



## 1.2D: The Emigration to Madinah

**What do you see here? Where is Muhammad represented in this picture? Describe the people on the left. How would you describe the manner in which Muhammad is being greeted here? Why would it have been necessary for Muhammad to leave Makkah? Why would these people be eager to have Muhammad enter their community?**

- **In this transparency** we see Muhammad, Abu Bakr, and other supporters of the Prophet arriving in Madinah after leaving Makkah. The Muslims of Madinah gathered outside the city every morning awaiting the Prophet's arrival. When he was finally sighted in the distance on camelback, a group of his supporters rode out to escort the Prophet into town.
- The same year of the Night Journey, both Khadija and Muhammad's uncle, Abu Talib, died. Abu Talib had used his power as the head of the Hashim clan to protect Muhammad. Now the new leader refused Muhammad protection. By A.D. 622, Muhammad decided to leave Makkah and travel to Yathrib, another oasis city about 200 miles north of Makkah. As the Prophet fled Makkah, he and Abu Bakr were pursued by Makkan soldiers. Islamic tradition holds that the first night of the journey to Madinah, Muhammad and Abu Bakr spent the night in a cave. Soldiers never searched the cave, however, because Allah caused a spider web to be spun and a dove's nest to be built at the entrance to indicate that no one was hiding within.
- This journey, known as the hijrah in Arabic, marks the introduction of Islam to humankind through the Prophet Muhammad and is the first year of the Muslim calendar. Followers of Muhammad who believed in Islam were called Muslims, meaning "those who submit to the will of God." Both the Jews and Arabs of Yathrib welcomed Muhammad and his followers. The city was about to erupt in civil war, and the people looked to Muhammad to unite them. They renamed Yathrib Madinat unNabit, which means "City of the Prophet." Yathrib was then called Madinah (Medina) and Muhammad remained in Madinah to lead the new Islamic community there.
- Muhammad was optimistic and hoped that all the different people living in Madinah would become believers of Islam. Muhammad felt that because he was accepting of Judaism and Christianity as the predecessors of Islam, he could win many converts. So in the beginning, Muhammad named Jerusalem (the sacred city of Jews and Christians) as the Qiblah, the direction of prayer. He accepted Abraham, Moses, and Jesus as also being among Allah's prophets.
- Not all of the residents of Madinah, however, became believers of Islam; some Jewish leaders did not accept Muhammad as God's latest prophet. Unable to unite the people of Madinah into a single community of believers, Muhammad expelled the Jews who opposed him from the city. After the rejection of the Prophet by Jewish tribes of Madinah, Muhammad told Muslims that the Qiblah (direction of prayer) was changed from Jerusalem to the Kaaba, in Makkah.