



The Expansive World of Islam

Historical Period 3: 600 – 1450

Region: Middle East & North Africa



Essential Question

*How is the rise of Islam a
turning point in World
History?*

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A Prophet & His World

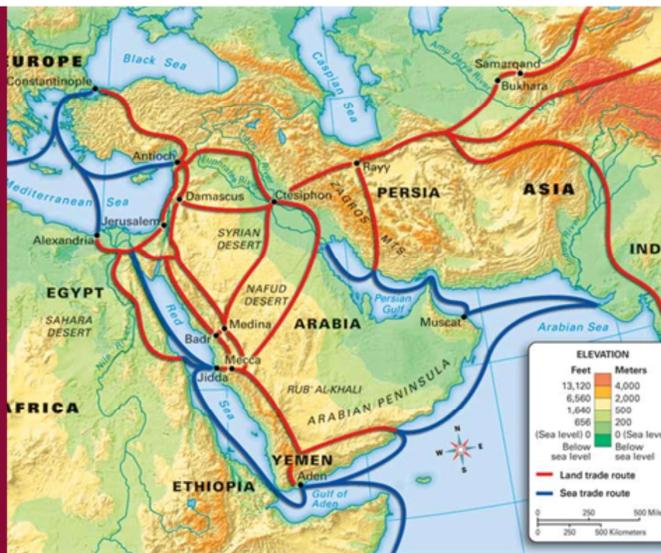
The Arabian Peninsula – Muhammad's World



The Arabian Peninsula



Arabia linked
China and
India with
Persia and
Byzantium.



A Prophet and his World

1. Geography of Arabian Peninsula –

The Arabian peninsula is extremely arid, with desert making farming possible only in Yemen and Medina, where oases provide water.

Nomadic people known as the bedouin kept herds of sheep, goats, and camels, organizing themselves in family and clan groups.

Cooperation made survival possible in this harsh climate.

2. Arabia's Role in Global Trade –

Arabia played a part in long-distance trade networks of the postclassical era.

Commodities arrived at ports in the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea before traveling overland by camel caravan to Palmyra or Damascus, from where it was brought to the Mediterranean.

Arabia linked China and India with Persia and Byzantium.



Muhammad and his Message

1. Muhammad's Early Life –

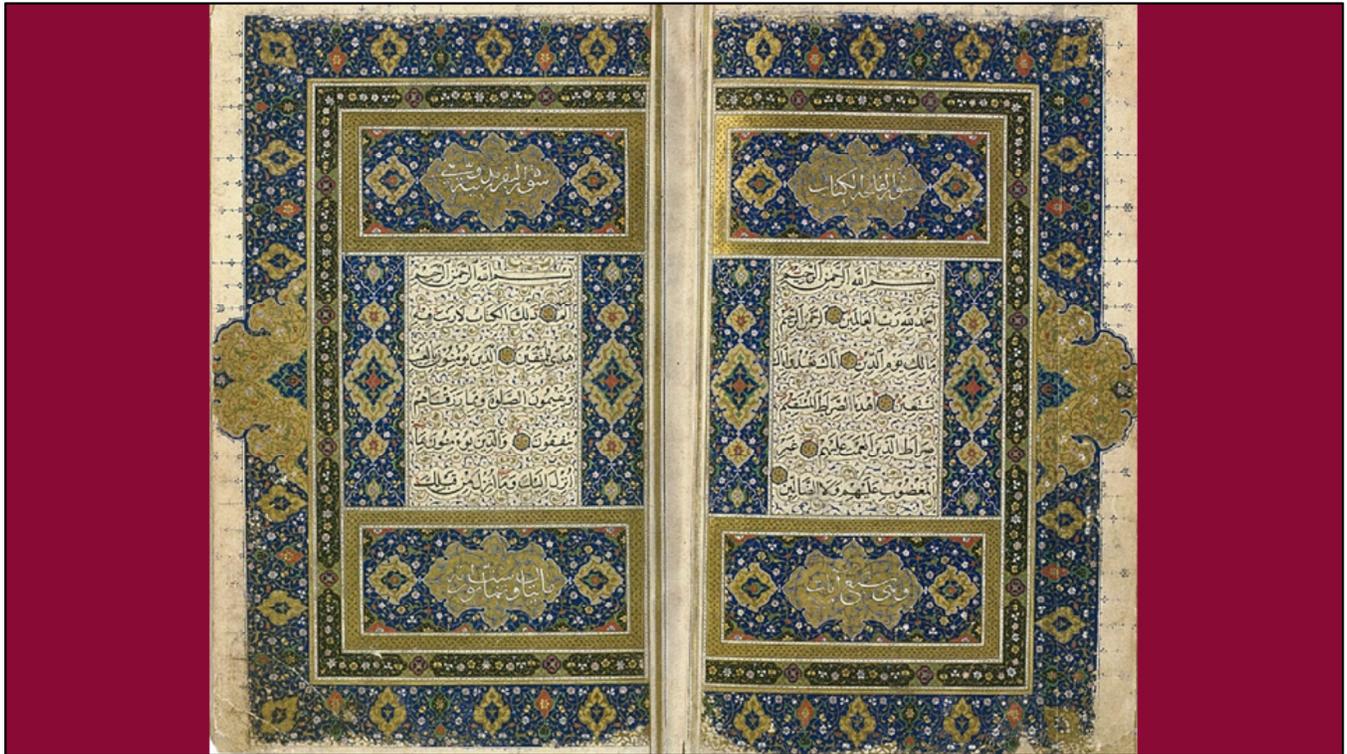
Born around 570, Muhammad ibn Abdullah was an orphan raised by his grandfather and uncle. He married a woman named Khadija, and became a merchant by the time he was thirty.

