

STUDY PACK 25

MOHAMMED AND THE RISE OF ISLAM

“An eclectic product of feral desert paganism, phobic Christian heresies and frenetic Judaism, Islam was a fierce new thing in the world. But why did this new energetic heresy enjoy such sudden and overwhelming success? One answer is that it won battles. Another is that its doctrine was _____.”
~~ Hilaire Belloc ~~

“You know I am a prophet who has been sent—you will find that in your Scriptures and God’s covenant with you.”
~~ Mohammed to a Jewish Tribal Leader ~~

I. THE ARAB PENINSULA BEFORE ISLAM

The Arabian Peninsula, the birthplace of Islam, is one of the hottest and driest regions in the world, consisting mainly of deserts. Since ancient times tribes of nomads had populated the region. Since they are considered the descendants of Noah’s third son, Shem, they are called _____.

In the sixth century A.D., north of the Arabian Peninsula, two great powers were locked in a seesaw power struggle. The Christian Byzantine kingdom, successors of the Roman Empire, was to the Northwest and controlled the Mediterranean Sea, North Africa and the lands of Palestine. In the Northeast lay the Zoroastrian Persian kingdom. Both the Byzantine and Persian kingdoms had client Arab tribes allied to their cause of trade and conquest.

The Arabian Peninsula became a land of refuge for those seeking _____. Heretical Christian sects like the Nestorians, and Jewish tribes escaping the oppressive Byzantines found refuge in the protective deserts and cities of the Peninsula.

Arabia was divided into tribes and cities. Each city had gods and goddesses. Once a year the tribes and cities of Arabia would meet in the city of Mecca during an event known as the Hajj. In Mecca, the Kaba (Cube), a large cube-shaped building, housed _____ from all the tribes of Arabia. The Kaba was the center of Arabian religious life. Here all the warring tribes would put aside their differences as they circled the Kaba. From the Kaba they would proceed to the other shrines outside of Mecca during this five-day religious event. The Hajj was a tradition that Arabs of the peninsula remembered going back hundreds of years.

II. MOHAMMED

It was in this world that Mohammed was born in the year 570 A.D. in the city of Mecca. His father died before he was born and his mother Amina died when he was 6 years old. Al-Muttalib, his grandfather, took charge of the youth and died 2 years later. Abu Talib, his uncle, adopted young Mohammed into his family and raised him as his own son. At the age of 12, young Mohammed was taken on a caravan-trading venture to Syria and experienced the world outside of Arabia for the first time.

At the age of 25, Mohammed married a 40 year old wealthy widow named Khadijah, who owned trading caravans. During the next 15 years of his life, he interacted with Arabs known as the

Hanefites. Hanefites were Arabs who rejected idol worship and were searching for the true religion.

They looked to the religion of the Jews and Christians as being close to the goal. The Hanefites abandoned their idols and would retreat to the caves of Mecca in meditation and prayer.

Some Arabs took the historic Arab name for the Creator God, Allah, and began to apply it to the ancient Sumerian moon god, presenting him as the one true Creator God.

At age 40, Mohammed had his first vision in the year 610 A.D. He was in a cave on Mt. Hera and _____ . He went to Khadijah and told her about the event. She consulted with her uncle, Waraca, a Hanefite who converted to Ebionite Christianity. The Ebionites did not believe in the full deity of Christ. He assured them that the spirits that Mohammed thought were demons _____ . See I John 4:1-4 and I Timothy 4:1.

Mohammed proclaimed Allah as the one true God and rejected the idol worship of Mecca. Khadijah, his wife, was the first convert to Islam. Few listened to Mohammed's message and animosity grew against him as he confronted the idol worshippers and preached his religion to Mecca. Abu Talib, his uncle, and his tribe, the Hasims, protected him during this early Meccan period. In 619 A.D., Khadijah and Abu Talib died. The new leader of the Hasim tribe, his uncle Abu Lahab, refused to protect Mohammed. During the next 3 years, Mohammed would fear for his life. He sought refuge and protection in nearby cities from those seeking his life.

Then in 621 A.D. during the Hajj, Arab tribes from the city of Yatrib, later to be called Medina, came for the annual pilgrimage. They met Mohammed and thought him to be a prophet and invited him to their city to bring peace and settle disputes between the warring tribes. Yatrib was founded by three Jewish tribes and the idea of monotheism was familiar to its Arab tribesmen. The Arabs of Medina had been told by Jewish tribesmen about _____ . The Arab tribes hoped to find this individual before the Jews. Meeting Mohammed, they thought he was the one. See Matthew 24:5.

Islam quickly became a combination of ideas borrowed from Catholicism, the independent Paulician churches, Judaism, the heretical Ebionites, the Sumerian moon cult, Arab paganism, and Zoroastrianism. Mohammed developed a few followers including his father-in-law, Abu Bakr.

The 150 Muslims of Mecca left for the city of Medina, 280 miles to the north. When word reached those of Mecca about the escape to Medina, they tried to kill Mohammed. Mohammed and Abu Bakr were able to sneak out of the city and escape to Medina by another route in September, 622.

In Medina, the warring Arab tribes submitted to Mohammed's leadership and prophet-hood. The Jewish tribes rejected his claims of being a prophet and _____ . With most of the new arrivals from Mecca without work, they needed to earn a living. Ghazu, or caravan raiding was a way tribes would prevent one tribe from becoming too powerful. The Muslims in Medina began to rob the _____ . This is where the Muslim doctrine of Jihad was created.

