

Seerat Ibn Hisham Review Summary for Final Exam

Introduction to the Book

- The Pre-Islamic arabs used to record their history by means of narration. There were narratives about the history of the Ka'bah and the emergence of the well of Zamzam.
- Therefore, Islam appeared at a time when people were accustomed to report all these stories and events.
- During the time of the Prophet, the Quran was being written, but hadith and information on important events was transmitted by word of mouth.
- Approximately 100 years after the Hijra, during the rule of the fifth Khalifa, Umar ibn Abdel Aziz, hadith began to be written.
 - Umar ibn Abdel Aziz prayed istikhara for 40 days before asking people with knowledge of hadith to write them down in book form
 - Afterwards, Muslims wrote whatever they knew of the Prophet's hadith
- Around the same time (100 AH), historians began to write history books, including books about the life of the Prophet.
- Most of the earliest works from the first Prophetic biographers were lost, with the exception of some parts that were scattered throughout other historical books.
- After them came another generation of biographers; one of the most famous ones was Muhammad Ibn Ishaq (who died in 152 AH).
 - It was said that Ibn Ishaq visited Al-Mansur (a leader at the time). Al-Mansur ordered Ibn Ishaq to write a book for him on the creation of God since the time of Adam to his day. Ibn Ishaq did as he was told, but when he came back to Al Mansur, he told him it was too long, so summarize it. So he did, and the book was shelved in the treasury of the Commander of the Believers.
- 50 years after Ibn Ishaq had written his book, Ibn Hisham rewrote this biography – he edited it, abridged it, made additions, and sometimes criticized portions of it by narrations of other scholars.
- Ibn Hisham was very careful when edited Ibn Ishaq's book – he never changed or added a single word unless he was explaining or refuting a narration, and he would make it clear what he was modifying.
- The main purpose of Ibn Hisham rewriting the biography of Ibn Ishaq was to summarize it. He deleted all that had been mentioned before the history of Ismail the son of Ibrahim, as well as stories and information of Ismail's sons, as well as any long controversial poems.
- So what was the role of Abdul-Salam Harun in this work?
 - Early in his youth, he tried to read Sirat Ibn Hisham from beginning to end, but could not because there were long digressions in the writing.
 - For example, Sirat Ibn Hisham has long chapters dedicated to naming the captives of the Battle of Badr, names of the horses of the Muslims in Badr, a list of the Muslims who

attended Badr from among the Quraysh and from the Ansar, those who were martyred on that day, and so on.

- Additionally, the original Sirat Ibn Hisham included long poems, lengthy lineages, chains of authorities and some Quranic commentaries which were not relevant to the Sirah.
- So Abdul-Salam Harun summarized the book to allow for uninterrupted reading, but he did NOT replace a single letter of the original text – **so what you will read is the text of Ibn Ishaq as narrated by Ibn Hisham, summarized by Abdul-Salam Harun.**
- Abdul-Salam Harun wrote his summary of Ibn Hisham's text in 1374 AH, in Egypt.

Brief History of Yemen

- Tub'an Asa'd brings Judaism to Yemen. Before, most Yemeni's were idol-worshippers.
- When Dhu Nuwas, the son of Tub'an Asa'd, became the ruler of Yemen, he would be the last person to lead from the Himyar kingship.
- Dhu Nuwas takes an army and goes to Najran, where there was a people of grace and honesty who were Christians. He tries to force them to convert to Judaism, but they refuse – he makes a large pit and lights a great fire and begins to throw those who refused to convert into the fire.
 - Ibn Hisham narrates that about 20,000 were killed on that day
 - The Quran refers to this event in Surat Al Buruuj, where Ashab alUkhduud (the people of the pit) are mentioned.
- One of the Christians of Najran was able to slip away on a horse – he rides to Rome where he seeks support from the Emperor against Dhu Nuwas and his soldiers. The Roman Emperor told him that his country was far, but that he would write to the Abyssinian king who was Christian as well.
- The Abyssinian king agrees to support the Christians of Najran to take revenge against Dhu Nawas of Yemen.
 - He sends an army of 70,000 Abyssinian warriors under the leadership of Aryat. Among these warriors is Abrahah Al Ashram
 - Dhu Nawas knows he doesn't have a chance, so he directs his horse towards the sea, falls in the water and drowns.
 - After this, Aryat, the Abyssinian is granted rule over Yemen.
- Abrahah starts to stir up dispute with Aryat over Abyssinian matters, to the point that the Abyssinians became disunited, and two sections formed.
 - Eventually, the two groups were ready to fight with each other.
 - Abrahah proposes a duel instead – Aryat agrees
 - In the duel, Abrahah wins by having a young lad sneak up from behind Aryat to stab him. In the duel, Aryat hits Abrahah with a spear, but it only barely hits him, slitting his eyebrow, eye, nose and lip – this is why he is known as Abrahah Al Ashram
- After the duel, Aryat's soldiers joined Abrahah's, and so Abrahah became in charge of Yemen.

