

The Life of Muhammad the Prophet

Intro:

Unlike the multiple biographies of Jesus the Christ, there is very limited resource to the early life of Muhammad. However in any research for a historical look at a historical Muhammad or a historical Jesus, we must distinguish between the historical figure and the figure of Faith. With the life of Jesus the two sources are close to identical; this is not so with the life of Muhammad.

Muhammad's early life 570-610ce

Born 570 in Arabia near Mecca
Tribal religion of his day was polytheistic
Raised by his uncle after his mother died
Very poor and tended animals for others
When 25 he met & married a wealthy caravan owner, Khadija, age 40.

610ce First Revelation

In a cave near Mecca, Muhammad is said to have had a vision from Gabriel of God's will for his life to be the last prophet of God.

622ce Muhammad goes to Medina

This date is recognized as the official date of the beginning of Islam, or the rule of Allah thru His prophet.

632ce the death of Muhammad

Muhammad died unexpectedly in the lap of his favorite wife, Aisha. He had prophesied that the soon return of Jesus to bring judgment day to all infidels would come in his lifetime. His sudden death left him no successor.

Sources to the details of Muhammad's life.

1. Ibn Ishaq=died in 768ce (130 years after Muhammad)

No written record now exists, only oral tradition.
Reveals Muhammad as;
An assassin, and warring tribal chieftain.
In Medina he is a robber baron gathering plunder from massacres.
Murders tribe of Jews, beheads the men and takes wives as concubines.
He is an unbridled libertine and encourages others to follow his example.
He uses Allah's will to justify tyranny & abuse of justice.
He will abandon monotheism to gain political ground (in Mecca)
He will deny he is a prophet early, then claim himself the greatest prophet later.

2. Book of Wars= about 822ce

Based on traditions & the Koran, and is not a primary source.

3. The Koran= about 675ce

Based on the revelations of Muhammad and passed down orally. Recorded in writing within a generation of the prophet's death. Though limited in details of Muhammad's life, from his own words we can determine certain details and traits.

- 1.) He was a sinner & admitted such. Suras 16:61; 40:55; 42:5, 30; 47:19; 48:1-2
- 2) He admits that Jesus is sinless Sura 3:45
- 3) He claimed that military victories assured forgiveness from sins.