sup>

In addition to all these events, the Prophet's wives asked for more worldly goods and property and than the Prophet took an oath to be separated from his wives for a month. After a month of separation, the verse "Takhyīr" was revealed: *"O Prophet! Say to your wives: "If you want the life of this world and its adornment, let me pay you your divorce costs and leave you in good shape. If you want Allah, His Messenger, and the abode of the Hereafter, know that Allah has prepared a great reward for those who do good among you."*<sup>[88]</sup> As a result, all his wives choosed to stay married to the Prophet.<sup>[89]</sup> Thus, the problem had been permanently resolved. Ummahat al-mu'minīn were neither angels nor superhumans. This position was given to them because they were brought up under the education of the Messenger of Allah and were in the position of an example. For this reason, in the time of the Prophet, they were clearly warned by revelation when a wrong behavior arose from them.

Another issue that should be evaluated when it comes to the family life of the Prophet is why he married many women. Some of the orientalist historians

[84] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/202-203.

[85] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/177-178.

[86] *al-Taḥrīm* 66/3.

[87] M. Yaşar Kandemir, "Hafsa", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1997), 15/120.

[88] *al-Aḥzāb* 33/28-29.

[89] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/68, 176.

criticize Muḥammad (pbuh) on this issue. However, such an accusation means not knowing the socio-cultural characteristics of that period and approaching the subject with prejudice. Polygamy was commonplace during his lifetime. Nevertheless, the Prophet married Khadija at the age of twenty-five and had not married another woman for twenty-five years until she passed away. He married Sawda after Khadija's death, and she was the only wife of the Prophet for three years. After the age of 53, Muhammad married many times. In addition, all the wives he married were widows, except for 'Ā'isha.<sup>[90]</sup> These marriages were happened for a number of legal, political and social reasons.

First, the Prophet's wives were of great importance in the training of Islamic society. The teaching of certain provisions, especially those related to women, was possible only through them. As a matter of fact, they, especially 'Ā'isha, Ḥafsa and Umm Salama, became legal advisers for Muslims. Another reason why the Prophet married many times was to protect lonesome and long-suffering Muslim women and honor them and to care for their children, if any. Sawda, Zaynab bint Khuzayma, Umm Salama and Umm Habiba all fall into this category. Another reason was to warm the tribe of the woman he married towards Islam. For instance, after marrying Juwayriya, her tribe Banū Mustalik converted to Islam. Some of the Prophet's marriages took place in order to bring an Islamic provision to society. His marriage to Zaynab bint Jaḥsh was Jaḥsh was one such an instance. Others took place in order to establish relationship by affinity with his close environment and friends. The marriage of Abū Bakr's daughter 'Ā'isha and 'Umar's daughter Ḥafsa were prime examples of this category.<sup>[91]</sup>

It was the mothers of the believers who conveyed the characteristics of the Prophet's family life to us. Thus, the Prophet's wives played a major role in determining the sunnah on a large scale. Because family life is one of the most important parts of a person's daily life. This part of the Prophet's life contains a very important part of his sunnah. In addition, many issues related to women were also conveyed by the Prophet's wives.

The Prophet was married to more than four women when the verse that restricted polygamy to four came down. As a unique situation for the Prophet, his existing marriages were allowed to continue, nonetheless without adding a new one to them.<sup>[92]</sup> These women, who were the mothers of the believers, were forbidden to marry other people after the Prophet.

[90] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 348.

[91] See: Mehmet Soysaldı, "Peygamber Efendimizin Evliliklerinin Sebep ve Hikmetleri", *Diyanet İlmî Dergi*, 5 (October 2009), 127-142; Aynur Uraler, "Ümmehâtü'l-Mü'minîn", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2012), 42/306-308.

[92] al-Ahzāb 33/50-52.

### C. The Prophet's Children

All the children of the Prophet, except Ibrāhīm, were from Khadija. His first son was Qāsim. Hence he was referred to as “Aba al-Qāsim”. There are different narrations about when and how old Qāsim passed away. Although it is claimed that he passed after the Prophet embarked on his divine mission and that his decease constituted the reason for the revelation of the Sūrat al-Kawthar, historical accounts that emphasize his death at the age of suckling before much prior the Muhammad's reception of Prophethood are credited as reliable and true.<sup>[93]</sup>

Zaynab, the eldest among the Prophet's daughters, was born twenty-three years before the Hijra.<sup>[94]</sup> She married Abu'l-Āṣ b. al-Rabi', her cousin. Two children, 'Alī and Umama, were born from this marriage. She was one of the first to convert to Islam, but her husband converted to Islam in the seventh year of the Hijra and migrated. As for Zaynab, she migrated after Badr. Zaynab died at the age of thirty-one in Medina in the eighth year of Hijra.<sup>[95]</sup> Her son 'Alī died when he was a child, and her daughter Umame married 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib after Fāṭima's death.<sup>[96]</sup>

