



Life of Muhammad^{sa}

BY

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EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

Muslims leave Mecca

When tyranny reached its extreme limit the Prophet^{sa} assembled his followers, and pointing to the west told them of a land across the sea where men were not murdered because of a change of faith, where they could worship God unmolested, and where there was a just king

A party of Muslim men, women and children, acting on this suggestion, went to Abyssinia



To leave Mecca was for them a great wrench

The party, .. had to keep its preparations for the journey a close secret and to depart without even saying goodbye to their friends and relations.

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Their departure, however, became known to some and did not fail to impress them



Umar^{ra}, subsequently the Second Khalifa of Islam, was still a disbeliever, a bitter enemy and persecutor of Muslims. By sheer chance, he met some members of this party



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When 'Umar^{ra} saw household effects packed up and loaded on animals, ... "Are you going?" he asked



"Yes, God is our witness," replied Ummi 'Abdullah^{ra}.



"We go to another land, because you treat us most cruelly here. We will not return now until Allah pleases to make it easy for us.



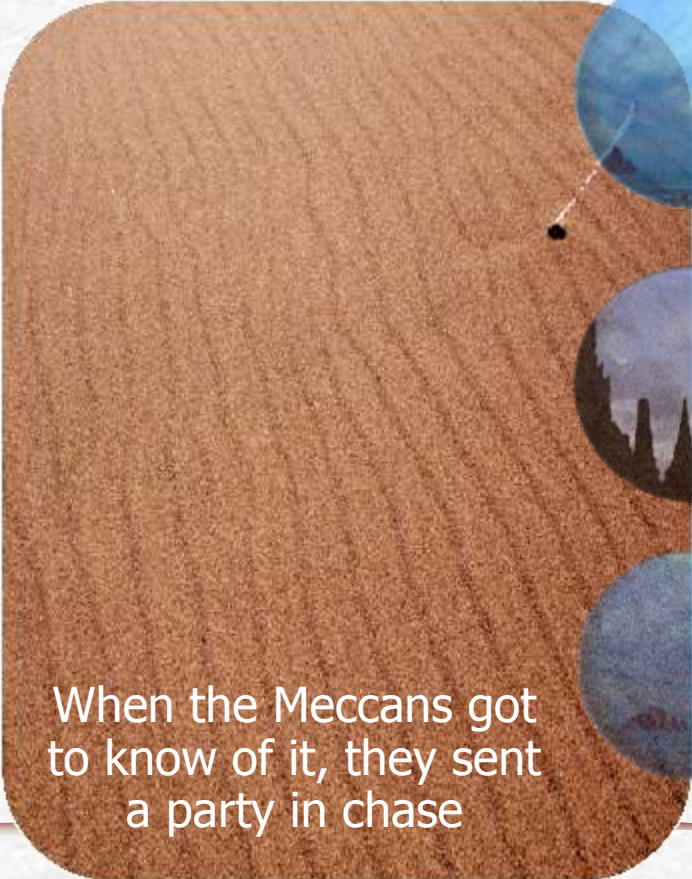
Umar^{ra} was impressed and said, "God be with you."



There was emotion in his voice. This silent scene had upset him

EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

Meccans chase Muslims



Not being able to overtake them, they decided to send a delegation to Abyssinia to excite the king against the refugees and to persuade him to hand them over again to Meccans

But the king .. refused to hand over the Muslim refugees to their persecutors

The delegation returned disappointed

When the Meccans got to know of it, they sent a party in chase

Muslims in Mecca

A devoted Muslim



Uthman bin Maz'un^{ra}, son of a leading Meccan chief. 'Uthman^{ra} received protection from a friend of his father, Walid bin Mughira, and began to live in peace



But he saw that other Muslims continued to suffer brutal persecution. It made him very unhappy.



He went to Walid and renounced his protection



He felt he should not have such protection while other Muslims continued to suffer

Muslims in Mecca

A devoted Muslim

One day, Labid, poet-laureate of Arabia, sat among the chiefs of Mecca, reciting his verse. He read a line which meant that all graces must ultimately come to an end. 'Uthman^{ra} boldly contradicted him and said, "The graces of Paradise will be everlasting."

Labid, not used to such contradictions, lost his temper and said, "Quraish, your guests were not insulted like this before. Whence has this fashion begun?"

To appease Labid, a man from among the audience rose and said, "Go on and take no notice of this fool".

Muslims in Mecca

A devoted Muslim



'Uthman^{ra} insisted that he had said nothing foolish.



This exasperated the Quraishite, who sprang upon 'Uthman^{ra} and gave him a sharp blow, knocking out an eye.




Walid was present at the scene. He was a close friend of 'Uthman's^{ra} father.




He could not endure such treatment of his deceased friend's son.

Muslims in Mecca

A devoted Muslim



Half in anger, half in anguish he turned to 'Uthman^{ra}, and said, "Son of my friend, you would have saved your eye, had you not renounced my protection. You have to thank yourself for it."



But 'Uthman^{ra} was no longer under his formal protection and Arab custom now forbade him to take sides. So he could do nothing.

'Uthman^{ra} replied, "**I have longed for this. I lament not over the loss of one eye, because the other waits for the same fate. Remember, while the Prophet^{sa} suffers, we want no peace**"