CHAPTER - 2

The Advent of the Prophet Muhammad and the ideological foundations of Islam

Muhammad was born in Mecca, Arabia on August 02, 570 A.D to noble parentage of Banu Hashim of the Quraysh tribe. His father’s name was Abdullah and mother’s name were Aminah.¹

According to Islamic belief, Prophet Muhammad was sent as a mercy to mankind to save it from oppression, superstition, moral degradation and chart out the mankind’s course to progression and away from self-destruction.²

Basically, there are two important periods from Prophet Muhammad’s life that is, the Meccan Period and the Medina Period. The Meccan period symbolises the launch of Prophet’s mission of Monotheism and the call to the faith of Islam. The Medina period symbolizes the revolution that lead to ideological ascendency of Islam that was to spread across the world.

At the time of Prophet Muhammad’s birth, the honour of Kaaba’s custody was possessed by his family and his grandfather, Abd al Muttalib was the most respected chief of the tribe.³

Early period of young Muhammad:

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was orphaned while he was still in his mother’s womb. He was nursed by a Bedouin by the name of Halimah al-Sadiyyah from Banu Sad tribe. Prophet remained with Banu Sad tribe till five years of age and learned the Arabic language in its purest form. He would often tell his companions that he is from the Banu Sad tribe and therefore purest of Arab among all his companions. His love for Halimah remained till the rest of his life as whenever she would visit Prophet, he would shower her with respect and gifts. As a mark of respect, he would

give his cloak for her to sit. When she visited him after his marriage with Khadijah, he gave her a camel loaded with water and forty heads of cattle. 4

So, after the nursing period for over two years and few months, Halimah al Sadiyyah took the child to his mother. When Muhammad was six, his mother died and he was taken in the custody of his grandfather, Abd al Muttalib. He was the chief of Quraysh and took great care of the child. However, he too died when Prophet reached the age of eight so the guardianship now fell on Abu Talib who was Muhammad’s uncle and a merchant by profession. Abu Talib brought him as his own son and even Muhammad was greatly attached to him and accompanied him in his trading trips. In one of the trips to Syria, when Muhammad was twelve, they visited a Christian Monk known as Bahira who told Abu Talib that his nephew was destined to be a Prophet and that he should take care of him. Muhammad was very sincere and hardworking and learnt trading from his uncle and became a trader. Even in the age of polytheism he believed in the concept of one God (called a Hunafa) and Meccans respected and placed him in an honoured position. His dealings with all were considered fair and trustworthy due to his spotless moral character. Young Muhammad from the beginning was bent towards Peace and as a youth he actively participated in forming of the alliance for maintaining peace in Mecca. This was called the Truce of Al Fudhul which was meant to uphold the rights of the poor and weak and to suppress any violence and injustice in the region.5

Wisdom of Muhammad-Precursor of a great Prophet

When Kaaba was to be rebuilt as it would often get flooded with rain water, there arose a quarrel as to who would place the Black Stone at its proper place. Since it was the most honourable thing to do therefore the fight broke out among the tribes which continued for four days. It was then decided by an elder Abu Umayya ibn Mughira on the fifth day that whoever would be the first person to visit Kaaba in the next morning gets to be the arbiter of the issue at hand. The next morning it was Muhammad who visited the Kaaba and was given the task to resolve the issue which if unresolved could take an ugly turn. Prophet in his great wisdom advised each chief


of the tribe to come forward and hold the corner of the sheet and when the sheet was lifted up and brought closer to the proposed site, he picked the Black Stone (Hasjar Aswad) and he set it in its place. In this way he not only allowed everyone to participate but was also able to avert a dangerous war with his wisdom and foresight. At the same time God Almighty got the stone placed from the hands of his last messenger which the Meccan polytheist agreed to this by their own decision.⁶

**Marriage with Khadijah and Revelation**

When Muhammad was twenty-five years old, he had already become well known for his honesty, piousness and an astute trader. His trade dealings earned him the title of Al Amin (The Trustworthy). Khadija was the daughter of Khuwaylid and belonged to Mecca and was from the tribe of Quraysh. Just as the Meccan called Muhammad ‘Ameen,’ they called Khadija Tahira, which meant ‘the pure one’. She was a respectable lady well regarded for her noble character and her administrative ability that earned herself the title among the Arabs as the ‘Princess of the Merchants’. Her caravan was known to be the largest as compared to all other merchants of Mecca put together. Abu Talib who was uncle of Muhammad suggested to Khadijah to hire Muhammad as her agent so she immediately appointed Muhammad as administrator of her caravan as she was already searching for a person to take care of her business.

In one of the business trips, when Muhammad returned after three months with unexpected success, Khadijah who was already impressed by his fairness and high personality proposed her hand to him which Muhammad accepted and they got married. So, with this marriage Muhammad had access to all her wealth and he could lead a very comfortable life but he instead became less and less interested in worldly affairs and started to utilize his time in search of truth by means of solitude, contemplation and meditation. He would frequently visit mount Hira which was three miles away from Mecca and spend time in the cave for hours. He would only return when his supply of food and water was exhausted. After refilling he would return to cave for solitude of nature, prayer and meditation. He would seek answers to existential questions on the purpose of life, and what happens to a soul after death so all his material interest faded in the search of the higher truth. In chapter ninety-

three verse number seven Quran mentions this phase of Muhammad as period of his wandering when God’s guidance came to him.

In the month of Ramadan Prophet Muhammad spent entire month in cave Hira and after a period of six months when he had attained the age of forty in the year 610 A.D on Feb 12, Gabriel appeared before him with the first revelation from God. The first revelation was to ‘Read’ as mentioned in the chapter ninety-six verse number one of the Quran.⁷

The Prophet responded by saying that he cannot read. After this Muhammad felt that his body was being embraced hard and Gabriel asked him again to which Muhammad maintained his answer so the Angel squeezed and asked Muhammad again for the third time to “Read”.

After this a transformation happened and Muhammad was able to repeat the divine words. He was revealed Al-Alaq that is chapter ninety-six first five verses where Lord asks him to read in his name who is most bountiful and He is the one who taught man by the pen.

Muhammad recited these verses repeating them after the angel. The Prophet was trembling in fear and awe and felt the cave was haunted and wanted to run away as he was unable to comprehend the experience of what he had seen and heard in the cave. The revelation was totally a new experience for him. He rushed towards his home immediately after the disappearance of the angel.⁸

After this when Prophet reached home, he was already shivering due to high fever, so he asked his wife Khadijah to cover him in blankets. After calming down, he explained the whole episode to her.

Khadijah, being very reassuring and understanding said that he will be the Prophet of the nation and will be the harbinger of Truth and that God will not let him down or fail him.