The Prophet's second daughter, Ruqayya, was born twenty years before the Hijra.<sup>[97]</sup> She was engaged to 'Utba b. Abū Lahab prior to the advent of Islam. But this engagement did not last longer. Afterwards she married 'Uthmān. 'Uthmān and Ruqayya migrated to Abyssinia with the first convoy and later to Medina. Ruqayya died in Medina while the Prophet and the believers were at Badr. She had a son named 'Abd Allāh from 'Uthmān, but he died at a young age.<sup>[98]</sup>

Umm Kulthūm was the third daughter of the Prophet. Her real name was Umayya, but it is not known why she was called Umm Kulthūm even though she had no children.<sup>[99]</sup> She was engaged to 'Utayba b. Abū Lahab, before prophecy, but the engagement was abandoned. She married 'Uthmān after her sister Ruqayya's death. Umm Kulthūm died in the ninth year of Hijra.<sup>[100]</sup>

The youngest daughter of the Prophet, Fāṭima, was born a year prior to the of Islam. She was nicknamed “Zahra”, meaning “white, bright-faced woman”.<sup>[101]</sup>

[93] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 337; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/111.

[94] Aynur Uraler, “Zeyneb”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2013), 44/355.

[95] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/31-36.

[96] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/31; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 55.

[97] Aynur Uraler, “Rukiyye”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2008), 35/219.

[98] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 338; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/36-37; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 55.

[99] Aynur Uraler, “Ümmü Külsüm”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2012), 42/323.

[100] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/37-38.

[101] M. Yaşar Kandemir, “Fāṭima”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1995), 12/219.

She married 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib in the second year of Hijra. She had children from 'Alī named Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Muḥsin, Umm Kulthūm and Zaynab.<sup>[102]</sup> Rumors have it that she had another daughter named Ruqayya.<sup>[103]</sup> The only child of the Prophet to continue his bloodline was Fāṭima. She died five and a half months after the Prophet's death.<sup>[104]</sup> Eighteen hadiths were narrated from Fāṭima.

The second son of the Prophet, 'Abd Allāh, was born after the emergence of Islam. He was also called Ṭayyib and Ṭāhir. Historical accounts claim that he died before he was old enough to walk.<sup>[105]</sup>

The youngest child of the Prophet was Ibrāhīm, born to the Egyptian concubine Māriya. He was born in the eighth year of Hijra. With his birth, his mother regained her freedom. He did not live longer and passed away in Medina when he was seventeen or eighteen months old. Upon his death, the Prophet was very sad and even cried.<sup>[106]</sup>

## Conclusion

Muḥammad's (pbuh) wives were the mothers of the believers. It is because of their special status that their life stories were full of scenes that should be taken as an example. The wives of the Messenger of Allah had social relations in daily life due to their living together. In this regard, they treated each other with the utmost respect. Apart from some simple discussions arising from the rivalry between them because of their human nature and their excessive love for the Prophet, they painted a very harmonious picture. They were women with different cultures and characters under the same roof. There was also occasional unpleasantness between them. It is normal for such things to happen in places where people live together. The Prophet's wives caused some negative situations to occur with jealousy and envy. In such cases, they were warned by revelation, and as a result, they regretted and turned away from their mistakes.

The Prophet had eleven wives in total. Six of them belonged to the Quraysh tribe: Khadija, Sawda, 'Ā'isha, Ḥafsa, Umm Salama and Umm Habiba. Zaynab bint Khuzayma, Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, Juwayriya and Maymūna were Arabs but not from the Quraysh. As for Ṣafiyya, she was from Banū Isrā'īl. Apart from these women, the Prophet also had concubines named Māriya, who was a Coptic, and Rayḥāna, who was from Banū Isrā'īl. Māriya, who gave birth

[102] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 340; Ibn Habīb, *el-Muhabber*, 56.

[103] Ibn Zebāle, *Ezvácü'n-Nebi*, 32.

[104] Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/29.

[105] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 337; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/111.

[106] Ibn Ishāk, *Kitābū's-Siyer*, 362-363; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/112-120.

to a child named Ibrāhīm, rose to the status of umm walad and gained her freedom. Of his wives, only Khadija and Zaynab bint Khuzayma died while the Prophet was alive.

The Prophet had seven children, according to the common conventional view. Of these, Qāsım and ‘Abd Allāh died at an extremely young age. His daughters Zaynab, Ruqayya and Umm Kulthūm passed away before the Prophet. As for Fāṭıma, she lived for another five and a half months after the Prophet’s death. All of the Prophet’s daughters had the privilege of accepting Islam. Khadija, his first ever wife, gave birth to these six children. His youngest child, Ibrāhīm’s mother was Māriya. Ibrāhīm passed away while he was still in the suckling period. The Prophet had no children from his other wives.

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