

# The story of the birth of Muhammad



The night was hot and a warm breeze blew gently across the silent desert. In the dry and dusty city of Mecca, a bright light suddenly appeared and the cry of a newborn baby rang out in the still darkness.

The birth of such a beautiful baby boy is always a joyful time but for the infant's mother, Aminah, this was also a time of sadness, because the baby's father had died before he could see his child. Aminah called the baby Muhammad, meaning the Praised One, and she loved him from the moment she saw him.

Now, it was the custom at that time for children to be sent to a desert village to grow up. Here they would learn to speak Arabic and live a healthy life away from the dusty city. But Aminah was worried – who would take her baby with no father to pay for his food?

Amongst the nurses who gathered to take a child was one named Halimah. She was not a rich woman, but she was a kind one, and she decided to take Muhammad home with her. Halimah settled the baby on her old donkey, and prepared for a slow ride home. Immediately, the beast trotted on with new

energy, overtaking the other women who looked on in amazement.

As they travelled on, Halimah was worried. Back home, her sheep and goats were thin and gave very little milk. No crops grew in the dry earth. Would she be able to feed Muhammed so that he grew up strong and healthy?

But Halimah had no need to worry, for from that moment her fortunes changed. Soon the sheep and goats began to produce more milk than the family could drink, and her bare patch of ground grew green with lush grass and vegetables. Halimah began to suspect that this child was no ordinary boy, for surely he had brought good luck their way.

The years passed and Muhammad grew to be a loving and well-mannered child. Everyone who met him marvelled at his gentle nature and envied Halimah her beautiful stepson. Soon it was time for him to return to his mother, who was overjoyed to see him. The two lived happily together until one day Aminah decided to take Muhammad to visit her family in another city.

As they set off on the long journey, Muhammad was excited at travelling so far, but Aminah was pale and quiet. The boy began to worry about his beloved mother who grew weaker and weaker until sadly she died. At just six years old, poor Muhammad became an orphan.

Now Muhammad went to live with his grandfather, but he too died. Muhammad had an uncle, Abu Talib, who was a trader. He travelled the desert sands with camels to take goods such as spices to faraway cities. The young Muhammad was very fond of his uncle and did not want to be parted from him, and so the eight year old boy was taken along too. Soon Muhammad began to love these new and exciting times and to think that this way of life was the one for him.