2. Religious Diversity in Arabia –

Most Arabs recognized many gods, goddesses, demons, and nature spirits whose favor they sought through prayers and sacrifice. Communities of Jewish Merchants and Christians also lived in Arabia. Muhammad had a good knowledge of both.

3. Muhammad's Spiritual Transformation –

While meditating in a cave near Mecca, Muhammad is said to have heard the voice of the angel Gabriel calling him to be the messenger of God. By 620 C.E., a zealous and expanding minority had joined Muhammad's circle of believers.



The Quran is Written – The Quran is said to contain the sacred word of God as revealed to Muhammad, setting ethical standards for honesty, generosity, and social justice. The Quran is only written in Arabic, and Muslims proclaim that translation into any other language would pervert its meaning. The Quran was originally written by devout Muslims in the 650s. Several other sources including hadith, or sayings attributed to Muhammad were collected and recorded.

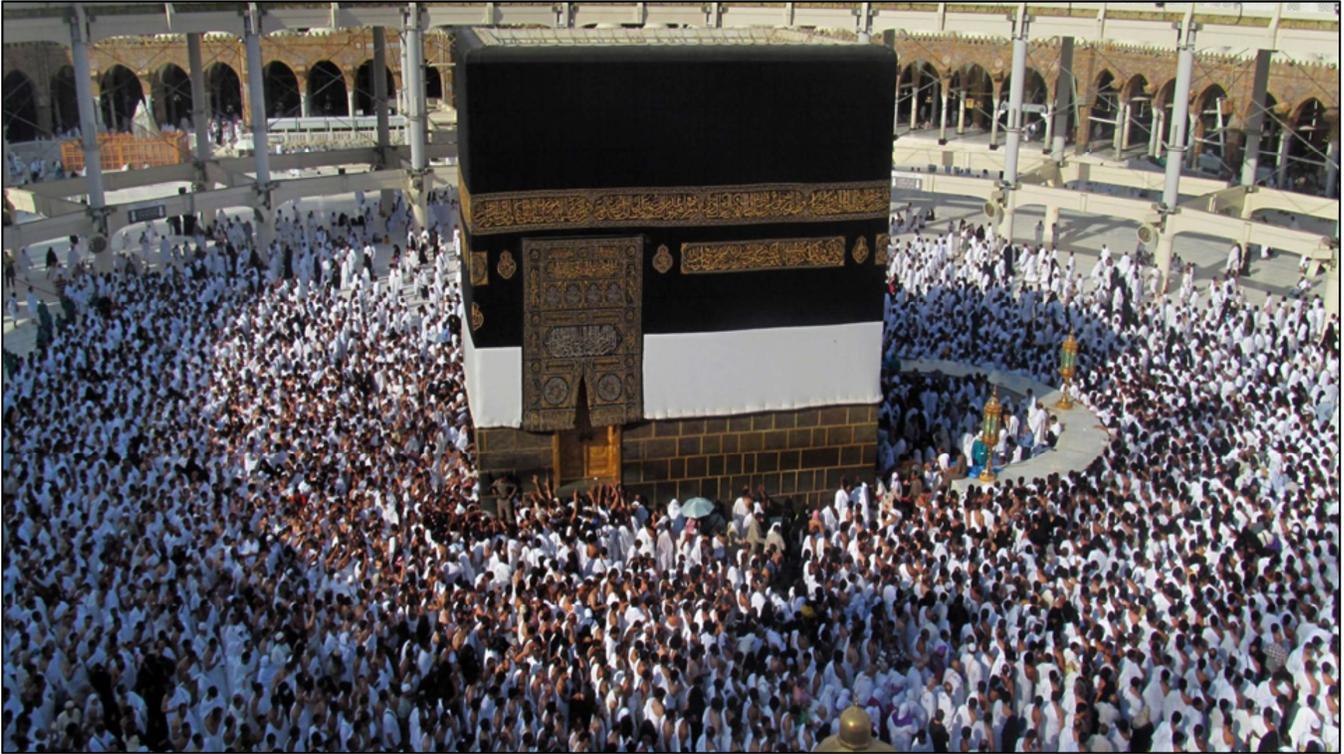


C. Muhammad's Migration to Medina

1. Conflict in Mecca – There were primarily two dimensions to the origin of conflict between Muhammad and Meccans. 1) Muhammad's insistence that there was only one God threatened the view that local Gods had control over aspects of Arab's lives, and these Gods should not be angered. Muhammad condemned the idolatry of the Ka'ba, long believed to house a powerful deity. 2) Muhammad's insistence that greed was moral wickedness to be punished by Allah was seen as a personal affront against wealthy merchants in the city.

2. Hijra – When his teachings weren't well received in Mecca, Muhammad and his followers left Mecca for Yathrib on a journey known as the hijra in 622. This city was renamed Medina or "City of the Prophet" and 622 became the first year of the

Islamic calendar. Medina became home to a community of Muslims called an umma.



Establishment of Islam in Arabia

1. Muhammad's return to Mecca –

Muhammad and his followers returned to Mecca in 630, attacking and capturing the city.

Muhammad and his followers destroyed pagan shrines and replaced them with mosques.

The Kaaba became important to Islam in 632 when Muhammad led a pilgrimage there.

The prophet died in 632, but by then, many bedouin clans and towns had been brought under the control of Islam.



