

## **What Changed in Medina: The Place of Peace and War in the Life of Prophet Muhammad**

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The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, is depicted through extremely polar interpretations. Some perceive his life as a source for peace-making societies, whereas others portray him as a “warmonger” or “Prophet of the sword”, and use his examples to justify violence and terrorist attacks. The major incidents referred to in the latter context are the wars and conflicts that occurred after his migration to Medina. These conflicts are also prominent in *sīrah* narratives of his Medinan life from classical and modern periods. One can argue that there is a significant difference in the way Prophet Muhammad acted in Medina compared to the Meccan period. This is mostly attributed to the power balance, as the Muslims had little power in Mecca, which resulted in them enduring adversities, including verbal insults and physical torture while remaining peaceful and non-violent. In Medina, however, the Muslims obtained relatively more power and behaved differently. The main criticism of the Prophet at this juncture is that he took advantage of this power and became violent; this is the reason all the battles fall in his Medinan life. This article examines the root causes of his behaviour and shift in attitude. It clarifies the Prophet’s goal and agenda at this stage of his life. The article highlights his attitude towards peace and war by holistically analysing the battles and skirmishes that unfolded during the Medinan period. It examines the time spent on war and peace throughout his prophetic mission. In doing so, it enumerates statistical data, such as the number of battlefield casualties and those from expeditions. To attain accurate information in this regard, classical *sīrah* works and modern research on the battles are referred to as the main resources.

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