

# Trade Journey of Muhammad (PBUH) Historical Study before Prophet Hood

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**Abstract:** Trade is that inevitable need without which, the system of human society cannot run. Allah, the Almighty has made the trade a source of meeting human needs; Our Holy Prophet (PBUH) adopted trade as a profession before his prophet hood. How he used to transact in it and how he used to settle the business affairs; The Holy Prophet (PBUH) adopted such principals which; if one acts upon, he can become a good trader for himself and best for the society. In the following Article, we will discuss the historical study of the trade Journeys that where embarked by the Holy Prophet prior to the Prophet Hood.

**Keywords:** Business affairs, Holy Prophet, trade Journeys and historical study

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## Introduction

The economy in the Arabian Peninsula was largely dependent on trade. Due to its abundance of deserts and mountains, agriculture was scarce. That is why trade was considered a great profession. The Arabs participated in trade according to their ability. The famous and holy city of Hijaz, Mecca was also considered as a great trading center and there were famous bazaars around it in which people from all over Arabia used to come for trade. And the people here used to travel to different areas in different seasons, sow their goods in other countries and buy their necessities from there. The Quraysh family of the Prophet was also involved in trade. The Quraysh used to travel from Mecca to Syria and Persia in summer and to Yemen and Abyssinia in winter. The people of Quraysh had great respect for the Bait-ul-Allah. Which Allah Almighty has described in Surah Quraysh in this way.

Exploiting the Quraysh to constrain them during the winter and summer journey, so let them worship the Lord of this House who has fed them with food (1). Encouraging the Quraysh made them accustomed to

the (commercial) journey of winter and summer. So let them worship the Lord of the House (of the Ka'bah) who gave them food (ie provision) in hunger (ie, conditions of poverty) and from (fear of) the enemies.

### **Geographical boundaries of Mecca**

The land of Mecca is a barren valley in the middle of the Holy Hijaz. Medina in the north, Yemen in the south, Najd in the east and the Red Sea in the west. There is very little mention of agriculture in it as Allah Almighty says I will not be affected by my atomic in an unfolded in your house, the forbidden of our Lord, to reside the prayer (2). Our Lord! Indeed, I (Abraham) have settled his children (Ishmael) (Ishmael) near the third sacred house in the dry valley of (Mecca). Our Lord! So that they may keep up prayer. So make the hearts of the people so that they may be inclined towards them with passion and love. And provide them with fruits of every kind, so that they may give thanks.

### **Commercial sources**

Due to the arid nature of the mainland of Mecca, these people had made trade their routine. And in Makkah there was trade from all sides. Trade caravans from the surrounding tribes and countries used to come to Mecca to sell goods and buy goods, especially during the Hajj season when distant traders would come to Mecca to sell their goods. So Ismail ibn Ali al-Qali writes. The Quraish were merchants, and their trade was no more than a place, but the non-Arabs would give them goods and they would buy them from them, then they would sell them among themselves and sell them to the Arabs around them (3).

The Quraysh were Meccan merchants and their trade (before Hashim bin Abdul Manaf) did not take place outside of Mecca but they used to sow seeds for the Arabs around them. Hashim bin Abdul Manaf, the great-grandfather of the Prophet, first started his trade journey outside Makkah because before that the trade caravans of Quraysh Makkah were not safe from robbers, bandits and thieves. That's why they didn't travel. Hashim ibn Abd al-Manaf and his brothers made trade agreements with the Arab tribes of Persia and the Abyssinians, which saved the Quraysh caravans from Mecca (4). Hashim bin Abdul Manaf was the first to start a trade trip to Syria in the summer and to Yemen in the winter. And the chiefs of the Arab tribes, the kings of Arabia, Rome, Syria, Yemen, and Abyssinia, accompanied him on their trade voyage, so that their caravans may set out on a trade voyage in complete peace and order (5).

There were ten commercial markets in Arabia in which they all participated and their lives and property were safe. Allama Hamdani has mentioned the number of commercial markets in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula as twelve and also mentioned the names of these markets. Aswaq al-Arab al-Qadima waqd zikrnaha. Aden, Mecca, Jund, Najran, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him (6). The ancient Arab bazaars we have mentioned are Aden, Mecca, Al-Jund, Najran, Dhi Al-Majaz, Okaz, Badr, Majna, Mina, Hajar, Al-Yamamah and Hajar Al-Bahrain. Similarly, Ibn Habib in his book Al-Muhabbar has mentioned the number of Arab trade markets as twelve, which shows the difference in the names of Arab trade markets.

