

“We have sent you as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner for the whole of mankind, but most people have no knowledge. They ask, ‘When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful?’ Say, ‘A Day has already been appointed for you which you can neither delay nor advance by a single moment.’”

*Saba'*, 34:28-30

## *Introduction*

**I**n ancient times, when the Prophets Ibrahim عليه السلام (Abraham) and Isma'il عليه السلام (Ishmael) were building the Kabah in Makkah, they prayed for a prophet among their descendants.



population of Makkah. This gave him a very high and honourable position.

Apart from this, Hashim organized the trade of Makkah in a big way. He organized two trade caravans, one from Makkah to Syria and another from Makkah to Yemen. These trips were planned very ably by Hashim, one during the summers and the other during the winters.

Under his leadership the Makkans prospered greatly and the economy of the city made great progress.

During the time when Hashim, the great grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, was the Chief of Makkah and the custodian of the Kabah, Makkan trade flourished in a big way.

Hashim planned two great caravans, one

from Makkah to Yemen and the other from Makkah to Syria. One travelled during the summers and the other during the winters. This greatly improved Makkan prosperity. The trade caravans which were travelling from Makkah to Syria and Najd, were connected to the Red Sea from where they were connected to the major trade route of the rest of the world, known as the Silk Route.

The Silk Route or the Silk Road, was a historical network interlinking several trade routes across Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe.

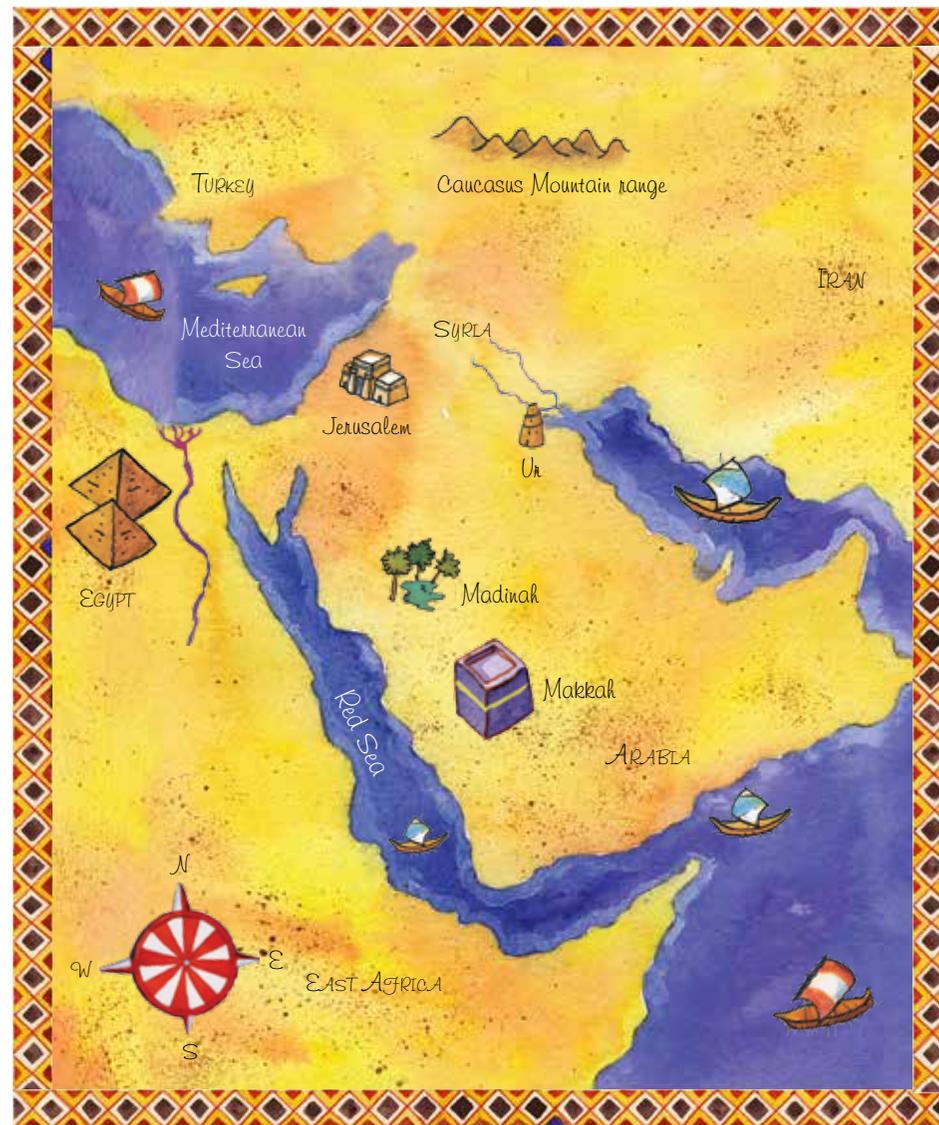
The Silk Route, which was started by the Chinese more than 2000 years ago, extended from the Red Sea to East Africa, India,