The Five Pillars of Islam

a) Declaration of Faith – This is known as the Shahada. “There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God.” Muslims believe that God had sent other prophets, including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, but that Muhammad was the last and greatest prophet.

b. Daily Prayer – Muslims pray five times each day. After a ritual washing, they face Mecca and perform specific actions as they pray.

c) Alms for the Poor – Muslims give charity to the poor. In some Muslim countries, money is collected in the form of a tax known as the zakat.

d) Fast during Ramadan – Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset during the holy month of Ramadan.

e) Hajj – Muslims who are physically and financially able must make a pilgrimage to pray at the Kaaba in Mecca at least once.

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Expansion of Islam

Reaching beyond Arabia & the Caliphate

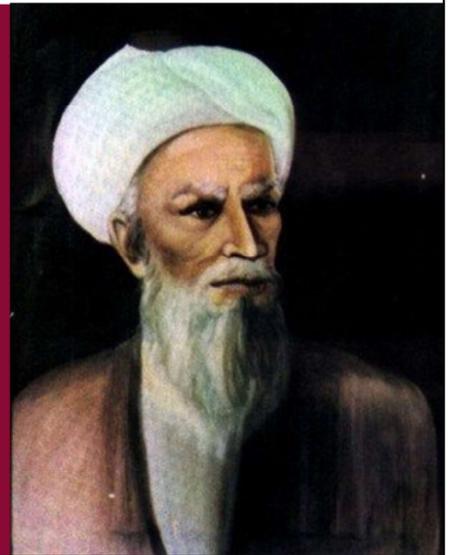


Abu Bakr



Caliph – Deputy, both
political and religious
leader

Umma – Community



1. A New Caliph - Muhammad's death led to uncertainty because there was division within the umma. The Caliph's role was to be chief judge, religious leader, and military commander
2. Expansion of Islam – Islamic armies carried Islam further and further to the borders of Byzantium and Sassanid empire between 633 and 637. Capturing Syria, Palestine, and most of the Mesopotamia, then Egypt and North Africa
3. Shia Sects Emerges – Disagreements over who should succeed Muhammad led to the formation of a "Shia" sect. who supported a cousin of Muhammad known as Ali. Ali became the fourth Caliph but he was assassinated. ONE OF THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SECTS was they are taught that descendants of Ali were infallible, sinless, and divinely appointed





- After Ali's assassination, the Umayyad Dynasty was established 661-750. They established their capital at Damascus in Syria but ruled as conquerors with politics reflecting the interest of the Arab military.
- Their treatment of conquered people was not the best. They taxed Christians and Jews in particular with a tax called the jizya
- By the middle of the 8th century the Umayyads faced opposition for the Shia, but also of conquered peoples. This led to their decline, and the rise of a new Dynasty



