

THE ISLAMIC TRILOGY
VOLUME 1

MOHAMMED AND THE UNBELIEVERS
A POLITICAL LIFE

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POLITICAL BEGINNINGS

CHAPTER 7

8:20 Believers! Be obedient to Allah and His messenger, and do not turn your backs now that you know the truth. Do not be like the ones who say, "We hear," but do not obey.

1279¹ After Abu Talib's death, Mohammed needed political allies. He went to the city of Taif, about fifty miles away, with one servant. In Taif he met with three brothers who were politically powerful. Mohammed called them to Islam and asked them to help him in his struggles with those who would defend their native religions.

1279 One brother said that if Mohammed were the representative of Allah he would go rip off the covering of the Kabah, Allah's shrine.

1279 The second brother said, "Couldn't Allah have found someone better than you to be a prophet?"

1279 The third brother said, "Don't let me even speak to you. If you are the prophet of Allah as you say you are, then you are too important for me to speak with. If you are not, then you are lying. And it is not right to speak with liars."

1280 Since they could not agree, Mohammed asked the three brothers to keep their meeting private. But Taif was a small town and within days everyone knew of Mohammed's presence. Taif was a very religious town following the old ways of the Arabs. Mohammed kept condemning them and their kind, until one day a mob gathered and drove him out of town, pelting him with stones.

1281 Half-way back to Mecca, he spent the night. The Koran says that jinns² came to hear him pray when he arose for his night prayer:

46:29 We sent a company of jinn so that they might hear the Koran. When the reading was finished, they returned to their people with warnings. They said, "O, people! We have heard a scripture sent down since the days of Moses verifying previous scriptures, a guide to the truth and the straight path. O, people! Hear the Messenger of Allah and believe

1. Margin note 555 of Ishaq's *Sira Rasul Allah*.

2. Islam has an entire world of spirits called jinns (genies). They can influence humans for good or bad.

Him that He will forgive your faults and protect you from tormenting punishment.”

PREACHING BACK IN MECCA

1282 When the fairs returned to Mecca, Mohammed went out to the crowd of visitors and told them he was the prophet of Allah and brought them the Koran, saying they should abandon their ancient religions and follow him. When he was finished with his preaching, a Quraysh who followed him told the audience to ignore Mohammed, that he was just trying to get them to abandon their ancestors' religions.

1283 One of the chiefs of a visiting tribe was taken with the power of Mohammed. He said, “By Allah, if I could take this man from the Quraysh, I could eat up all of Arabia with him.” He asked Mohammed, “If I give allegiance to you and Allah gives you victory over your enemies, will we have authority over you?” Mohammed replied that Allah gave authority where he pleased. The chief said back, “So we protect you with our arms and lives and you reap the benefit! Thanks, but no thanks.”

1285 Mohammed approached one visitor, who said, “Perhaps you have something like what I have.” He handed Mohammed a scroll of Luqman¹. Mohammed said, “This is fine, but I have something better, a Koran which Allah has revealed to me.” The visitor said Mohammed's Koran was fine poetry, but he was not converted.

THE BEGINNING OF POWER AND JIHAD IN MEDINA

Medina was about a ten-day journey from Mecca, but since ancient days the Medinans had come to Mecca for the fairs. Medina was half Jewish and half Arab, and there was ongoing tension between the two. The Jews worked as farmers and craftsmen and were literate. They were the wealthy class, but their power was slowly waning. In times past the Arabs had raided and stolen from the Jews. The Jews retaliated by saying that one day a prophet would come and lead them to victory over the Arabs. In spite of the tension, the Arab tribe of Khazraj were allies with the Jews.

1286 When the members of the Khazraj met Mohammed, they said among themselves, “This is the prophet the Jews spoke of. Let us join ranks with him before the Jews do.” They became Muslims. Their tribe was rancorous and divided, and they hoped that Islam could unite them. Soon every house in Medina had heard of Islam.

1. Luqman was a philosopher and a writer of wisdom.

1289 The next year when the Medinan Muslims returned to Mecca, they took an oath to Mohammed, the first oath of Aqaba (so named because of the location outside Mecca where the pilgrims had set up camp; the “oath of Aqaba” is an established term in Islamic literature). They returned to Medina and soon many Medinans submitted to Islam. This first oath of Aqaba was called the oath of women and was not a blood oath.