The Story of the Companions of the Elephant

- Abrahah builds a church called Al-Qullyas in Sanaa. He sends to the Abyssinian king that he had built a magnificent church, and that he will make the Arabs perform pilgrimage to it.
- When the Arabs found out about this, they became angry, and one of them went to Al Qullyas and desecrated it.

- Abrahah was enraged and swore to march and demolish the house. He marched an army of soldiers and elephants to Mekka.
- In Mekka, when the elephant, Mahmud, was faced towards the Ka'ba, he would kneel down. When he was turned away, he would get up and start walking.
- Birds with stones came, and everyone who was affected in his body and died.

The Years Before Prophethood

The Prophet's Grandfather and Parents

- The lineage of the Prophet which you should memorize: He is the son of Abdullah, son of AbdulMuttalib, son of Hashim, son of Abd Manaf, son of Qusayy.
- The parents of the Prophet were Abdullah son of Abdul-Muttalib, and Aminah daughter of Wahb.
- Abdul-Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet, sees a dream where he is told to dig Zamzam. He digs in the location he saw in his dream and finds the spring of Zamzam. The people of Quraysh dispute with him for it, but eventually decide that it truly does belong do Abdul-Mutallib.
- Abudl-Muttalib vows that if God ever gives him 10 sons who grow to manhood, he will slaughter one of them. The time came that he eventually had 10 sons, and he decided to fulfill his oath. He has his children cast arrows to decide whom to slaughter – his youngest and most favored son, Abdullah, was chosen.
- On his way to sacrifice Abdullah, Abdul-Muttalib is seen by the leaders of Quraysh. They convince him to ask a diviner for advice to see if he had any other options.
- The diviner tells Abdul-Muttalib to add 10 camels at a time, and then cast arrows for his son Abdullah vs the camels. He kept adding 10 camels and casting the arrows until there was 100 camels. Finally, the cast of arrows fell against the camels. The camels were slaughtered instead, and by this Abdullah was saved.

The Birth of the Prophet

- Aminah, daughter of Wahb, and mother of the Prophet, used to say when she was pregnant that it was said to her in a vision: "You are conceiving the master of this nation and when he has been born, say, "I seek refuge for him with the One from the evil of every envious person', then name him Muhammad."
- She also saw in a dream that a light emitted from her by which she could see the castles of Busra in Syria.
- Abdullah, the Prophet's father, died while Aminah was still pregnant.
- The Prophet was born on the 12th of Rabi Ul-Awwal, in the Year of the Elephant.

Halimah's Care

- Halimah left here dwelling with her clan on a quest to find a baby to care for. Halimah and her family were poor and it was a year of drought and famine.
- Halimah reached Mekkah and all of the babies were already taken, except for one. The Prophet was an orphan, so no one wanted to take him because they thought they wouldn't get a good reward from his mother. Halimah figured she would take the orphan so at least she would not return empty handed.

- The night that Halimah took in the prophet, everything improved. She had plenty of milk, her donkey became the fastest of her tribe, and the udders of her animal became filled with milk.
- When it came time to return the prophet to his mother, Aminah, Halimah asked Aminah if she could keep the prophet for some time longer. This is because Halimah saw the amount of barakah that had come to her family from having the prophet with them. Aminah agreed.
- A few months later, “two men in white” seized the prophet while he was playing with Halimah’s children, and they ripped open his chest and removed his heart. When this happened, Halimah was concerned that something bad had happened to the prophet and she decided to take him right back to his mother Aminah.
- This event is known as Shaq al Sadr. It is when two angels came and opened the chest of the prophet, removed a small black clot, and washed his heart, then returned it.