Khadijah then went to meet her cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal, who was a Christian and said to her that Muhammad would be the Prophet of this nation. Later when Waraqa ibn Nawfal met Muhammad he said to him that he is the chosen one and a Prophet who would be denied and troubled. He further told him that like him Prophet Moses too had received the message and that he will help the Prophet as long as he remains alive.9

The Prophet’s wife Khadijah was the first to embrace Islam. After that both Ali who was Prophet’s cousin and Zayd a freed slave accepted Islam. When Prophet’s Childhood friend Abu Bakr heard of the new experience of the Prophet, he confirmed from the Prophet whether he received the revelation from an Angel sent by God. When Prophet replied “Yes,” Abu Bakr immediately professed his faith without any further arguments. Abu Bakr belonged to the lineage of nobles among the Quraysh and was most knowledgeable in the clans. His coming into Islam was a great strength for Prophet. Abu Bakr later began to call unto Islam people he knew well and trusted like Uthman ibn Affan, Abd al Rahman ibn Awf, Talhan ibn Ubayd Allah, Sad ibn Aby Waqqas and Al Zubayr ibn Al Awwam, Abu Ubaydah ibn al Jarrah.

**Ideological Foundation: Day of the Declaration of his Mission**

Muhammad never practiced polytheism even before Proclamation of Islam. An incident indicates this as during his second journey to Syria, a dispute arose for a dealing of transaction between Muhammad and a man. The man asked the Prophet to swear in the names of idols Al- Lat and Al-Uzza . The names of these idols have also been mentioned in the Chapter fifty-three and verse number nineteen and twenty. However, Muhammad refused saying he has never done that his life and rather avoided and ignored the idols. This shows that Prophet’s nature was preserved right from his childhood days and Biographer Ibn Hisham writes that it seemed as if God was protecting him from the evils of polytheism and God wanted to honour him with the Prophethood. Muhammad was considered best in his conduct which earned him

the title of trustworthy in Mecca. His honesty was well known and he belonged to the noble lineage and he eventually reached to a position of supremacy.¹⁰

After the Declaration of Islam and as its Prophet, he prohibited all the pagan practices and customs which had earlier become the norms in Mecca. Such was the faultless character of Prophet that even though the Quraysh thirsted for his blood, still they admired his truthfulness. It was the Quraysh who called him Sadiq (the truthful) and Amin (the trusted one).

Some days later when Prophet Muhammad was sitting inside the cave Hira, the Archangel Gabriel came before him with the second revelation as mentioned in the Chapter seventy-four of Quran in the first three verses where he asked Prophet to arise and warn the mankind. It was to give an indication for him to begin his mission of Monotheism.

The Muslims who heeded to Prophet’s call were few in number and therefore they did not take the risk to offer their prayers in public. So, one of the companions of Prophet Al Arqam, an early convert offered his big house for the congregational prayers and this continued till three years. In the fourth year, the commandment to warn his relatives and near ones was revealed in chapter twenty-six and verse number two hundred and fourteen.

Whenever important announcements or news had to be shared in Arab custom, they would ascend a hill and make the announcement. So, prophet climbed up the hillock Safa which was near the Kaaba and called the chiefs one by one. Prophet Muhammad was always wise in his approach so when he addressed, he first took a validation by asking the people that if he warns them of an attack from the valley then will they believe him, when they all said that they would, as he never lied. So, when Prophet got this response, he began to give his message of monotheism and about the warning that they should abandon polytheism to avoid God’s punishment. He told them that he would not be able to protect them even though they are his near ones.¹¹

When Abu Lahab, the Prophet’s uncle heard the message he became livid and his response was immediate with full of hate and scorn and he cursed him for gathering all of them for such a message.12

Abu Lahab who was Prophet’s uncle led the charge and took the assembled chief with him and this showed the fierce enmity that was to begin between Prophet and Abu Lahab. However, besides the ideological reason there was one more important reason for the Quraysh to oppose Prophet’s mission of Monotheism. Mecca was a hub of business due to its pilgrimage for Kaaba, which held 360 idols from the neighbouring tribes. The presence of Kaaba gave the Quraysh pre-eminence over all the other clans and they enjoyed unparalleled respect and power. Due to the offerings these tribes made all through the year, these 360 idols ensured great economic prosperity for Mecca. Since Mecca was a desert so no other means of sustenance was available; they feared that practice of monotheism over 360 idols would not only take away their undisputed respect which they enjoyed among all the clans but it would also end their economic prosperity.

Later on, Muhammad invited them again and this time for a meal, he assigned this task to his cousin, the young Ali who invited all the relatives including the family members of Banu hashim and Banu Muttalib. After all had assembled in the hall of Abu Talib’s house, Muhammad rose to address but before he could speak, Abu Lahab who sensed the intent of his message got up and told them not to listen to him. He cautioned them that Muhammad is asking them to leave the religion of their forefathers in lieu of his new religion. He sowed seed of fear in their minds by stating that this would invite enmity of all other Arabs and with their number being less they would not stand a chance to go against other Arabs.

This statement of Abu Lahab created confusion and people started leaving Muhammad’s place. So, the first attempt of Prophet to convey the message and to bring his kinsmen into Islam failed. The Prophet again after few days asked his cousin Ali to invite the guests and when they came and had taken their dinner, Prophet Muhammad got up and asked them to accept the path of God as this was the God’s ordain and then he sought their support for his mission.

Everyone stood in silence with nobody coming forward till a young boy of thirteen years and cousin of Prophet named Ali got up and pledged his support and offered to be his companion for the mission of monotheism. The people who were present did not take it seriously and rather laughed at the proposal extended by little Ali.  

After this incident Abu Lahab decided that he would at every opportunity trouble the Prophet to derail his mission and create huddles in his efforts to popularise the message of Islam. He was aided by his wife Umm Jameel in his evil designs. It is for this reason that verse was revealed to show God’s wrath for both of them in chapter one hundred and eleven in first five verses where God said that Abu Lahab would be ruined and he will be casted in hell fire along with his wife and his wealth will not come to his use.

Post this Prophet began to proclaim his message freely in public and Meccans formed the impression that he was either mad or being possessed by a Jinn or an evil spirit. The Arabs initially were not in bitter opposition until Prophet began to reject the idols worshipped by the Pagans and when the emphasis was given by Prophet on the last judgement and eternal punishment of idolaters in hell. The thought of their forefathers being in hell as confirmed by Prophet further angered them and their opposition grew stronger against the Prophet.

There were some people who gave attention to what Prophet said and slowly accepted the message Islam preached and thereby accepted Islam. Slowly the number of believers began to increase. The Quraysh who enjoyed the Meccan leadership saw great danger to their leadership and considered the teachings of Islam an insult to the religion of their forefathers. So, they decided to take action and put an end to the work Prophet was doing in Mecca.

After discussion with the chiefs they went to Prophets uncle Abu Talib to ask him to stop Muhammad from spreading his message. Abu Talib was deeply alarmed and worried at the same time. He called Prophet and requested to stop conveying his message as he being an old man cannot take further the burden. Also, deep inside Abu Talib was concerned about the well-being of his nephew.