### **Merchandise trade of Mecca**

Among the commodities traded by the people of Makkah were animal skins, leather cloth, silver, manqa, kashmish, gum, wheat, Yemeni sheets, adani cloth, wild equipment, weapons, ironware, etc. Dr. Jawad Ali writes about the trade goods of Quraysh Mecca in "Al-Mufsal Fi Tarikh Al-Arab Qabl Al-Islam" Adam,

raisins, gum, Yemeni wheat and cold, metallic clothing, weapons, iron articles and other metals, and they are among the main commodities from which the Quraish trade consists.

### **Cash and weight scale among the people of Makkah**

Among the scales used by the people of Makkah in their trade and transactions were dirhams, dinars, riyals, oqiyah and wasq. The dirham was a Persian scale made of silver. The dinar was a Roman scale made of gold and both were non-Arabic scales but were used in Arabia. One pound was twelve ounces of silver and one ounce was forty dirhams. The people of Makkah used these scales for their trade before Islam. Islam also upheld these standards.

The Quraysh had weights in the pre-Islamic era, so Islam entered and became reliant on what it was upon. The Quraysh weighed silver at a weight you named as a dirham, and weighed gold at a weight you named as a dinar, so all ten of the weights of the dirhams were seven times the weights of the dinars, and they had the weight of one dirham and the weight of them was six dinars. Forty dirhams, and the weight of twenty dirhams was raised, and they had the nuclei, which weighed five dirhams, so they traded with dust on these weights.

The Quraysh had some weight in Jahiliyyah and when Islam came they remained the same. The Quraysh weighed silver with dirhams and weighed gold with dinars. Every ten dirhams weighed equal to dinars. And he weighed in with the "poetry". One ounce, which was one-sixtieth of a dirham, weighed forty dirhams, and one nash weighed twenty dirhams. The scales of one weight, which was equal to five dirhams, were traded with these weights. When the time came, he maintained it.

### **Before there was a prophet, a famous Meccan merchant**

Many people used to trade in Makkah before his prophethood. There were some of them who did business with the Prophet. The following gentlemen were more famous among them. (1) Abu Bakr Siddiq, Abbasah bin Abdul Muttalib (3) Nawfal bin Harith bin Abdul Muttalib (4) Abu Talib (5) Abu Sufyan (6) Hakim bin Hazzam (7) Al-Sa'ib bin Al-Sa'ib (8).

#### **Abu Bakr Siddiq**

Abu Bakr Siddiq was one of the famous merchants of Makkah. He hated the business of interest. They did not mix and they did not oppress anyone in business. He always traded honestly. And traveled to different parts of the Arabian Peninsula for trade. So Ibn Sa'd writes about him. Abu Bakr was famous for traveling to different parts of Syria. Abu Bakr also went on a business trip with him when he was twenty years old and Abu Bakr was eighteen years old (7).

#### **Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib**

His uncle Abbas was also a famous merchant. He had a vineyard in Katif and often went to Yemen for trade. Abbas was counted among the wealthy people of Banu Hashim, says Afif Al-Kandi. Al-Abbas was a friend of mine and he used to go to Yemen to buy perfume and sell it during the seasons (8).

**Nawfal bin Al-Harith:**

Nawfal bin Al-Harith was his cousin. He was in the arms business and used to buy and sell spears in it. When he came as a prisoner in the battle of Badr, he demanded ransom from him (9).

**Abu Talib Abdul Manaf Bin Abdul Muttalib:**

He had traveled to Syria with Abu Talib as a boy. Although this was not his business trip, Abu Talib went for business. And on this trip I met Bahira Rahib (10).

**Hakim bin Hazzam**

Hakim bin Hazzam was the nephew of Hazrat Khadijah. He was rich and wealthy. The people of Makkah used to hand over their goods to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and when they returned from trade they would distribute the profits among them. You also traded with the Messenger of Allaah.

**Part of the Prophet's trade in Makkah**

By the time the Prophet was born, Mecca had become a center of trade. In fact, his mother Majida died on a business trip (11). That is why his nature also became inclined towards trade and started trading. According to a tradition, he made his first business trip at the age of nine. (12). According to another narration, at the age of twelve, his uncle made the first business trip to Syria with Talib. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to graze goats for some time after he reached puberty, but then he took up his family business and took full part in it. He initially traded in and around Makkah and then went out of Makkah for trade and used to buy and sell in it. Othman Amr bin Al-Jahiz is a message that praises the merchants and slanders the work of Sultan Mei Lakha. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) traded for some time. He bought and sold merchandise (13).