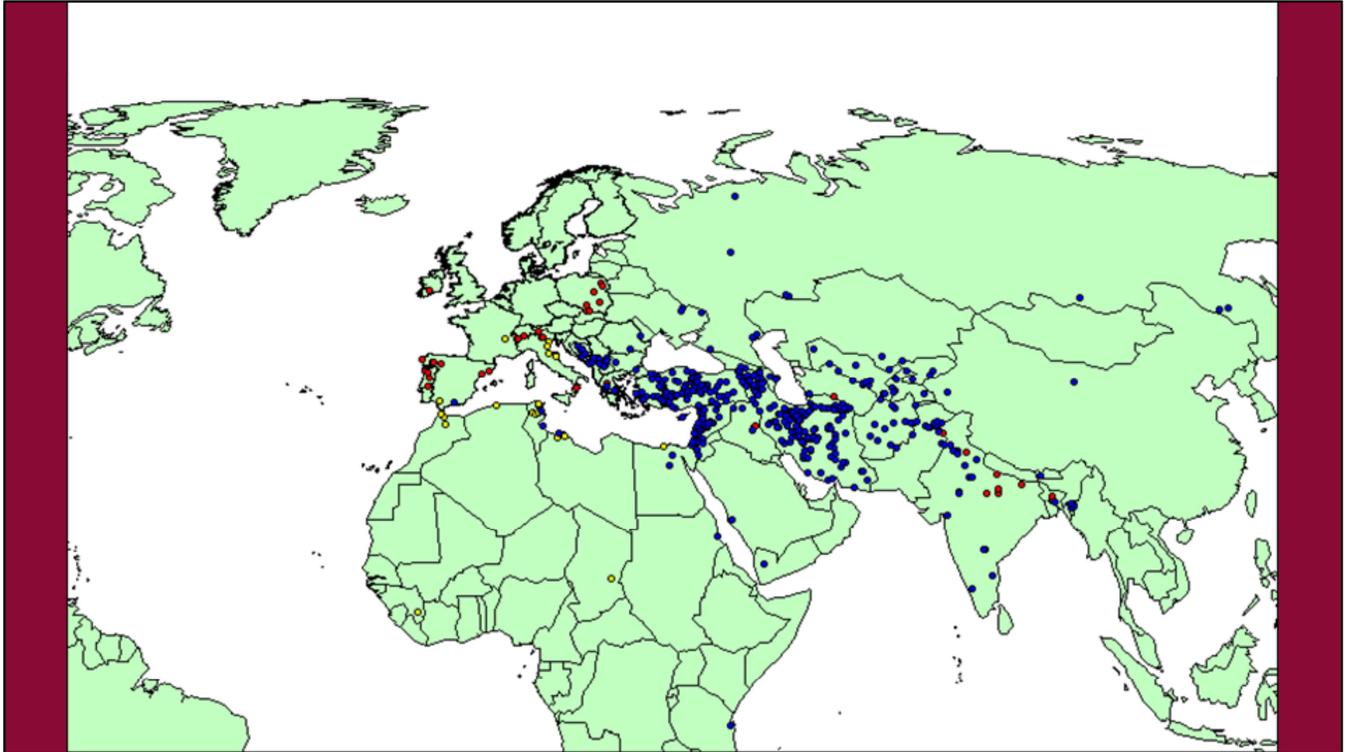
Rise of the Abbasid Dynasty

- A rebel from Persia named Abu al-Abbas, a descendant of Muhammad's uncle and a Sunni Arab, allied with Shias and other foreigners to bring the Umayyad down
- By 750 Al-Abbas' army brought down the Umayyad forces in a huge battle
- Remaining members were invited to a banquet for supposed reconciliation where they were slaughtered
- Abbasid dynasty remained the source of authority in the dar al-Islam until they were toppled by the Mongols in 1258



Harun al-Rashid

- Ruling from 786-809, caliph Harun al-Rashid brought in tax revenues from across the empire
- Baghdad became a center of commerce, banking, industrial production, and more
- Harun al-Rashid sponsored artists and writers also distributed money to the poor
- An elephant was sent as a gift to the king Charlemagne, who ruled the Carolingian Empire in Europe



The Formation of a Hemispheric Trading Zone

- Overland Trade – Muslim Merchant could take advantage of extensive road networks built in the Classical Era because of the control over Merv, Nishapur, Bukhara, and Samarkand
- Camels and Caravans – Camel Caravans carried heavy loads throughout Arabia, North Africa, southwest Asian and central Asia. Caravanserias were maintained which were inns offering lodging for caravan merchants as well as food, water, and care for animals.
- Banks – Islamic Banks of the Abbasid period provided services such as lending to entrepreneurs and serving as brokers for investments while also exchanging currencies
- Facit – In short, transportation, improved banking, business organizations such as pooled investments (spread the risks) allowed Islamic trade to explode

Change in the Status of Women

- Veiling – reinforced male dominance
- Male guardians controlled the social and sexual lives of Women
- Strong patriarchal traditions in the Sassanid and Byzantine Empires gave Muslims reason to adopt long-standing customs such as veiling of women
- As early as the 13th Century BCE Mesopotamian women had practiced veiling as a sign of modesty



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