



Islam a Religion of Peace

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

19.11.24



A long time ago, about 1,500 years ago, a boy was born in a place called Makkah in the country we now know as Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. His was a poor family and his parents were ill. They both died by the time the boy was just six years old. The boy was then brought up by his grandfather and later his uncle. They were good to the boy and loved him and helped him to start work as a shepherd.

Later, as he grew into a young man, he began to travel with his uncle. They took long journeys on camels into distant lands, trading goods and meeting people of different tribes. This was an exciting time for the young man, especially when, as he gained experience, he was able to lead the trading journeys himself.

Later still, when he was a married man, he began to think deeply about his life and what had happened to him. He would go to a lonely cave and wonder how he, once a poor boy with no parents, had become so rich and successful. Yet he did not feel entirely happy and, as he sat in the cave, he suddenly knew why.

The people of Makkah, his home, did not help the poor, they did not look after each other, and they did not feed the hungry or care for the sick. It seemed to him that all they wanted was money and, when they got it, all they wanted was more money! But the more money they had, the less happy they seemed to be.





Then, one day, an extraordinary thing happened. As he sat in the cave thinking these thoughts, an angel appeared before him. This was frightening at first, as you can imagine - it's not the sort of thing that happens every day! The angel said his name was Gabriel and he had a special message - a message from the one true God who the people knew as Allah. So, overcoming his fear, the man in the cave listened to what the angel had to say. Allah wanted all the people to worship only him, the angel said, and they should do this by prayer and saying thank you for all they had, and by helping the poor, the sick, and the needy. Allah wanted everyone to try hard to be good and lead honourable lives.

As he heard the angel's words, the man in the cave knew that they were true words - they were just the kind of things he had been thinking about all these years.

The man who had once been a poor boy, then a shepherd, then a merchant, then a thinker, now became a great leader, a prophet - that is, one who speaks God's words. He took the angel's message to the people, a message of faith and belief in one true God, a message of always trying to do your best and caring for the people around you.

This man became so famous that the place where he was born, now named Mecca, has become a place of pilgrimage for people from all over the world and his name is famous too.

Does anyone know the name of the man I am describing?



Islam, the Muslim faith, is now one of the world's great religions and like the other major faiths, its main beliefs are about peace and justice, about looking after each other and always seeking to do good.

Yes, his name is Muhammad! When Muslims, followers of his faith say his name they always add 'peace be upon him' after they speak it, as a mark of respect for a very special prophet and his very special message. And when they write it, they do the same thing by adding (PBUH) after his name.





# Time for reflection

Dear God,  
Thank you for the prophet Muhammad – peace be upon him,  
and all that he taught about peace and looking after each other.

We thank you for all the good things that Muslim believers have done through the centuries as they have tried to put the prophet's words into action.

Help us to do what we can for others, living in peace with each other.

**Amen.**