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Listening to this the Prophet stood silent as he was concerned that on one hand his uncle was being troubled at an old age and on the other hand there was the responsibility on him to proclaim the message of God. This could only be possible with the protection of his uncle as without protection no one would be safe among the tribes. Prophet became emotional and he told his uncle that he would not abandon the mission at any cost and would carry it on till the end of his life. Seeing his nephew crying Abu Talib also became emotional and he vowed to protect his nephew as long he is alive and that he will not let anyone harm him.  

**Opposition Intensified and Emigration to Abyssinia**

When the Quraysh did not succeed in winning over Abu Talib against Prophet Muhammad, they intensified their assaults on Prophet and his companions. Slaves, the most vulnerable of all in the society, were the worst sufferers. Abu Bakr used greater part of his wealth freeing the slaves as many were brutally beaten and tortured to death. Even though slaves and Muslims bore the torture patiently, none got spared and were severely persecuted. The relatives turned against one another due to ideological differences. After the demise of Prophet’s uncle and Kadijah, the Quraysh got more emboldened and resorted to all sorts of mischiefs including throwing rubbish on him when he passed through the street and made disturbances when he stood up to pray in Kaaba. The Prophet’s faith was so strong that he would say to his daughter Fatimah not to cry as God was their protector. 

The Meccans did their best to turn people away from the Prophet. They would accost the pilgrims visiting the Kaaba by warning them not to listen to Prophet’s message but this did better than harm as people became increasingly curious to find about Prophet’s message. Stopping of pilgrims by Quraysh gave lot of publicity to Prophet’s mission and his message of Islam continued to spread with many powerful men accepting Islam like Hamzah, the Prophet’s uncle, Umar ibn Al-Khattab, who was well known for his bravery and Abu DharrGhifari few among them. 

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The Meccan leaders got more furious on the successes of Prophet and started making things more difficult for the Prophet’s companions. With rising persecution Prophet advised them to migrate to Abyssinia which was a Christian kingdom ruled by King Negus. The first group to emigrate included eleven men and four women. They were primarily, Uthman ibn Affan from the Banu Umayya clan and cousin of Abu Sufyan along with his wife Ruqayya, Abu Hudhaifa ibn utba and his wife Sahla, Zubair ibn Al Awwam who was the cousin of the Prophet, Musab ibn Umair who was the grandson of Hashim, Abd al Rahman ibn Auf, Abu Salma al Makhzumi, Uthman ibn MazunJumahi, Amir ibn Rabia with his wife Laila, Abu Sabra ibn Abi Ruhm, Abu hatib ibn Amr, Suhail Ibn Baida and Abd Allah ibn Masud were the people who migrated first. Later as the conditions in Meccas was not good for Muslims so the second contingent with eighty three people migrated to Abyssinia. The emigration to Abyssinia is also referred as the first emigration in Islam. The Quraysh were angry on Muslims finding safe place to stay so they sent Amr ibn al As and Abdullah ibn Abu Rabiah with precious gifts for the king to soften him so that he could return the Meccan men to them.

Both the men then asked king Negus to return the men as they have created new religion and their relatives and elders would want to deal with them back home. However, Negus refused to agree with them and instead asked the Muslims to explain their position with respect to the charges levelled by the Meccan officials. Jafar, son of Abu Talib, rose to explain the situation in Mecca, about injustice meted out to the weak and poor, about the immoral practices and customs, superstitions that prevailed in the society and ill-treatment of women. He went on to explain to Negus about the teachings of Islam and worship of one God. Negus asked Jafar to show him the portions of Quran to which Jafar recited the verse from the chapter ‘Mary’:

“She pointed to the child. They said, ‘How shall we talk to someone who is a child in the cradle?’ [But] he said, ‘I am God’s servant. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet; He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and has enjoined upon me prayer and almsgiving throughout my life. He has made me dutiful toward my mother, and He has not made me arrogant or wicked. Blessed was I on the day I was

born, and blessed I shall be on the day I die and, on the day, I am raised to life again.” (19: 29-33)

After listening to the above recitation, Negus was so impressed that he not only allowed them all to stay in their kingdom but also refused their extradition and told Meccans to leave his kingdom as he was not handing over the emigrants to them. He further stated that Muslims are following the Truth.\(^{18}\)

The Meccans returned unsuccessful much to the dismay and anger of the leaders of Mecca who were left fretting with their delegation failure. The big positive side to such Migration was the advantage it presented to Islam from shedding its light wherever it was introduced. So, wherever the companions went to the new place they carried with them the torch of truth that Islam had lighted; and it helped in creating a foothold in the minds and hearts of people who came in contact with the Islamic ideology.

**Umar's and Hamza’s Conversion to Islam**

Hamza was prophet’s uncle and was a strong man in Mecca. He was well respected for his archery. One day when he heard about Prophet being subjected to unbearable torture perpetrated by Abu Jahl, he went to the Haram where Abu Jahl was present. He hit him and announced his conversion. Hamza was a powerful man of Mecca and it strengthened Prophet’s mission with his coming into Islam.

However, the most notable event was the conversion of Umar bin Khattab in 616 A.D. who was to also become second khalifa of the Muslim ummah in near future. He was one of the most feared people and a very strong personality. It is said that one day Umar was very livid and he had decided to kill Muhammad. He was heading towards the house of Al Arqam when he discovered that forty people including Prophet were having a meeting. On the way he met Nuaim from his clan who taunted on knowing his intentions by saying that he should set his own house in order since his sister and brother in law had also embraced Islam. Angry he left for her sister Fathima and Saeed, his brother in law’s house. On reaching their house he heard Quran recitation and, in his rage, he hit his sister, when he saw the blood coming

from her face he calmed down and then asked for the copy of the Quran which they were reading. He read the first eight verses of chapter fifty-seven where God is being glorified as controller of heavens and earth. Umar kept on reading the verses which then talked about God's all-knowing nature and that all the affairs are managed by him including changing of day and night.

Umar was totally shaken up and moved when he heard the above verse and the moment, he came to words which said have faith in God and his messenger. He immediately spoke that he believes in God and his Prophet and headed towards the house of Al Arqan and on meeting with the Prophet he professed his faith. This indeed was turning point of the events in history as with coming of Umar the whole position changed completely. The Muslims felt more confident with two big champions as Hamza and Umar on their side. The fear of Umar was so much among people that it can be understood from Prophet’s tradition that if Satan were to know about the coming of Umar he would get out of his way. A great hue and cry were made out of conversion of Umar as it was a severe setback to all the plans of the Quraysh. The opposition then met up and decided to hold a meeting to deal with the situation and came up with the policy of boycott of the Banu Hashim and Muttalib family.