Abdulmuttalib’s Care

- Aminah, the prophet’s mother, passed away when the prophet was 6. The prophet was left to the care of his grandfather, Abdulmuttalib.
- Abdulmuttalib loved him dearly – he passed away about two years later, when the prophet was 8 years old.

Bahira, the monk

- After Abdulmuttalib passed away, the Prophet came under the care of his uncle Abu Talib.
- One year, Abu Talib was going with a caravan to Syria for business. He took the prophet along. On the way, they passed by the monk Bahira. Bahira studied Christian books and knew there was a prophet that would be sent to this region. When he saw the caravan, he knew the prophet was amongst them, so he invited them in to eat. When he saw the prophet, he began to ask him questions and examine him, and found him to match the descriptions from his books exactly. He told Abu Taleb to take good care of him and to protect him from anyone who might want to harm him.

His Marriage to Khadija

- Khadija was a business woman of honor and wealth, and the most honorable of woman in Mekka. She was respected and dignified amongst her people.
- She heard about the prophet’s truthfulness, so proposed to him a deal to carry out her trade in Syria. He agreed, and so he went with her slave boy, Maysarah.
- Maysarah noticed some curious things about the Prophet, particularly that two angels would shade the prophet from the sun’s beams as they traveled.
- When they returned to Mekka, Maysarah told Khadija about what he saw. Khadija, being an intelligent and noble woman, liked the qualities of the prophet and proposed marriage to him. The Prophet told his uncles and his uncle Hamzah went with him to her family and they were married.
- Khadija went to her cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal, and told him what Maysarah had told her about the Prophet. Waraqah said, “Verily Muhammad is the prophet of this nation”.

Rebuilding the Ka’aba

- The arabs wanted to rebuild and roof the Ka’bah. The Prophet was 35 years old at this time.

- Because of what had happened to Abrahah and his elephants, everyone was afraid to modify anything in the Ka'bah, fearing that God would destroy them.
- Eventually, they gathered the courage to do it and began the project, promising to God that they had a good intention and that they would only rebuild it through lawful gains.
- The rebuilding was going relatively smooth until they reached the black stone. Every tribe wanted to have the honor of replacing it in its spot – they were about to fight each other for it when they decided to let the next person who came in decide between them. The next person was the prophet.
- The Prophet ordered a cloth, the stone was put in the center of it, then the head of every tribe held a side of the cloth, and the prophet returned the stone with his own hands – then the rebuilding continued.

His description in the other books

- News of the coming of a Prophet was discussed among the Jewish rabbis, the Christian monks, and the Arab diviners.
- The rabbis and the monks knew about him from their prophets and what had been written in the Torah and the Injil (Bible) regarding him.
- The Arab diviners knew about the prophet from Satans who would report what they overheard before God prevented them from doing so.

The Mission and Dawah to Islam Until Hijra

The Mission

- Mohammed, peace be upon him, became a Prophet at the age of 40.
- Aisha said the first sign of prophethood was that he saw visions that became true exactly as he had seen them. He also liked solitude.
- When he would go to Hira, all the stones and trees would say “peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah,” even before his prophethood.
- The Prophet practiced tahannuth, which meant worship of Allah away from idols. He would stay in Hira for a month every year to worship privately.
- Jibril came with the message (first 5 ayas of Iqra') when the Prophet was alone in Hira during Ramadan.
- On his way back home, the Prophet saw Gibril again.
- When he got home and told her what had happened, Khadija comforted him. She told him “rejoice and be firm. Surely, by Him in whose Hand is Khadija's soul, I wish that you will become the Prophet of this nation.”
- She went with this story to her paternal cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who was a Christian. He identified the angel as Gibril and verified that Mohammed was indeed the prophet of the nation.
- Waraqah met with Mohammed a little bit later, and said something similar. He added that the Prophet would be persecuted for this message, and that Waraqah would aid him when the time comes.

Khadijah, Daughter of Khuwaylid, Embraces Islam

- She is the first Muslim. She provided immense comfort to the Prophet, especially at the most difficult parts of relaying his message.
- H: "I was commanded to give Khadijah glad tidings of a house in paradise made of carved pearls wherein will be no noise, nor drudgery." i.e. Filled with sakinah, just as she filled the Prophets house in this dunya with sakina.

