

Sources: This is based using the earliest and most reliable Islamic sources: the Qur'an (*Q.*), the *Sira* (biography) written by Ibn Ishaq and edited by Ibn Hisham, and the *Sahih* (authentic) *Hadith* (traditions) of *al-Bukhari* and *Muslim*. You can view the Qur'an and Hadith quotes on: www.searchtruth.com

You can download a free copy of the *Sira* on <http://www.archive.org/details/IbnIshaq-SiratRasulAllah-translatorA.Guillaume>

Early Life: Muhammad was born c.570 AD in Mecca, Arabia. He was orphaned as a young child, and brought up by his uncle. He worked as a shepherd and then leading camel caravans to and from Syria. He was poor, illiterate and powerless, but respected by his peers.

First marriage: At age 25, he was proposed to by his employer, Khadija, a wealthy 40 year old woman from his tribe. They were married for 25 years until her death. She bore him six children. She had been married twice before. Her wealth and position gave Muhammad free time to meditate.

Revelations: At age 40, while meditating in a cave outside Mecca, Muhammad had a dream that the angel Gabriel came to him and told him to recite certain verses (*Q.96:1-5*). Gabriel squeezed Muhammad tightly to make him recite (*al-Bukhari 1:3*).

Several suicide attempts: Muhammad was so distressed by this dream that he thought he had been possessed (*Sira p.106*). Khadija consulted her cousin, Waraqa bin Naufal, who was a Christian, who confirmed that Muhammad was a prophet. But a few days later Waraqa died. Muhammad was so depressed that he set off several times to commit suicide (*al-Bukhari 9:111*), saying: "I will go to the top of the mountain and throw myself down that I may kill myself" (*Sira p.106*). But each time he was stopped by a vision of the angel.

Public preaching: Initially Muhammad told close friends and relatives about this dream. After 3 years, Muhammad was ordered to preach publicly. "Gabriel came to me and told me that if I did not do as I was ordered my Lord would punish me."(*Sira p.117*)

Response to persecution: He started to preach and some people said "injurious things" about him. He responded with: "By him who holds my life in His hand I bring you slaughter!" (*Sira p.131*). When his opponents were killed by Muslim troops a few years later, he mocked their corpses, saying: "Have you found true what your Lord promised you?" (*al-Bukhari 2:452*)

A false revelation led to worship with pagans: Muhammad had support from his powerful uncle Abu Talib, so he remained in Mecca while many of his followers fled to Christian-ruled Abyssinia. Muhammad

received a revelation about three of the Meccan idols (*Q.53:19,20*). The initial revelation endorsed these gods as intercessors. The pagan Arabs were delighted and prostrated before the Ka'ba (the black building in Mecca) along with the Muslims. Those in Abyssinia heard about this and started to return. However the angel Gabriel then told Muhammad that these verses were from Satan, and not from Allah. So new verses were revealed in their place. Muhammad lost a lot of support for this public back-down (*Sira 165-167*).

Looking for support and protection:

After Khadija and Abu Talib died, "the apostle offered himself to the tribes of Arabs at the fairs whenever opportunity came, summoning them to God and telling them that he was a prophet who had been sent. He used to ask them to believe in him and protect him" (*Sira p.196*) However none accepted him until one day some Arabs came from Yathrib (later renamed Medina)

Why the Medinan Arabs followed him:

The Jews of Medina had threatened the Arabs: 'A prophet will be sent soon. His day is at hand. We shall follow him and kill you by his aid as 'Ad and Iram perished.' So when [the Arabs of Medina] heard the apostle's message they said one to another: 'This is the very prophet of whom the Jews warned us. Don't let them get to him before us!' Thereupon they accepted his teaching and became Muslims." (*Sira p.198*) He then moved to Medina with 200 followers.

He married a little girl aged six: In Medina Muhammad took Aisha, the daughter of his best friend. “The Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old.” (*al-Bukhari 7:64*)

He married many women: Although Muslims were only allowed to marry four women (*Q.4:3*), Muhammad married nine or eleven (*al-Bukhari 1:286*) or thirteen (*Sira p.792 n.918*). When he was forbidden by Allah from marrying more wives, he was still allowed his slave girls (*Q.33:52*). Muhammad claimed to have sex with all his wives in one night (*al-Bukhari 7:6*). One of his wives denied this, claiming that Muhammad was bewitched by a magic spell and was imagining things (*al-Bukhari 8:89*). The spell affected Muhammad for a year (*Sira p.240 n.1*)

He hit his young wife: One night Aisha went outside without his permission. She reports that “he struck me on the chest which caused me pain.” (*Sahih Muslim bk.4 no.2127*)

Muhammad and slavery: Although he told others to free their slaves (*al-Bukhari 3:671*), Muhammad kept female and male slaves (*al-Bukhari 9: 321, 368*). His son-in-law Ali violently beat Burayra, a slave girl, in Muhammad’s presence (*Sira p.496*), and the Prophet ordered Ali to flog another slave-girl for adultery. (*Muslim no. 4224*).

He acted as a slave-trader. “A man decided that a slave of his would be manumitted after his death, and later on he was in need of money, so the Prophet took the slave and said, “Who will buy this slave from me?” (*al-Bukhari 8:804*)

Assassinations: When people criticised or opposed Muhammad, he sent his men to assassinate them. These included women such as mother-of-five Asma bint Marwan (*Sira pp.675,676*), Fartana and another singing girl from Mecca, and Sara, a freed slave girl (*Sira p.551*). The men included Kab bin al-Ashraf, the 120 year old Jew Abu Afak, Abu Rafi, al-Aswad, Khalid and several others. Eight people in Mecca were put on Muhammad’s death-list. (*Sira p.550*).

Executions: In Medina, Muhammad took part in the beheading of 600-900 Jews from the tribe of Bani Qurayza (*Sira p.464*)

Muhammad and war: The Prophet said: “I have been made victorious with terror.” (*al-Bukhari 4:220*). He led about 27 military campaigns (*Sira p.659*), and sent his troops out on at least 50 more attacks. He led his final campaign to Tabuk in 630 A.D. accompanied by 30,000 Muslim soldiers.

Death: Muhammad died at the age of 62 or 63 in 632 A.D. By the end of his life, Islam ruled over the entire Arabian Peninsula.

For further information, see
[http://www.answering-islam.org/
Muhammad/index.html](http://www.answering-islam.org/Muhammad/index.html) ph. 0449 768 932

The TRUTH about MUHAMMAD

*You
should
know
the facts
about
the prophet
of Islam*

“You have had a good example
in God’s Messenger”
(The Qur’an 33:21)

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ
اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ
(سورة الأحزاب 33 : 21)