Boycott of the Banu Hashim and year of Sorrow (A.D. 616-619)

The Quraysh realized that all their threats, persecution and torture of Muhammad and his followers were not bringing the desired result. The Muslims were rather increasing in number gradually. Their attempt to pressurise Abu Talib to get his nephew Muhammad give up his mission came to nothing. Finally, the Quraysh decided to attack the very roots of Prophet’s protection and sustenance of his mission and decided to boycott Banu Hashim clan. A covenant was signed by about forty Quraysh leader which was hung up inside the Kaaba to show that all the clans are together on this decision. This had a huge impact on the clan of Banu Hashim as it meant no trade or social ties; no one would marry their daughters or sons to Hashim family. It gradually weakened the clans as it lasted for more than three years and Abu Bakr lost most of his wealth due to the boycott. However, many among the Quraysh

thought the boycott was unnecessary, also some role got played due to closer kinship
ties of Quraysh people with Banu Hashim and Muttalib clans. Despite Abu Lahab
and Abu Jahl’s intervention the boycott was lifted and the situation began to improve
after few months. However, Khadijah Prophet’s wife died shortly after the lifting of
the boycott in 619 AD. It caused great grief to Prophet who lost his closest
companion. She played historically a very meaningful role in Prophet’s life and in
making his mission stronger. She was also the first convert when Prophet began his
mission. While Prophet was in sorrow, he lost his uncle, Abu Talib who was his
protector and sustainer. It was the year of grief for Prophet who lost two important
people of his life. Prophet then decided to seek support from outside the city and
decided to visit Taif.\footnote{Ramadan, Tariq.(2007). In the Footsteps of the Prophet, Lessons from the life of Muhammad.Newy
York, New York: Oxford University Press. (p.67-8)}

\textbf{Muhammad's Visit to Ta'if}

Mecca was inhospitable to Islam so prophet decided to reach out to outer city and he
went to Taif and sought help from the three chiefs of the local tribe. He invited them
to accept Islam and stop worshipping their idol. The chiefs of Taif were arrogant and
they did not listen to the Prophet and rather mobilized local people and street
hooligans to mocked and jeer at him. He was also pelted with stones which wounded
him grievously. The injury caused him to bleed badly and he almost collapsed when
he took refuge behind the trailers of vineyards which belonged to Utba ibn Rabia.
After resting and dressing of his wounds he went to Nakhla where he stayed for few
days. He then came to Hira and asked help from Mutim ibn Adi for protection as he
knew if he enters Mecca without any protection then Qurayh would surely kill him.
Mutim ibn Adi responded to his call of distress. He was the same person who helped
in ending the boycott by tearing the document that was hung from Kaaba confirming
expulsion of Banu Hashim. Mutim after promising protection asked his sons to go
with Prophet to the Haram armed with weapons and announce protection of Prophet
under him. The Prophet entered the Haram and then came to his house escorted by

In the same year in 619 AD i.e. tenth year of Prophethood, when Prophet was
passing through the toughest of time in his life, Angel Gabriel came to him. Prophet
was asleep in the enclosure of Kaaba when Gabriel woke him up for a heavenly journey. He was honoured by God with Isra’ and Me’raj. Isra’ is the nocturnal journey from “the Haram” to “the Distant Mosque” (Masjid Al-Aqsa) in Jerusalem. He was taken on a winged animal called Al Buraq to Jerusalem where he met all the Prophets who preceded him; he led the prayer at the temple site. Isra’ is referred in the Quran in chapter seventeen and its first verse where it says that Prophet was taken from Mecca to a remote place of worship in Jerusalem and the area has been blessed so that Prophet could be shown some of the signs of God almighty.

After the prayer, Gabriel ascended with Prophet to Heaven where he received from Allah the injunction of offering prayers five times daily. He was then brought back to Jerusalem and from there to Mecca. The Quraysh did not believe the Prophet when the news spread and they mocked at him. But this episode was clearly a blessing of God for Prophet during his time of tribulations; the teachings Prophet received were to become the foundation of Islamic worship and ritual. Majority of Muslim Scholars believe that the journey was both physical as well as spiritual.23

This has been validated further in the chapter fifty-three and in first eighteen verses of the Quran where God said that some of the greatest signs were shown to the Prophet and people should not dispute with Prophet who has been chosen for revelations. It further clarified that he does not speak out of his own desire and that he was indeed taught by the angel and he did see signs of God including the mystic loter tree in Paradise and this should not be misconstrued in any way.

**Covenant of Aqba: First and Second Pledge:**

In the eleventh year of his Prophet’s mission i.e. 620 AD six men from Medina Khazraj tribe came for pilgrimage and met Muhammad and accepted Islam. They also shared that Medina was in a potential state of warfare and they hoped that city would see peace through him. After assuring to return next year, they went back to Medina and told their kinsmen about Prophet and his mission. Next year in 621 AD twelve more people from Yathrib (Medina) including two women visited Mecca and

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they all accepted Islam and gave Prophet the pledge of loyalty. This is called the First Pledge of Aqaba.\textsuperscript{24}

These Muslims swore to Prophet and pledged allegiance that they would never associate partners with God, they would not worship anyone except God and obey Him and Prophet and remain faithful to him at all times; they would not indulge in female infanticide; they would always be pure and virtuous, they would never steal; they would never insult others; they would never slander women. They then requested the Prophet to send Mas‘ab ibn Umayr, who was companion of Prophet and was known for his wisdom, poised personality and beautiful recitation of the Quran. The Medina chapter of Prophet’s mission officially began with many people accepting Islam after this.

Later in the second year that is, 622 A.D, seventy-two people from Yathrib (Medina) visited Mecca for pilgrimage. They all took the oath known as the second pledge of Aqaba and pledged to protect Prophet from his enemies. They invited the Prophet to settle in Medina. The men who represented Aws and Khazraj tribes for their support to Prophet wanted one assurance from him that is, after gaining power he should not return to Mecca. The Prophet gave them the promise that he will not leave their company and that he belongs to them and their blood and his blood is same.

After the second pledge Muhammad encouraged Muslims to emigrate to Medina while his closest companions remained with him. The second pledge was landmark in the history of Islam as it gave a foothold to Prophet’s mission much to the dismay and frustration of the Quraysh who were now bent towards killing Muhammad.\textsuperscript{25}

**The Historical Hijra (Migration) 622 A.D**

The Hijra began from the 1\textsuperscript{st} of Muharram (Lunar month) of the year or 15 July 622 A.D and was to mark the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

The Meccan leaders had become desperate and wanted to close the chapter and decided to assassinate the Prophet one night. They feared that he may escape to Yathrib (Medina) where the no. of the Muslims had risen to considerable number.