With their caravan business being threatened, Mecca responded with one thousand soldiers at the battle of Bedr in March 624. The Muslims fielded 300 warriors. The battle went to the Muslims. Mohammed proclaimed that his victory was a sign from Allah and his status in Medina was magnified. The lack of enthusiasm by one of the Jewish tribes caused them to be expelled by the victorious Muslim army. The direction of prayer .

Exactly one year later, Mecca amassed 3,000 soldiers at the battle of Uhud and the Muslims fielded 1,000 soldiers. The battle did not go as planned. The Muslims defeated by Mecca retreated to Medina. Disheartened, Muslims blamed a Jewish tribe as conspirators against their cause. Their homes and possessions were confiscated, and they were expelled from the city in 626 A.D.

The Meccans, in the hope of ending the caravan raids by the Muslims, assembled 10,000 soldiers to attack the city of Medina in the year 627. After a two-week siege in the hot sun, they were unable to penetrate the fortress-like city. They returned to Mecca. After this unsuccessful attack, Mohammed and the Muslims attacked the last remaining Jewish tribe. The tribe surrendered to the mercy of Mohammed. The men _____.

The Muslims then began to consolidate their power with the surrounding Arab tribes and cities.

Mecca began to feel the economic impact of its trading losses as Mohammed's power grew in the north. They reluctantly signed the 10-year Hudaibiyyah peace agreement with Mohammed and the Muslims in March 628. Muslims were allowed to return to Mecca and worship at the Kaba once a year.

_____, in January 630, Mohammed led 10,000 warriors to Mecca and nullified the treaty of Hudaibiyyah. The city submitted to Mohammed and his warriors and accepted him as prophet. Mohammed went to the Kaba and _____. From Mecca, the "Muslims" waged Jihad on the surrounding cities, _____.

Mohammed made his final Hajj in 632 and died unexpectedly 3 months later in June. His friend and father-in-law, Abu Bakr succeeded him as leader of the Muslims.

III. THE QURAN

The Quran is about 4/5 the length of the New Testament. Muslims believe the identical book is in Heaven and Allah sent the angel Gabriel to Mohammed to reveal his "Word". The Quran is divided into 114 chapters or Surahs. The Surahs _____.

The Quran, composed during Mohammed's lifetime, corresponds to the time and circumstances of his life. The Surahs, or chapters, can be divided into three time periods. The earliest Surahs are the shortest and known as **Early Meccan**, and date from 610 to 622 A.D. They were composed in Mecca, prior to Hejira, where Mohammed fled to Medina in September 622 A.D.

The **Median Surahs** were composed during the time Muslims controlled the city of Medina. They date from 622 to 630 A.D. The doctrine of Jihad was introduced as war was waged against Mecca and its idol worshippers. Animosity _____.

Resurrection: Everybody will be resurrected to stand before Allah to be judged in the Last Day. Those who follow Allah and Mohammed will go to Paradise; others will go to Hell. Everybody will pass through Hell and even some Muslims will spend time in Hell _____ and Mohammed intercedes for them.

Hell: Hell is a place of Allah's judgment where Muslims will spend some time before entering paradise; unbelievers will have no escape. Muslims believe Mohammed will intercede for them and deliver them from Hell.

C. Other Islamic Doctrines

1. **Jesus:** Jesus is just a prophet and not the Son of God. He is only a prophet to the Jews, _____, but was caught up into Heaven. God placed a substitute in his place on the cross. Many Muslims feel the substitute was Judas. Jesus is the Messiah who is coming at the end. He will _____, _____ and _____, break all crosses, get married and die 40 years later and be buried in Medina next to Mohammed. The Resurrection will follow.
2. **Salvation:** The Muslims believe in salvation by _____. Mohammed will intercede on the behalf of Muslims before Allah. In a scale, _____. Time in Hell will be necessary to pay for _____, after which the "Muslims" will be accepted into Paradise. Non-Believers will go to Hell with no hope of escape. Those who die in Jihad or Holy War will go directly to Paradise where 72 virgins will be awaiting them.

V. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS ON ISLAM

The sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, summed up the feeling of the western world of his day about Islam:

"In the seventh century of the Christian era, a wandering Arab of the lineage of Hagar the Egyptian, combining the powers of _____ with the preternatural energy of a _____, and the fraudulent spirit of _____, proclaimed himself as a messenger from Heaven, and spread desolation and delusion over an extensive part of the earth, adopting from the sublime conception of the Mosaic Law, the doctrine of one omnipotent God; he connected indissolubly with it, the audacious falsehood, that he was himself _____, adopting from the new Revelation of Jesus, the faith and hope of immortal life, and of future retribution, he humbled it to the dust by adapting all the rewards and sanctions of his religion to the gratification of the sexual passion. He poisoned the sources of human felicity at the fountain, by degrading the condition of the female sex, and _____, and he declared undistinguishing and exterminating war, as part of his religion against all the rest of mankind. The essence of his doctrine _____

_____ ... Between these two religions, thus contrasted in their character, a war of twelve hundred years has already raged. The war is yet flagrant... while the merciless and dissolute dogmas of the false prophet shall furnish motives to human action, there can never be peace on earth and good will towards men."