According to Jawad Ali (14), The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to engage in trade for a living, so he used to trade sometimes alone and sometimes with the help of others. He used to buy and sell in the markets of Hijaz in Makkah and in the markets of Yemen. Like the bazaar of Habasha which was in the area of Yemen at a distance of 6 nights from Mecca. This bazaar was open for the first three days of the month of Rajab.

**The Prophet's Commercial Travels**

During his stay in Makkah, before the Prophet Hood, he traveled extensively in different countries. Most of them traveled to Syria, Yemen, the Holy Hijaz and the vicinity of Mecca to buy and sell Hazrat Khadija's merchandise. While some journeys were made in which Hazrat Khadija and other people used to have wealth. His business journeys were a mixture of tenancy, speculation, and partnership.

**The holy Prophet first business trip**

The first of the Prophet's business trips was to Syria at the age of twelve with his uncle Abu Talib. During this journey, he met a monk named Bahira at a place in Syria called Basra. Who advised his uncle Abu

Talib that this child could be harmed by the evil of the jealous Jews in Syria. So Abu Talib sent him back to Mecca (15). During this journey he saw Wadi Al-Qura, Madinah, Basri and many other areas in which agriculture and greenery were examples of lush greenery and beauty which were seldom found in the desert of Batha valley and this was the first trip of the region during his time.

### **Second trade trip to Syria**

A narration of Ibn Manda about the second journey has been narrated by Ahl-e-Sir. That the Prophet (peace be upon him) traveled to Syria with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq at the age of twenty. Abu Bakr Siddiq was eighteen years old at that time. But there is a saying in this narration that if this narration is true then this journey is in addition to Khadija's trade. Because there is no mention of Hazrat Khadija's journey at the age of twenty in connection with trade. Rather, when he went to Syria with Hazrat Khadija's goods and trade. At that time Mubarak was 25 years old. Imam al-Qastalani writes about this journey in Al-Mawahib Al-Duniya Bal Mana Al-Muhammadiya

Ibn 'Abbas says that Abu Bakr al-Siddiq became the companion of the Holy Prophet when he was eighteen years old and he was twenty years old. Camped under a tree. Abu Bakr went to a monk named Bahiri. He asked them, "Which man is camping under the shade of a tree?" He replied: Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abdul Muttalib. He said: By Allah, this is a prophet. No one camped under this tree after Jesus except Muhammad. This was confirmed in the heart of Hazrat Abu Bakr. When the Holy Prophet was sent, he followed him (16). Some people think that this is the journey that you took with your uncle Abu Talib towards Syria (17). But this does not seem to be true because at that time he was twelve years old while he is twenty years old in this journey. While in Al-Asaba, Hafiz Ibn Hajar has said about this journey: If this story is true, then it is another journey after the journey of Abi Talib (18).

### **The third journey**

Hazrat Khadijah bint Khuwail was an honorable and wealthy woman. When Khadijah came to know of the truthfulness, honesty and high morals of the Messenger of Allah, she sent a message to him that you should take his goods to Syria for trade and they would pay him more than other traders. And his slave Maysara will be with him in this journey. Therefore, the Prophet accepted this offer. And they took their property and went to Syria, and their slave was with you until you reached Syria (19). From this narration it is known that he went to Syria with the property of Hazrat Khadija. Most of the biographers have narrated this narration; however the words may be different. In the narration which mentions the first journey of Hazrat Khadija's wealth towards the Yemeni bazaar "Souq Habasha", it is narrated by Imam Abdul Razzaq Al-Sanaani in his book "Musnaf Abdul Razzaq" from Imam Zuhri. When he was young and he did not have any wealth, Hazrat Khadijah bint Khuwail asked him to hire her for trade in the market of Tahama "Suq Habasha" and he also took a man from Quraysh with him.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said while talking about this incident: I could not find any better employer than Khadija. When my companion and I would come back to her, she would prepare food for us. Imam Tabari has narrated a narration regarding this journey (20). It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Shahab Zuhri that Hazrat Khadijah asked the Messenger of Allah and another man from Quraysh to trade in the market of Tahama towards Suq Habasha (32). But this narration is not correct as

the narrations of the country of Syria about this journey are more authentic, reliable and strong than this one. So if this journey does not mean the first voyage of Hazrat Khadija, but it is another voyage, then perhaps the contradiction in it may end because you have made a few voyages to Yemen from Hazrat Khadija's merchandise.