\textsuperscript{25}Khanam, F.\textit{(2003). Life and Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.}Delhi,Delhi:Goodword Books.(P.42)
The Quraysh were worried that if Prophet reaches Medina then he would be able to consolidate his position and power and might attack Mecca or possibly cut off their trade route to Al Sham (Syria). This would then be akin to avenging the boycott which Quraysh had implemented. They further thought that if they keep him alive in Mecca then Medina people may attack them to release their Prophet. So, there was no other alternative but to kill the Prophet and get rid of their problem. But they discussed that killing of the Prophet would lead to warfare between Banu Hashim and Banu Al Muttalib to whom Prophet belonged. To avoid this civil war, they decided that each clan would nominate one strongperson armed with sword to kill the Prophet and in this way responsibility of killing would be shared by all the tribes. Banu Hashim and Banu Al Muttalib would then not gather the courage to fight all the tribes and matter would be resolved without any further trouble. However Prophet was informed about the same by Gabriel with instruction to leave that very night. This is mentioned in the chapter eight and verse number thirty of the Quran where it was revealed to the Prophet on how the Quraysh schemed to expel and kill him but the scheme of God saved him.

The Hijrah that marks the emigration of Prophet’s from Mecca to Medina was the most important event of Islamic history. When the Prophet took the decision to leave Mecca, he shared his plan with Ali ibn Abu Talib and instructed him to take his place under his blanket and sleep giving an impression to his assassins that Prophet was still in the house. Prophet wanted to surprise his enemies so he escaped taking the backdoor of his house while Ali slept in his place. Prophet further asked Ali to stay in Mecca till all the possessions left with Muhammad have been returned to the rightful owners. This showed the Prophets attribute of justice and honesty. Even during period of emigration, he trusted a non-muslim Bedouin by the name of Abdullah ibn Urayqat to take them to Medina by an unfamiliar route. This showed his impartial attitude towards everyone and he would not use the yardstick of religion to trust someone rather he would look at the moral qualities in a person. It showed

his just and kind heartedness for all, a quality that only a true messenger of God would possess.\textsuperscript{27}

When the news of Prophet’s escape reached the chiefs of Mecca, they were enraged and offered a prize of one hundred camels to anyone who would capture Muhammad. A number of horsemen went out into the desert and even managed to reach the mouth of the cave of Thawr. Abu Bakr was worried that they might get noticed which meant fatal harm to him as well as to the Prophet. But the Prophet reassured him with the historical statement: what do you think of those two Abu Bakr who has God as the third companion. These words re-assured Abu Bakr and he immediately felt safe and became calm.\textsuperscript{28}

The Prophet and Abu Bakr for three days and nights continued to stay unseen in the cave and came out on the fourth day. The young men of Quraysh who were pursuing Abu Bakr and Prophet came dangerously close to the cave but after noticing cobwebs at the cave thought no one could be inside and left. After this event Abu Bakr’s faith in God and the Prophet became even stronger.

After escaping the capture of the Quraysh at the cave, they continued the journey with Abdullah ibn Urayqit along with their guide Amir bin Fuhaira, the servant of Abu Bakr.

One of the horsemen by the name of Suraqah bin Malik was eager to earn the announced reward of hundred camels and pursued Prophet. He was able to spot them on the road to Medina and came close but all of a sudden, his horse fell down. Suraqah made two more attempts to come near to the Prophet but each time he failed. This frightened him as he realized that Prophet was under some divine protection and asked for his forgiveness from the Prophet who forgave him.\textsuperscript{29}

According to renowned Islamic Scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan there is a great contemporary lesson to be drawn from the Hijrah of the Prophet. He said that the Prophet carried out the mission of Tawheed (monotheism) peacefully in Mecca for

\textsuperscript{27}Ramadan, Tariq.(2007). In the Footsteps of the Prophet, Lessons from the life of Muhammad.New York, New York: Oxford University Press. (p. 83)
\textsuperscript{28}Al Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismā‘īl, (1422AH), al-Jaami‘ al-Musnad al-Sahih (Arabic). Dar Tawq el Najat. (V.5, P.5-4, h3652-53)
\textsuperscript{29}Khanam, F.(2003). Life and Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.Delhi,Delhi:Goodword Books.(P.43)
thirteen years. Yet, the Quraysh became so hostile opponents that they plotted to kill him. Despite this open threat from the Quraysh, Prophet still chose to adopt a Peaceful method and decided to leave Mecca for Medina. The Hijra was a great success as Prophet was able to shift the engagements in Medina and later signed Hudaybiyyah agreement which was a 10-year Peace treaty. This gave Prophet the time for consolidating his mission and to strengthen and enlist more people in his mission. His ideological mission soon started to attract the enemies and good number of important people from Mecca entered Islam. So, the formula that one derives is adopt the peaceful method over confrontational option and shift the area of efforts when there is no choice available. This would help in redeployment of efforts which may bring positive results like it did in the situation of Hijrah.30

Transformation brought about by Prophet Muhammad in the Society

The new religion Islam was a result of the malaise of the Pre-Islamic period. With the advent of Prophet of Islam, there were reforms brought about in the Arabian Society as detailed below:

(A.) Social Changes:

Status of Women31:

Women were in the most precarious position before Islam came in Arabia. Females were buried alive and women had no proper position. All of this changed when Prophet started spreading the message of Islam. Lower status of women in Islam therefore is the biggest misconception wrongly attributed to Islam whereas in reality Islam actually raised the status of women by giving equal rights in all spheres of social, religious and economic activity.

The position of women was made higher as they began to participate in different spheres of the society that is, from expressing their opinions freely to nursing the wounded during the battles, they even traded openly in the marketplace. This can be seen from the fact that Caliph Umar appointed Shaffa bint Abdullah, as the administrator of the market.

Status of Mother:

In Islam the aim of every Muslim is to qualify for Paradise in after life, Prophet Muhammad once said that the paradise lies in the feet of mother. This is explained in one of the Hadith of Prophet where a man who came to meet him once asked him who is more praiseworthy and he asked three times and each time the Prophet replied, ‘your mother’. Only at the fourth time being asked the Prophet said ‘your father’. 32

Educational Status:

Muhammad declared that Education is obligatory for both men and women. In the pre-Islamic period, there was no education and was marked by ignorance and superstition.

Prophet of Islam encouraged not just men but also the womenfolk in the society and this could be seen from the fact that women of his own household also played important part in the development and progress of the society. It was his wife Aisha who has been attributed for contributing more than two thousand hadiths of the Prophet. These hadiths are now part of the Islamic Jurisprudence and has been greatly helpful in guiding mankind. It is also said of her that after the death of Prophet whenever companion needed some guidance they would go to Aisha for her advice. In the later period there have been many women who achieved great feats like Fatima Al Fihri who founded the university of Al Qarawiyyin which is also known as the first university in the world. There have been many names in the annals of history, well know biographers like Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Sad, Al Marqizi who have mentioned contribution of women in various discipline of education and science. This became possible as Prophet Muhammad set a trend which started from his home of letting women come forward and play equal role in the field of education. 33

32 Al Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismā’īl, (1422AH), al-Jaami’ al-Musnad al-Sahih (Arabic). Dar Tawq el Najat. (V.8, P.2, h.5971)
Inheritance:

Women did not enjoy any economic freedom in the Pre Islam period. If the male member or the administrator died then succession would be by the next eligible person. If the group or family would be larger than the property might be divided between several administrators and the same would be the case if several heirs were of equal standing. So, woman had virtually no share in this. However, after the coming of Islam women were given the share of her deceased relative whether as wife, mother, sister or daughter. Several verses of Quran were revealed to this effect.34

Marriage:

In Pre Islam period, a woman did not have any rights over marriage, they were passed onto many men and were disrespected in the vilest of the way but after Islam came, women were given the right to choose and decide on her marriage by either accepting or rejecting the marriage proposal.