The Pause in Revelation

- The revelation paused for a while, which was difficult and depressing for the Prophet.
- Then Allah revealed Suratul Duha to him, which showed how great of a favor the Prophet actually has.

The Earliest to Embrace Islam

- Ali ibn Abi Talib, who was 10 at the time, was to believe in the Prophet. Allah had given him a special place. Earlier, the Prophet and AlAbbas (the Prophet's uncle) decided to help Abu Talib take care of some his kids. The Prophet returned with Ali; AlAbbas took Jaafar.
- The Prophet used to go secretly with Ali to the outskirts to pray and worship. One day, Abu Talib saw them and asked what they were doing. The Prophet explained his message, but Abu Talib said he could not leave the religion of his fathers, but he would protect the Prophet.
- Zayd ibn Haritha was next. He was a slave given to Khadija by her nephew. She then had given him to the Prophet as a gift, who freed him and treated him as a son.
- Abu Bakr then embraced Islam. He was well liked, intelligent, had high morals and kindness. He called many people to Islam: Uthman ibn Affan, Zubayr ibn al awwam, AbdurRahman ibn Awf, Saad ibn abi Waqqas, and Talhah ibn Ubaydillah. These were the first 8 who embraced Islam.
- Then came many other major Sahaba, including Fatima, Omar's sister, Asma and Aisha, the daughters of Abu Bakr, and others.

The Prophet's Public Preaching and the Reaction to it

- When groups of people had embraced, Allah ordered the Prophet to publicize his call to Islam after 3 years of secret preaching (Hijr 94, and Shuara 214-216)
- Things began to get tense between believers and the kuffar, but the Quraish could not do anything to the Prophet because of the protection of Abu Talib.
- They asked Abu Talib to stop the Prophet, but he dismissed them. When they asked again and threatened with fighting, he went to the Prophet and asked him to stop. The Prophet thought Abu Talib had joined them. The Prophet swore by Allah that even if they put the sun in his right and the moon in his left, he would not turn away from the deen. When Abu Talib saw this conviction, he agreed to continue protecting him.
- When the Quraysh realized that Abu Talib would not give the Prophet to them, they offered to trade him a young, strong man for the Prophet, sort of as a man for a man trade. Abu Talib rejected this as well. The Quraysh were furious, and they began persecuting the Muslims.
- Banu Hashim and Banu AlMuttalib (family of the Prophet) were also being persecuted. Abu Talib invited them to stand with him and the Prophet, and they did so. The only family member that rejected was Abu Lahab.

The Words of Walid Ibnul Mughirah About the Quran

- When it was time for Hajj, the Quraysh went to Walid for advice so that pilgrims wouldn't be attracted to the message of the Prophet. They went through ideas for what to call him, including a soothsayer, magician, possession by jin, poet, but Walid said none of them were befitting of the Prophet because high standing and clarity in speech and meaning. He finally said to go with magician that split brother from brother. He was addressed in a harsh way in the Quran (Muddathir 11-16).

How the Prophet was Treated by His People

- The Prophet continued preaching Islam despite the persecution.
- Once when the Prophet was circling the Kaaba, the Quraysh ridiculed the Prophet as he passed. They did so a second time. On the third time, the Prophet said, "Will you listen to me O Quraysh? By Him in whose Hand is my soul. I have brought you slaughter [if you do not believe]." This stunned the Quraysh.
- When they recalled this later, they got angry and encircled the Prophet. Abu Bakr interjected and broke it up.

Hamzah Accepts Islam

- One day, Abu Jahl ridiculed and offended the Prophet at Saffa. The Prophet didn't respond. A mawlah of Ibn Judan was in her house and heard what happened.
- Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib was on his way back from hunting with his bow. Normally, he would stop at every gathering and chat. The mawlah stopped him and told him what happened. He started running to the Kaaba, not stopping to talk to anyone. He found Abu Jahl at the haram, and hit him with his bow, saying "do you hurt him while I follow his religion and say what he says? Strike me back if you can!" The companions of Abu Jahl were prepared to fight, but he said, "let Abu Imarah (Hamza's laqab) alone, for by Allah, I injured his nephew deeply."
- Because of his standing and strength in Mekka, the harassment against Muslims lessened with his Islam.