### **The Holy prophet fourth journey**

I saw the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in (Suq Habasha). This happened when Hazrat Khadija had sent her goods to Souq Habasha. His slave Maysara was also with him on this journey so they both went there and they bought cloth made of Jund Maqam and traded some more then returned to Mecca. They made huge profits, the market lasted for eight days (21).

### **The fifth journey**

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, traveled to "Jursh", a place of trade and commerce of Hazrat Khadija. It is narrated from Hazrat Jabir (AS) that Hazrat Khadija (AS) asked the Messenger of Allah (SAW) to hire her in exchange for two young camels at Jursh a place in Yemen (22).

The biography is in Al-Halabiyyah, The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made two trips from Hazrat Khadija's property in exchange for two camels. On the first voyage he sent him with his slave Maysar to Suq Habasha (Yemen). And on the second journey he sent you to Syria with his slave Maysar. While in Sira al-Halabi there is another place.

### **While in Sira al-Halabi there is another place**

Hazrat Khadija had earlier sent him to Souq Habasha due to his short journey and short duration. Then he was sent to Syria with Maysar or one of the reasons was that Hazrat Khadijah may have thought that Abu Talib would not agree to his (more distant) journey to Syria and would agree to this (near journey). So consider (65). According to Nur al-Din al-Halabi, in view of the aforesaid tradition of Mustadarak Hakim, Hazrat Khadija's wealth makes the third journey towards Syria. He would write about it. From the above discussion it is concluded that the Prophet (peace be upon him) made three trips for trade with Hazrat Khadija's wealth. And perhaps the Abyssinians also mean Jursh. Otherwise, it is necessary for him to make five journeys for them, four to Yemen and one to Syria.

### **The commercial principles of the Prophet**

Before Prophethood, he introduced many important principles of trade. He always adhered to these principles. These principles include honesty, non-violence, avoidance of fraud, and modesty in business dealings.

#### **1- Speaking the truth**

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) grew up with the honor of being the most generous, the most knowledgeable, the most humble, the most tolerant, the most truthful, and the most trustworthy in his nation. That is why his people used to call him honest and trustworthy. Therefore, in view of this fame, Hazrat Khadija chose him for trading her wealth. Allama Halabi writes, Then Hazrat Khadija sent a message to you that I want to send you my goods with trade. Because I have heard your truth

about honesty and good manners and I will reward you twice as much as the other people of your nation (23).

## **2- Do not be cruel or excessive**

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not oppress anyone in his daily life, just as he did in business. He paid, so no one complained about his business dealings.

## **3- Avoiding fraud**

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: Bending the scales in weighing. In the business principles of the Holy Prophet, do not reduce the weight but give more. He was known to urge people to give more weight by bending the scales and he himself followed it (28). Because his trade was very clear and a shining example of features, if there was any defect, he would also state it so that the buyer could decide on the defect of the goods. You have declared "treason" meaning deception.

## **Avoiding interest**

The life of Rasoolullah was unparalleled. Even before receiving prophecy, they used to abstain from usury. It has never happened in my life. In which there is doubt of usury (usury). The people of Makkah testified that he did not trade.

## **Demonstrating modesty**

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to show more modesty in business than he used to have in public life. After marrying Hazrat Khadija, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) gave up his long trade journey and did not go to the nearby bazaars. And he would entrust his goods to other merchants and he would take whatever profit he could get according to the agreement. As Abu Sufyan carried his goods to Syria and Yemen. And there was a good profit in the trade of this commodity.

## **Conclusion**

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) traveled a total of five times in different parts of his life before receiving the Prophethood, and almost all of them were for trade and business purposes, so his first journey was with his uncle Abu Talib when he was 12 years old. The country was headed for Syria. He also made his third trip to Syria in which he was 25 years old and he took Hazrat Khadija's goods with him. He had also made the fourth and fifth voyage with Hazrat Khadija's merchandise but these voyages were towards Yemen Prior to the revelation, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) always adhered to the principles of truthfulness, non-violence, avoidance of fraud, abstinence from usury and modesty.

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