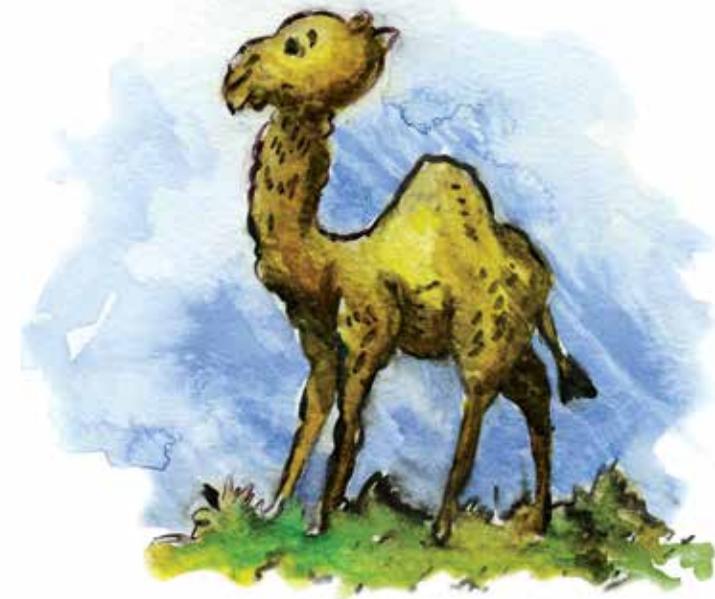


Abu Bakr was born in 573 C.E., in the city of Makkah. His parents were Uthman bin Abu Qahafah and Ummul Khair. This noble and wealthy family belonged to the tribe of Quraysh, the same tribe as that of Muhammad(Pbuh).

At birth he was named Abdul Kabah (servant of Kabah), and when he accepted Islam, he was named ‘Abdullah (servant of Allah). However, he became known as Abu Bakr, the father of the camel, as he loved camels and knew a lot about them.

Abu Bakr was three years younger than the Prophet Muhammad(Pbuh) and, as they were very much alike, he became his childhood friend. Abu Bakr remained his closest Companion and the Prophet once said, ‘No one has been a better companion to me than Abu Bakr.’



When Prophet Muhammad(Pbuh) was twelve years old, he had gone to Syria with his uncle, Abu Talib, with a trading caravan. During that trip, Bahira (a monk) on seeing Muhammad(Pbuh) predicted that one day he would be a prophet. Abu Bakr was also with the caravan. From that day onwards, Abu Bakr was convinced that this prophecy would come true.

Abu Bakr was known for his good character. He was honest and truthful; hardworking and fair in his dealings. He was extremely kind and helped the poor and the sick. He spoke eloquently and enjoyed composing poetry. He was intelligent and had an excellent memory.

As a merchant he traveled a lot and the experiences he had on his journeys broadened his general knowledge and outlook on life.

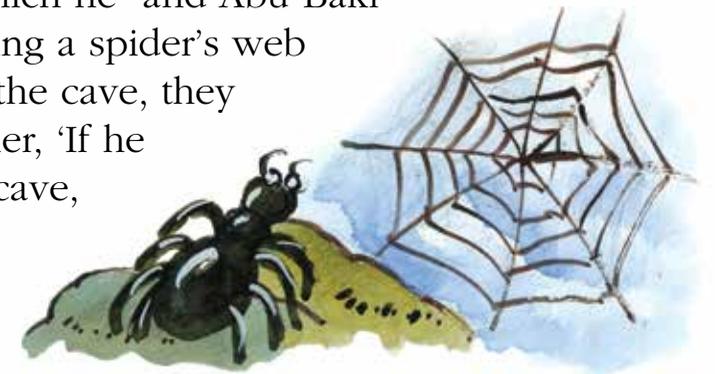




When the persecution in 622 C.E. became intolerable, the Muslims started migrating in batches to Yathrib (Madinah).

Allah revealed to the Prophet Mohammad(Pbuh) that the Quraish were plotting to kill him. One night under the cover of darkness, he left Makkah accompanied by Abu Bakr and a guide. They took an indirect and longer route because they knew the Makkans would be searching for them along the direct route to Madinah. They stayed in the Cave of Thawr for three days and nights. Asma, Abu Bakr's daughter, brought them food in the dead of night.

When the Quraish learned of this, they were very upset and offered a reward of one hundred camels to whosoever brought the Prophet back to Makkah. One search party followed close on the heels of the Prophet, but when they reached the mountain, they lost trace of him. They then climbed the mountain, and passed by the cave in which he and Abu Bakr were hiding. Noting a spider's web on the mouth of the cave, they said to one another, 'If he had entered this cave, the spider's web would not have remained intact.'





When Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) and Abu Bakr reached Quba, on the outskirts of Madinah, they built a masjid there. When they reached Madinah, they received a very warm and grand welcome. The first thing the Prophet wanted to do was to build a masjid there as well. Abu Bakr paid for the land where it was to be built. Both of them participated in the construction of this masjid, now known as Masjid un Nabawi.

To help settle the newcomers, Prophet Muhammad(Pbuh) paired each one of them with a person from Madinah, thus establishing a 'brotherhood'.

Prophet Muhammad(Pbuh) consulted Abu Bakr in all important matters and his advice was often accepted. The Prophet used to say that Abu Bakr was the best counselor. During meetings Abu Bakr often sat on the right side of the Prophet.

After being in Madinah for some time, Abu Bakr's daughter Aishah was married to Prophet Muhammad(Pbuh), which brought Abu Bakr and the Prophet even closer.

