

The Prophet Muhammad's Amazing Night Journey
[Found in the Hadith, Book of Faith (Kitab al-Iman), Verse 309]

1

One night, the Prophet Muhammad lay down in his bed to go to sleep. Things had been difficult. First, his uncle had died. Then, his wife had died.

On top of that, some of the people in the city were constantly being mean to Muhammad and his followers. Muhammad believed that there was only one God, Allah. But many other people in the city believed that there were many gods. They didn't like Muhammad's message, and they tried to make his life miserable. One day, someone threw dirt at Muhammad. It covered his clothes and face, and he looked awful. The dirt didn't really hurt Muhammad; they just threw it to be disrespectful.

Sometimes, when Muhammad was trying to teach the people about Allah, they whistled and clapped their hands, so no one could hear what he was saying. One time, they even threw stones at the Prophet.

2

On this particular night, when Muhammad went to bed, he tried to focus on Allah's love and mercy. He believed that Allah had a plan and that Allah would always protect him.

Allah heard Muhammad's prayers and knew how devoted Muhammad was, so Allah decided it was time to show Muhammad the infinite magnificence of the divine.

First, Muhammad was given an animal to ride. The animal's name was Buraq. It was unlike any animal Muhammad had ever seen before, so it was difficult to describe. Buraq was sort of like a donkey or a horse, but his coat was whiter than the whitest snow and glistened in the dark night. Many people say Buraq had wings on his back, the face of a human. His eyes were filled with wisdom and love, and he truly was the most amazing animal Muhammad had ever seen.

3

Muhammad got on Buraq's back, and Buraq carried him away to a temple. Muhammad prayed in the Temple, and when he came out, an angel of the Lord appeared to him. The angel's name was Gabriel. You may have heard of this angel before because it's the same angel that appeared to Mary and told her she was pregnant with the baby Jesus.

When Gabriel appeared to Muhammad, he showed Muhammad two vessels. One vessel contained wine, and the other vessel contained milk. The angel Gabriel asked Muhammad to choose one of the vessels.

Which vessel do you think Muhammad will choose?

4

Muhammad chose the vessel with milk. Then, Gabriel took Muhammad to heaven. At the gate of heaven, Gabriel was asked, "Who are you?"

Gabriel answered, "I am Gabriel."

Then he was asked, "Who is with you?"

And Gabriel replied, "Muhammad."

Then he was asked, "Has Muhammad been sent for?"

And Gabriel replied, “Indeed, he has been sent for.”

And the doors of heaven were opened for them.

They immediately saw Adam, the first person ever created by God.

Adam welcomed Gabriel and Muhammad and said a prayer wishing them well.

Then, Gabriel and Muhammad ascended to the second heaven.

5

When the door to the second heaven was opened for them, Gabriel and Muhammad saw Jesus and his cousin John. When they saw Gabriel and Muhammad, the Jesus and John welcomed them and said a prayer to wish them well.

Then, Gabriel and Muhammad ascended to the third heaven. This time, they saw Joseph, the son of Jacob. You might remember Joseph because he had a lot of dreams that made his brothers mad. They sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt, but eventually Joseph became a great leader and saved everyone from a horrible seven-year famine.

Joseph also said a prayer wishing Gabriel and Muhammad well.

Then, they ascended to the fourth heaven.

This time, they saw Enoch. Enoch was the great-grandfather of Noah.

Do you remember who Noah was?

6

When they ascended to the fifth heaven and the door was opened for them, they saw Aaron, the brother of Moses.

You guessed it. Aaron welcomed them and said a prayer wishing them well.

Then, they ascended to the sixth heaven!!

This time, they met Moses.

But Muhammad’s journey wasn’t quite finished because there was a seventh heaven, too!

When the door to that heaven was opened, Muhammad saw Abraham, the great prophet who was told that he would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky.

The seventh heaven was more splendid than Muhammad could have imagined. For a brief moment, Muhammad saw the sacred house of Allah. Each day, 70,000 angels would visit this most sacred mosque and pray.

There was also a huge and amazing tree in the seventh heaven. Its leaves were as big as elephant ears, and its fruit was as big as a huge vase.

7

The splendid scene disappeared almost as quickly as it had appeared. And that’s when Allah revealed to Muhammad that his followers should pray 50 times a day.

Muhammad went back down to see Moses about that.

Moses said, “Ask Allah to make a reduction. Praying 50 times a day is way too much. The people will never be able to do it!”

So Muhammad went back to Allah and requested a reduction.

This time, Allah revealed to Muhammad that his followers should pray 45 times a day.

When Muhammad went back to Moses, Moses once again said, “Ask Allah to make a reduction. Praying 45 times a day is way too much. The people will never be able to do it!”

So Muhammad went back to Allah and requested a reduction.

8

This went on and on. Allah would reveal a number to Muhammad. Muhammad would ask Moses about it. Moses would tell Muhammad to ask for a reduction. And Muhammad would go back to Allah.

Finally, Allah said that Muhammad and his followers should pray five times a day.

When Muhammad told Moses about that, Moses said, “Ask Allah to make a reduction. Praying five times a day is way too much. The people will never be able to do it!”

But this time, Muhammad said, “Nope. That’s it. Five it is.”

And to this day, Muslims still pray five times a day, and it’s all because of Muhammad’s amazing night journey.