1294 The next year at the fair in Mecca, many of the new Muslims from Medina showed up. During the early part of the night about seventy of them left the caravan to meet with Mohammed. He recited the Koran and said, “I invite your allegiance on the basis that you protect me as you would your children.” (This was a blood oath.) The Medinans gave their oath. One of them then asked about their now severed ties to the Jews of Medina. If they helped Mohammed with arms and they were successful, would he go back to Mecca? Mohammed smiled and said, “No, blood is blood, and blood not to be paid for is blood not to be paid for.” Blood revenge and its obligation were common to them. “I will war against those who war against you and be at peace with those at peace with you.”

1297 Mohammed told them to appoint twelve leaders to take charge of the people’s affairs.

1299 One of the Medinans said to those taking the pledge, “Do you realize what you are committing yourselves to in pledging your support to this man? It is war against all. Quit now if you think you will give him up after losing your property and your best are killed. But if you think you will be loyal to your oath even if you do lose your property and your best are killed, then take him, for it will profit you now and in Paradise.” They asked what they would receive for their oath; Mohammed promised them Paradise. They all shook hands on the deal.

B4,52,207 *I [Salama] gave the pledge of allegiance to Allah’s Apostle and then I moved to the shade of a tree. When the number of people around the Prophet diminished, he said, “O Ibn Al-Akwa! Will you not give to me the pledge of allegiance?”*

I replied, “O Allah’s Apostle! I have already given to you the pledge of allegiance.”

He said, “Do it again.” So I gave the pledge of allegiance for the second time.”

I asked, “O Abu Muslim! For what did you give the pledge of allegiance on that day?”

He replied, “We gave the pledge of allegiance for death.”

The Medinans retired to the caravan for the night.

1304 The second oath of Aqaba had conditions of war that were not in the first oath. Now the Muslims of Medina were bound to war against all for Allah and Mohammed. For faithful service they would go to Paradise for complete obedience.

1301 In the morning the leaders of the Quraysh came to the caravan. They had heard that the Medinans had come to invite Mohammed to Medina and had pledged themselves to war against the Quraysh. The Quraysh wanted no part of war with the Medinans. But there were Medinans in the caravan who had not heard of the pledge and were puzzled by their protests.

1301 One of the Quraysh was wearing a new pair of sandals. A Medinan Muslim called out to a friend, "You need to get some new sandals like the ones on this young Quraysh." The Quraysh took them off and threw them at the speaker. "Whoa, don't get them riled up," said the friend. "Give him back his sandals." "No," said the Muslim. "It is a good omen. I shall steal what he has in war."

BACK IN MEDINA

1304 Back in Medina the Muslims now practiced their new religion openly, but most of the Arabs still practiced their ancient tribal religions. The Muslims would desecrate the old shrines and ritual objects. They broke into houses and stole the ritual objects and threw them into the latrines. On one occasion they killed a dog and tied the dog's body to the ritual object and threw it into the latrine.

THE OPENING WORDS OF WAR

1313 Until now the tension in the Quraysh tribe over the new religion had been resolved by words. Curses and insults had been exchanged: Mohammed condemned the ancient religion and customs on an almost daily basis, and the Quraysh mocked Mohammed and abused lower class converts. What blood had been drawn had been in the equivalent of a brawl. Dust had been thrown in the face of Mohammed, but no real violence had occurred and no one had died. Then there came a new kind of word:

22:39 Those who have been attacked are given permission to fight because they have been persecuted, and surely Allah is able to make them victorious.

And the end of war would come when Islam ruled:

22:41 *But surely Allah will help those who help Him in His cause. Allah is strong and mighty. Allah will surely help those who, once we establish them as leaders in the land, pray regularly and pay the poor tax and command what is right and forbid what is wrong. And the final outcome of all things is in Allah's hands.*

This was jihad, fighting in Allah's Cause. Those who resisted Mohammed were worse than killers, and their reward would be death and Hell.

2:190 *Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight against you, but do not attack them first. Allah does not love aggressors.*

2:191 *Slay them wherever you find them. Drive them out of the places [Medina] from which they drove you. Idolatry is more grievous than bloodshed. But do not fight them within the precincts of the Holy Mosque unless they attack you there; if they attack you put them to the sword. Thus shall the unbelievers be rewarded: but if they mend their ways, know that Allah is forgiving and merciful.*

2:193 *Fight against them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme. But if they desist, fight none except the evil-doers.*

EMIGRATION

1314 Allah had given permission to fight. The Muslim Medinans had pledged to support Mohammed in war and help the Muslims from Mecca. The Muslims in Mecca left and went to Medina.

MOHAMMED IN MEDINA