The Words of Utbah Ibn Rabiah about the Prophet

- Utbah was a man of great standing in Quraysh. One day, he proposed to a gathering he was in that he would try and make an offer to the Prophet to make him stop.
- He offered him anything and everything: riches, honor, sovereignty as a king, physician. The Prophet responded by reciting Surat Fussilat until the sajda. During this, the words of the Quran changed Utbah, he listened while leaning on his hands behind his back.
- He returned to Quraysh with a different face than he had set out with. He said that what he heard was not magic, poetry, or soothsaying. He advised them to leave the Prophet alone, and that if he persists, they will have glory through him, peace be upon him.
- Utbah was accused of being bewitched.

Negotiations between the Prophet and the Chiefs of Quraysh

- The leading man of every clan of Quraysh gathered in front of the Kaaba and sought again to negotiate with the Prophet.
- They made him a similar offer as Utbah, but he rejected them again, saying that he wasn't sent for those things.

- They asked him to prove his Prophethood by making Mekka a lush land and resurrecting the dead, especially their leaders, and have them support the Prophet. The Prophet rejected this and said that he only has what Allah sent to him.
- They then asked him to do something for himself to show his superiority, like asking Allah for castles and treasures and to send him an angel for support. He declined with a similar answer.
- They asked him to ask Allah to shatter the heavens, and the Prophet declined. They became distraught and said things such as “we will not believe in you until you bring Allah and the angels to before us face to face.”
- The Prophet had hoped they would change their minds, so he left sad and depressed.

An Act of Abu Jahl

- After this meeting, Abu Jahl swore that he would kill the Prophet by striking him in the back of the head with a stone when he prostrates in prayer, no matter what the consequences.
- The Prophet used to pray towards Syria in Mekka, but he would pray at the Yemini corner of the Kaaba, putting the Kaaba in the direction of the Qibla.
- When Abu Jahl went to strike the Prophet, he turned back suddenly, all pale and threw the stone away. When they asked what happened, he said that he saw a stallion appear between him and the Prophet. “By Allah, I have never seen anything like that head, neck, shoulders, and teeth of that stallion; he looked as though he would eat me.”

The Story of AnNadr ibnul Harith

- He was one of the people who had the most animosity to the Prophet.
- When Abu Jahl returned from his attempt at killing the Prophet, Nadr stood up and proclaimed that he had a true difficult matter on their hands. Similar to Walid ibnul Mughirah, he said that the Prophet was not a poet, sorcerer, diviner, possessed, or a poet.
- He had learned the stories of Rustam, Isfandiyar, and kings of Persia in AlHirah.
- He viewed what the Prophet was saying as similar stories, and would gather the people after the Prophet told them what happened to the previous nations, and would tell them the stories of Persia.
- He would say, “in what way is Mohammed a better story teller than I am.”

The Polytheists’ Animosity towards the Oppressed Muslims

- The Muslims were tortured in every method, including deprivation of food and drink and being exposed to the burning heat of Mekka. Some endured and others gave up.
- Bilal ibn Rabah was a slave of Umayyah bin Khalaf who was tortured by being placed on the sand and with a giant rock on his chest, ordering him to renounce Islam. Bilal would repeatedly say “One, One.”
- Waraqah passed by and said “by Allah, if you kill him this way, I will take his tomb as a place of blessing.”
- Abu Bakr passed by and traded a polytheist slave of his for Bilal, then Bilal go free.
- Bilal was the 7th slave freed by Abu Bakr. They were week, so Abu Quhafah, his father, asked him why he did not free stronger slaves for protection. He responded that he was doing this for Allah.

- Ammar ibn Yassir, his father, and his mother were tortured by being forced to lie in the burning sands of Mekka. The Prophet told them, “be patient, family of Yassir. Your meeting place will be in Paradise.” His mother was killed with torture.
- Abu Jahl was at the forefront of inciting violence and torture against the Muslims. He would ruin the reputation of noble converts, destroy the business of wealthy converts, and urge the torture of weak converts.
- Ibn Abbas said that the torture of companions was to such an extent that apostasy was excusable for them. “they used to beat each of them, depriving them of food and drink to the extent that he could hardly sit upright.”

The First Migration to Abyssinia

- When the Prophet saw this injustice, he allowed them to go to Abyssinia because the king was just there.
- This is the first migration in Islam, there was a total of 83 immigrants.