China and Southeast Asia. It was over 6500 kilometers (4000 miles) long and is considered to be a major factor in development of the great civilizations of China, India, Egypt, Iran and Arabia.

Some of the goods traded in those trade caravans were silk, fabrics, musk, perfumes, spices, medicines, jewels, glassware, ivory, textiles, gold, silver, precious stones, etc.

Due to the caravan going from Makkah to Yemen and Syria and from there to other parts of the world, Makkan trade was given a boost and Makkah became the trade centre for the whole of Arabia. Caravans started coming from many countries and goods were exported and imported in big convoys. This gave rise to the

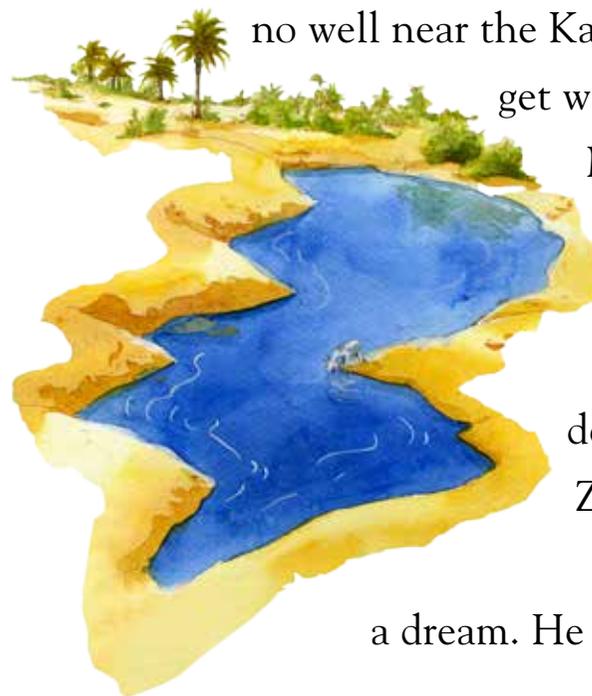


Al-Muttalib passed away, the Makkans gave Abd al-Muttalib the offices of the *siqayah* and the *rifadah* which his father Hashim had held before his death.

Abd al-Muttalib was a wise man with great insight, resolution and the will to do good works. His main duty was to arrange fresh water for the pilgrims, since the well of Zamzam was no longer functioning. Due to the carelessness of certain people of Jurhum tribe some years ago, the Zamzam well had been filled with sand and mud and was thus so totally ruined that it disappeared. Over the years people did not even know the exact location of the well. However, the Makkans had heard about Zamzam, and the story of the Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام and his

son Ismail عليه السلام were fresh in their memory. They always desired and hoped that one day the Zamzam well could be restored.

Since Abd al-Muttalib was in charge of arranging fresh water for the pilgrims, he found it difficult to discharge his duties, as there was



no well near the Kabah. He had to get water from outside Makkah and store it in a reservoir near the Kabah.

For this reason, his desire to restore the Zamzam well grew.

One day he had a dream. He saw that someone



“Charity does not decrease one’s wealth.  
Nor does humility lower one’s prestige. If  
one acts humbly for the sake of God, then  
God will certainly raise one’s rank.”

*Muslim*

## *The Birth of the Prophet*



**A**bd al-Muttalib had ten sons, out of which  
six are well known. They were Al-Abbas,  
Hamzah, Abu Talib, Abu Lahab, Abdullah and  
Al-Harith.