In Islam the status of man and woman is equal and there is no discrimination between one another. It can be seen in the chapter thirty verse number twenty-one of Quran where God said that he created for each other, spouses so that they might find comfort and affection for one another. Prophet Muhammad highlighting the importance of wives once said that only that person is considered best who is best for his wife.35

Quran clearly shows that both men and women are members to one another as can be seen in the chapter three and verse number one hundred and ninety-five. Women’s position with regard to status, blessing and rights there are no less than the men in this world and also in the hereafter. In chapter four and verse number one Quran says that God created both men and women from a single soul and He further commands mankind not to sever the ties of relationship as he is observing and watching the conduct of every person.

The above verse educates us about the first soul i.e. Adam and Eve from whom the entire human race came about. So, there is some commonness between the man and woman. Both are comfort to one another and an intellectual partner to help in the journey of life. There is a hadith that talks about equality and says that men and women are two equal halves of a single unit.36

Some people misconstrue the verse of the Quran which mentions men are in charge of, that is, ‘maintainers’ of women (4:34). Here the verse does not infer any superiority or higher status of men over women. The mention of maintainers of women concerns the practical management of the household affairs for which the man is held responsible. It does not mean that a woman will never be allowed to shoulder these responsibilities. If a situation arises where she can bear this burden, then no objection will be raised from any quarter. An example of Queen of Sheeba can be found in the Quran who lived in Yemen. Their country was very prosperous and had attained great heights of civilization which was made possible by the legendary dam of Marib.37 The Quran in chapter twenty-seven and verse number twenty-three mentions about a kingdom which was reigned by a woman who was given everything, this itself indicates that there is no disapproval of a woman’s rule as otherwise a verse would have condemned it.

If we see history, we find a very relevant example in the queen Bilqis of Sheeba which shows that status of women is higher in Islam. According to this example in Quran, when Solomon sent a message to Queen Bilqis to either surrender or face war, she was advised by her court advisors to prepare for an attack. However, she was a very wise and learned lady and knew that war will only cause destruction and therefore she rejected the advice.

If we consider the above example in the light of principle adopted by the scholars and exegist of the Quran that when Quran does not endorse something it reports then it is considered as an approval. Therefore, with above example of Queen Bilqis it strengthens the claim of women being considered equally important in Islam. Being a woman, she shouldered the responsibility of rule with greater ability. Therefore, the


rule is not only man’s domain and a woman can be authority over a man which has been testified by the Quran itself in the above case. The above examples from the Quran and the Hadith clearly give adequate proof against those claimants in today’s scenario who say that Islam does not treat women with equality and respect. There are many media reports which say that women in Islam are not allowed to work and should be confined to household chores as they are inferior to men. Clearly, we can see from the above that it is not true and women have same rights and status as Muslim men.

(B) Religious Characteristics:

Belief: Kaaba in the Pre-Islam period had become a place of Polytheism (Shirk) due to presence of 360 idols. It was Prophet Muhammad’s mission to bring the message of Tawheed that is, Monotheism among the Pagan Arabs and correct the beliefs of People which were propagating idol worship. He forbids all the wrong customs and practices like use of magic, superstition, sacrificing of animal to idols, discussing of fate using arrows, taking Idols for swearing. Instead everyone who came into the fold had to utter Kalima-i-Tawheed and that their prayers are only for Allah alone.

The Prophet wanted to eradicate superstitious beliefs as that would have made the mission stronger since monotheism belief was based on rational and objective understanding. He was so concerned to develop the objective thinking that he did not take advantage of a personal incident which was death of his son that had coincided with Solar Eclipse. When People began to attribute the eclipse with the death of Prophet’s son, he did not pause even a second to capitalize this belief, rather he mounted the stage and announced that such eclipses are nothing but signs of God. He further said that whenever one witnesses these phenomena’s one should glorify God and after saying this he got down and performed prayers with others.

If the Prophet would have gone with the belief of the Arabs, this would have strengthened his cause of mission as people would have easily believed it. However,

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39 Al Bukhari, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl, (1422AH), *Al-Jaami‘ al-Musnad al-Sahih (Arabic)*. Dar Tawq el Najat. (V2, P.37, h1052)
the Prophet’s objective was not to make theminds of Arabs firm up on a superstitious belief. He wanted to fight the myths; ill practices mired in superstition and develop human intellect and reason so that people can distinguish between faith and superstition. His aim was to build rational thinking power and eradicate all kinds of superstition even if the superstition could help him in strengthening his cause.

Interestingly, Prophet Muhammad was against superstition or myths right from his childhood days. An incident shows this from his early life when he was four years old and under the care of his foster-mother Halimah, he once expressed his desire to go into jungle with his foster-brothers. Halimah narrated this incident from the life of the early childhood days of the Prophet that one day when she readied him and after bathing him, applied oil, she put around his neck beads of Yemen believed to protect from evil spirits but Muhammad immediately removed it saying that his protection is by God.40

2. Worship: The concept of worship in Pre Islam was merely superstitious and did not aim in transforming a person spiritually as people would worship to Idols for their personal gains or solving of problems. With coming of Islam, the concept of worship established a relationship between creator and His creation. In Islam it is central to the theme of Monotheism as prayer connect a person with his creator when he prays. Even in Quran chapter fifty-one and verse number fifty-six says that God created Mankind and Jinn so they may worship Him.

God wants man to be humble and it is this attitude which is called worship. A person who is genuinely modest will be modest in his dealing with everyone. A humble person surrenders unconditionally to the will of God. Prophet’s emphasis in the society was therefore on worship as it was important and done in congregation (Jamaat) which promoted unity, togetherness, solidarity among fellow beings and above all equality before the creator. These other Pillars being, belief in Prophet Fasting, Zakat, Hajj promoted cooperation and goodness and piousness in the society. A person who is immersed in the thought of God find himself close to God.

as finding closeness to Him is the highest reality of religion which a true worshipper aspires.41

3. Education and Knowledge:

In Pre Islam period there was no education and the period were marked by ignorance and no literacy. This is the reason it is called as a dark age. After the coming of Islam, the main objective was to end polytheism and establish monotheism. Polytheism was also a big road block to progress and learning and Islam was to change the order of History by way of revolution. The revolution was to give freedom of thought that would lead to learning and open the opportunities to scientific progress. This could only be possible through education and knowledge one gains out of it. Once can therefore understand the relevance of a verse number one hundred and fourteen of chapter twenty of the Quran where a prayer is supplicated to Lord to increase oneself in Knowledge.

