



Pre-Islamic Arabia

- ◆ Arabia was isolated from the great nations of the world.
- ◆ Two different types of people: the people of the town and the dwellers of the desert
- ◆ The virtues and the defects of the Badawee, were his devotion to his clan, his sense of honor, with his recklessness and thirst for revenge.
- ◆ The Arabs, and especially the Mekkans, were passionately addicted to drinking, gambling, and music.



Pre-Islamic Arabia

- ◆ The Jews succeeded in gaining in Arabia a considerable body of proselytes, in Yemen, Kinda, Khaibar and Yathrib (Medina).
- ◆ The Nestorians and the Jacobite Christians had also founded colonies in Arabia, in Mesopotamia, in Syria, and Irak.
- ◆ At the Council of Chalcedon (Asia Minor), which was convened at the instance of the Bishop of Rome in 451, the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in one person but in two natures was definitely settled.



Pre-Islamic Arabia

- ◆ The Nestorians who opposed the use of the term *Theotokos* of the Virgin Mary and came to teach that in the Incarnate Christ there had been two separate persons, one human, one divine.
- ◆ The Jacobites are the followers of Jacob Baradaeus who repudiated the doctrine of the two natures (human and divine).
- ◆ Mekka was, at this time, the center of a far-reaching idolatry. The majority of the nation was addicted to fetishism. A minority believed in the idea of a Supreme Divinity.



From Muhammad's Childhood to His Prophetic Call

- ◆ When Allah wished to select a Prophet He chose first the best tribe.
- ◆ He finally came to the tribe of Banu Kinana and from the Quraysh He chose the family of Banu Hashim.
- ◆ 'Abd al-Muttalib was the grand-father of the Prophet.



Muhammad's Childhood

- ◆ Legend has it that Allah once made the well spring forth for Ishmael the ancestor of Muhammad.
- ◆ ‘Abd al-Muttalib’s son ‘Abd Allah the father of the Prophet married Amina Bint Wahb.
- ◆ The grand-father died, and Muhammad went to his uncle.



Muhammad's life

- ◆ Now in Bostra, in Syria, there was a monk named Buhaira.
- ◆ When Muhammad arrived the monk examined him carefully. Between his shoulders he found the seal of the prophetic office.
- ◆ Muhammad's marriage with Khadija.



Muhammad's life

- ◆ The Prophet said: “No, no one is better than Khadija. She believed in me when all others were unbelieving; she took my words to be true when all others treated me as a liar.”
- ◆ The Prophet was known by the epithet Al-Amin, the reliable.
- ◆ The first revelation came to him in the month of Ramadan on Mount Hira.



Prophet Muhammad said:

Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God.

Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, [...] our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; [...] it serves as an armor against our enemies.

With knowledge, the servant of God rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereign in this world, and attains to perfection of happiness in the next.



Muhammad's Religious Message

- ◆ For him the Day of Judgment is a reality which is threateningly near.
- ◆ The important thing for him is not when the day is coming, but the certainty that it will come.
- ◆ In the judgment no soul can bear the burden for another.



Muhammad's Religious Message

- ◆ He who first created man in his mother's womb out of a drop of running blood is surely able to awaken him, that is, to create him anew.
- ◆ A believer should regard the temporal as something which is only a brief loan, an allowance for the journey to the eternal.
- ◆ Muhammad does not share the conception that the flesh is itself evil and valueless.



Muhammad's Religious Message

- ◆ (2: 100): “Whatever verses we cancel or cause thee to forget, we bring a better or its like. Knowest thou not hath power over all things?”
- ◆ Muslims like Jews believed the God whom they proclaimed was a God of history.
- ◆ But Muhammad sternly reprimands the Jews for considering themselves to be the race favored of God.



Fear of God

- ◆ To Muhammad the religious motive for a type of conduct that is pleasing to Allah is primarily gratitude.
- ◆ The fear of God is more than being afraid. It arouses a feeling of the tremendous seriousness of life, and of the responsibility and sublimity involved in being Man.
- ◆ The element of holiness enters the soul and bows the heart in willing obedience.



Ethical principles

- ◆ The duty of being kind and helpful is especially stressed.
- ◆ The alms-giving must be regarded as a perpetual responsibility.
- ◆ Reverence and gratitude toward one's parents.
- ◆ Muhammad was unable completely to abolish blood-vengeance.