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HIS 113: World Civilization

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### Research and Writing Assignment Week #7

It is true that history can be shaped by seemingly small events or decisions, and the journey of the Prophet Muhammad is an example. There are several moments in his journey where a different decision or outcome could have drastically altered the course of history. One moment occurred during Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina. As Muhammad and his followers were fleeing persecution from the Meccan elites, they stopped at a cave, where they hid from their pursuers. It is said that a spider spun a web over the entrance to the cave, which made the Meccan search party believe that no one could be inside, allowing Muhammad and his companions to escape safely. If the spider had not spun its web, or if the Meccan search party had been more thorough, Muhammad and his followers could have been captured or killed, and the early Muslim community might not have been established. This could have drastically altered the course of history, as the Muslim community in Medina provided the foundation for the establishment of the first Islamic state and the spread of Islam. Another critical moment in Muhammad's journey was his decision to spare the lives of the Meccan elites after he conquered Mecca. Muhammad had been exiled from Mecca and his followers had been persecuted by the Meccans for years, but when he returned to Mecca with an army, he chose to forgive and reconcile with his former enemies, rather than seeking revenge. If Muhammad had chosen to seek revenge and punish the Meccan elites, it could have led to prolonged conflict and bloodshed between the Muslim and Meccan communities, and the spread of Islam could have been significantly hindered.