It was therefore Islam which laid emphasis on the importance of education so as to end the period of intellectual darkness. Islamic Scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan for this reason attributes the credit of civilization to Islam and not to Europe. He explains this in his book Islam the Creator of Modern Age. He mentions that in the Cambridge History of Islam written by Professor P.M Holt and other orientalist, the Literary Impact of Islam in the Modern West is mentioned. He says further that Islam had far reaching impact on the West and that the trend during Middle Ages was from East to West meaning that Islam lead the way to progress and initiated modern civilization. In the same book he gives reference of Montgomery Watt’s book The Majesty that was Islam where he writes that Arab Science and Philosophy contributed hugely to developments in Europe. 42

The mindset could change only because of Islam’s focus on education and Prophet of Islam once said that he has been sent as a teacher.43 This was further validated by


43Ibn Majah, Mohammad ibn Yazid[compiler], Shu'aybArna'ut, Aadil Murshid & others (Ed.) (2009),Sunan Ibn Majah(Arabic), Dar Al Risala Al-Aalamiyah. (V 1, P. 155, h 229).
Quran in chapter sixty-two verse number two where it is said that Prophet was sent among the uneducated to teach them as they were among the misguided.

From the very beginning Islam’s emphasis on education can be understood from the fact that first word revealed to Prophet was ‘Iqra’ (96:1). The fourth verse of the first revelation of chapter Al-Qalam mentioned that God has taught man by the pen and similarly there are several other references in the Quran and Hadith which holds people with knowledge superior to the ignorant (39:9). There are whole chapters devoted to the importance of learning and knowledge. For example, there is a hadith that one who walks a path in search of knowledge has his way paved to paradise by God as a reward for this noble act.44

In another tradition recorded in Tirmidhi wherein it was narrated by Abu Darda that Prophet once said that whoever follows the path of knowledge, his path to Heaven is made easy by God and everyone prays for forgiveness of that person from heaven to earth. He further said that such scholars are like successors of the Prophet.45

Similarly, there is another tradition which emphasizes the imparting of knowledge to others, Prophet’s companion Abu Huraira reported that Prophet used to emphasize much on spread of knowledge with others. He used to say that whoever conceals the knowledge he has acquired would be punished on the day of judgement with fire.46

The people in Arabia used their ability to memorize for preservation of literacy and there were not more than one hundred and fifty people who knew how to read and write. There was no intellectual climate because of superstition and polytheism did not allow emergence of scientific ideas. This is the reason that at that time there was no country in which science and as a result learning could progress. After the revelation of Quran education took centre stage as people began to learn the Quran from the Prophet and took it further in their society. As a result, the houses of the

44Muslim, Ibn ul Hajjaj, Al-Musnada Al-Sahih (Arabic), Beirut: Dar Ihya al Turath al Arabi. (V 4, P. 2074, h2699).


46Ibn Majah, Mohammad ibn Yazid[comp], Shu’aybArna’ut, Aadil Murshid & others (Ed). (2009), Sunan Ibn Majah (Arabic), Dar Al Risala Al-Aalamiyah. (V 1, pg 97, h 264).
companions like Al Arqam, Abu Bakr and Fatimah daughter of Umar became educational centres for people. More importantly, Prophet of Islam had appointed scribes who would write down the verses once they were revealed to Prophet. This encouraged others to learn how to read and write so they could have their own copies of the Scriptures. Before migration could take place, he selected a dozen companions who were learned teachers and were dispatched to educate the Al Aws and Al Khazraj tribes. The benefit of this exercise was so visible that when Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina, all the people young and old were well conversant and aware about the message of the Quran.47

The importance of education laid by Prophet was so high that after the battle of Badr, about seventy prisoners were caught and their ransom was set at four thousand dirhams. But there were some captives who could not afford the ransom but since they were into trade and hence literate therefore a ransom of teaching ten children was set for their freedom as against dirhams. This showed how much emphasis Prophet laid on education.

The emphasis of education started to spread and over a decade, it led to emergence of scientific temperament which eventually paved the way for many scientific investigations. Therefore, the beginning which was initiated in Mecca spread to Medina and Damascus from where it went to Baghdad where it found a great centre of learning. From Baghdad it reached to Spain, Sicily, Italy and then spread into the whole of Europe. All this was due to the spirit of enquiry and learning which Islam encouraged and opened the minds of people that brought a universal approach.

The message of the Quran not just laid high stress on leaning and teaching but it also sowed intellectual seed of enquiry. So, the spirit of enquiry along with the encouragement of the Prophet to reflect on nature and to do contemplation led to curiosity and open mindedness that culminated to knowledge explosion. It was this trend that led to later generation during Umayyad and Abbasid dynasty to establish learning centres like Bayt al Hikmah (the House of Wisdom). There were highly acclaimed Scholars appointed to translate Persian, Greek philosophy and sciences into Arabic books. Here important point is that many renowned historians have

pointed out for example Hughman, that Muslims contribution in natural sciences and philosophy were not confined to translations of Greek, Indian, Persian etc but they rather took the work forward. The Arabs had only received the theoretical argument i.e.merely philosophy but they turned it into invention by way of experimentation. So basically, there were two important contributions of Islam, firstly it was to remove mental block by ushering in education-based knowledge and secondly to launch the new age of progress and development which eventually lead to intellectual revolution.48

4. Prohibiting Ignorant Traditions and Customs: The Pre-Islam period had the characteristic of traditions which were based on superstition. Arabs believed in Soothsayers and star gazers, cruelty marked their actions and they would not think before killing a pregnant woman and her unborn baby. Girl child were buried alive for want of sons and women were treated as mere sex objects. Men gave their wives to famous men in society so they could produce sons like them. Adultery was common and thievery and robbery was a way of life. The Prophet prohibited all this by separating people from the idol worship and brought them near to Allah by inculcating Islamic morals in the society. Slander, backbiting, bribery, black marketing, spilling of blood, adultery, stealing, Liquor was all forbidden.49

5. Cooperation: Prophet Muhammad promoted cooperation through ties of brotherhood which he believed was the most essential trait in the society. Companions during the Meccas period helped one another both financially and spiritually. Much of Abu Bakr’s wealth was spent on freeing the slaves from the Meccan’s. Later the brotherhood was to spread in Medina period as Ansars helped the emigrants with all their possessions. This strengthened the bond between the hosts and the emigrants.50 This extraordinary support and help has been mentioned in chapter eight and verse number seventy-two of the Quran which says that people who struggled for Gods cause with their possession and provided shelter to those who migrated are friends to one another.

Prophet of Islam called these helpers as Mujahid’s, who would first learn themselves and then contribute in learning of others. Abu Hurairah narrated this thing about Prophet that he said of those who come to his mosque with the objective to learn and help others learn then their status would be that of a Mujahid.  

(C) Abolition of Slavery and Usury

In Pre Islam period the economy was linked to trade of slaves and business based on usury. The Quraysh considered their clan to be of the elite class and could not digest the notion of equality especially in comparison with slaves. They lived their life in arrogance and conceit and believed their bloodline to be superior. After the coming of Islam, Prophet Muhammad abolished the line defining status of people as superior or inferior. He believed there was no justification of social inequality decided on the grounds of accidental birth into a rich family. As a result, a message of equality was promulgated in the society with focus shifting onto the concept of universal brotherhood. According to the Quran entire humanity has descended from Adam and Eve and culture of superiority comes from Satan as he said to God that he was created from dust while Man was created from fire. Therefore, equation of Arab and Non-Arab, rich and poor does not exist in the eyes of God. In Islam there is no importance of race, colour, bloodline and what matters is piety and the person who is exalted is the one who loves God and lives in submission. Secondly the rich Arabs were loan sharks who lent money either on interest or heinous terms linked to lien marking on the borrower’s wife and children. The poor could never repay the debts so Prophet abolished the usury and made it haram (forbidden) and introduced the system of Zakat, Sadaqah and Fitr in the society.

(D) Wine Drinking

In the Pre Islam period, wine drinking was very common, this was prohibited by Islam as was revealed in chapter two verse number two hundred and nineteen wherein Quran says that gambling and intoxicants are unlawful and people should rather spend on charity with their excess money.

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51Ibn Majah, Mohammad ibn Yazid[compiler], Shu'ayb Arna'ut, Aadil Murshid & others [editors (2009), Sunan Ibn Majah(Arabic), Dar Al Risala Al-Aalamiyah. (V 1, P. 82, h 227)
**Justice and Equality to all**

Before the coming of Islam, there was religious persecution and no room for another religion. This contrasts with Prophet who never discriminated on the lines of the religion, in fact he even relied on people from other faith who displayed moral character. Even Prophet’s companions never restricted their social and human relations to their co-religionist. The principle they followed was of mutual respect.\(^5^3\)

The Quran itself established the rightfulness of the above principle followed by the Prophet in chapter sixty verse number eight where justness is emphasized and friendship is forbidden with those who persecute for practicing ones religion or force someone to abandon his house.

So, to summarize, the Mecca period gives us great lessons to apply in the present world which has become increasingly reactive and confrontational. With Hijrah Prophet demonstrated that between the peaceful and the violent course of action, one should adopt the Peaceful method. This can be seen from the Prophet’s life when he decided to migrate from Mecca to Medina which demonstrates shifting of focus from the place of action that is, Mecca so as to get desired results. This would not have been possible if he had adopted confrontational approach. HadratAisha has also been reported to have said that Prophet always opted for the easier option when faced with both, difficult or easier choice.

Another important aspect that emerges from the life of the Prophet is the miracle of the Quran. The earlier Prophets were given physical miracles with which they could convince the people about existence of God and also prove their claim of Prophet hood. For example, Jesus could cure the sick and give life to the dead; Moses could do miracles using his staff. However, there were no such miracles given to the Prophet Muhammad. He was to be the harbinger of Age of Reason so his miracle was the Quran itself. The Quran was to be the everlasting miracle till the end of times. This can be further understood from the verse which got revealed when opposition demanded miracles from the Prophet. The Quran states that Prophet’s

\(^{5^3}\)Ramadan, Tariq.(2007). In the Footsteps of the Prophet, Lessons from the life of Muhammad.Newy York, New York: Oxford University Press. (p.77)
mission was to give only warning and that Quran comes to mankind as a big blessing and as an admonition for the true believers.

Then there are other extraordinary aspects of Quran which stands and will continue to stand as a miracle for all time. For example:

1. The language of the Qur’an is Arabic and has till date maintained its original form like it was 1400 years ago at the time of the Prophet. This is unlike other International languages which have altered with the passage of time.

2. The Qur’an is the only scripture which remains in its preserved form in which it was originally revealed. There have been no alterations since its time of revelation and this is again unique to Islam as compared to any other religions in the world.

3. No one has been able to challenge the Quran in its wisdom or the text as it was revealed. Till date no one could produce verses similar to the verses of the Quran. This clearly shows that it is the book of God.

The religion Prophet of Islam brought in the 7th Century was not a new religion. It was the same religion which was brought by preceding Prophets but human additions over the centuries had made it irrelevant and the real message got diluted. The role of Prophet was therefore to bring religion which was to remain pristine, free from human additions till humanity exists.

Another significant aspect of Meccan period and in later times was the role of companions who stood with the Prophet and helped him in his mission. The companions were deeply attached to the cause of the faith and did not rest while any problem came upon it. The unique quality of the Companions was that they recognised in Muhammad a Prophet who was their contemporary. Today the Muslims accept Prophet as he has become a historically established Prophet with glory and success on his side. Islam is now an acclaimed and well accepted religion of the world but companions accepted Prophet when everyone else ridiculed and rejected him. The revolution which Prophet and his companions brought out was based on the belief in one creator and life in hereafter. The polytheistic traditions and its superstitious belief would not have been destroyed had there been not any support of companions to Prophet and his mission.
The Mecca period saw the challenge presented by Prophet to polytheistic thought which was reigning supreme. The Quraysh worshiped many deities which was creating an obstacle to human progress. In this regard the historian Arnold Toynbee has rightly mentioned that when natural phenomena are taken as objects of worship then they could not possibly become objects of investigation. Islam shattered this belief of worshipping anything other than one God and this paved the way for Intellectual revolution which was ushered in by future generations. Seeds were sown in the very beginning of the Islamic period, at the time of the Prophet later contributed towards liberation of human mind. The objectivity with which Prophet approached to situations like the occasion of a lunar eclipse which coincided with the death of his son showed his great wisdom and far sightedness which only a messenger of God could possess. Prophet had come to demolish the superstition which was the biggest hindrance to liberation of human intellect. This was to later set the trend of objectivity and rationality and to ensure the greatness of God. This thought process eventually lead to many scientific discoveries which were triggered with a spark generated by Prophet of Islam with his emphasis on education, learning and pursuit of knowledge.

By the end of Mecca period, history had taken a forward step with seeds of Monotheism being sown in Mecca, Medina and surrounding areas. Important people like Umar, Hamza, Uthman Abu Bakr and many more accepted Islam and strengthened the position of Muslims. Migration to Medina was to conclusively establish Islam as a religion which would guide all future generations to the path of its Creator.