

Islam



Islam mean submission or surrender.

***Masjid*, the Arabic term for mosque, means
“place of prostration.”**



Three keywords for Islam:

Allah, Muhammad, Quran

Allah

Allah: Arabic word for God.

God is singular: Monotheism



“There is no god but God. He is One. He has no associate – say not Three.”

Strong denial of the Trinity.

God cannot incarnate a human body.

No visual image can be made of God as this only tempts us towards idolatry.

Allah

The gravest mistake for a Muslim is idolatry – making anything greater than God.

Jesus was a prophet – not a saviour or son of God. (To refer to him as God is idolatry).

God is beyond gender, but the *Quran* only uses “He” when referring to him.



Allah



Totally transcendent.

God's names are legion in the *Quran*.

**Sovereign Lord, Holy One, Peace, Keeper of Faith,
Guardian, Majestic, Compeller, Superb.**

**All-Compassionate, All-Merciful, Forgiving,
Generous, Loving, Powerful, Eternal, Knowing,
Wrathful, Just.**

Muhammad (570-632 CE).



- Was a great spiritual and secular leader.
- A politician, military leader, legislator, and diplomat.
- Born in Mecca and orphaned as a child.
- He was 40 when God first came to him on Mount Hira.
- This was a place Muhammad would regularly go to pray and meditate.
- There the angel Gabriel met him and told him to “Recite.”

Muhammad (570-632 CE).



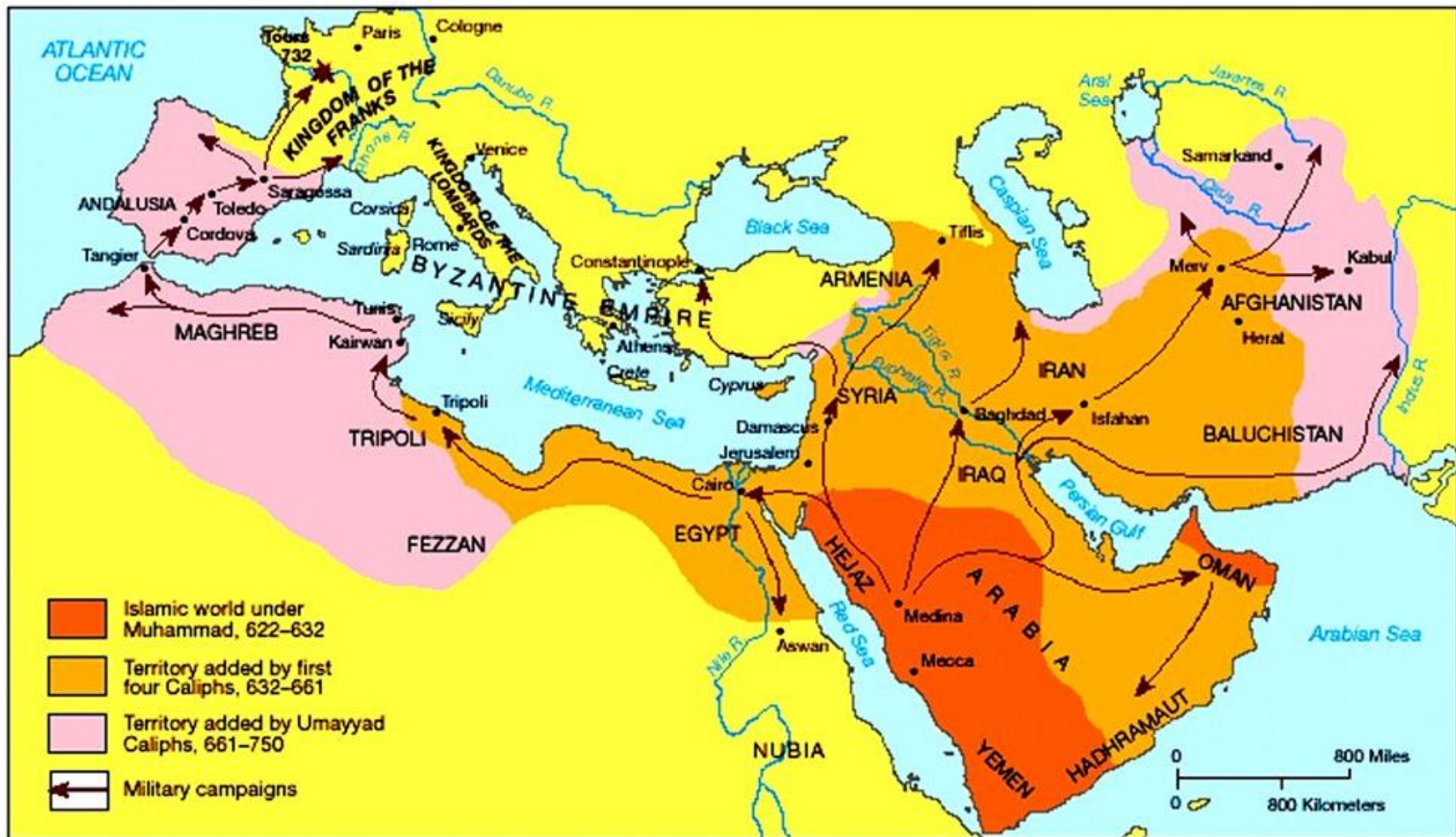
- From 610-632 he continued to get these revelations which were recorded as the *Quran* until his death at 63.
- Tradition says that he was illiterate so he did not write the *Quran*, but received it in Arabic and passed it on to his followers.


Muhammad (570-632 CE).



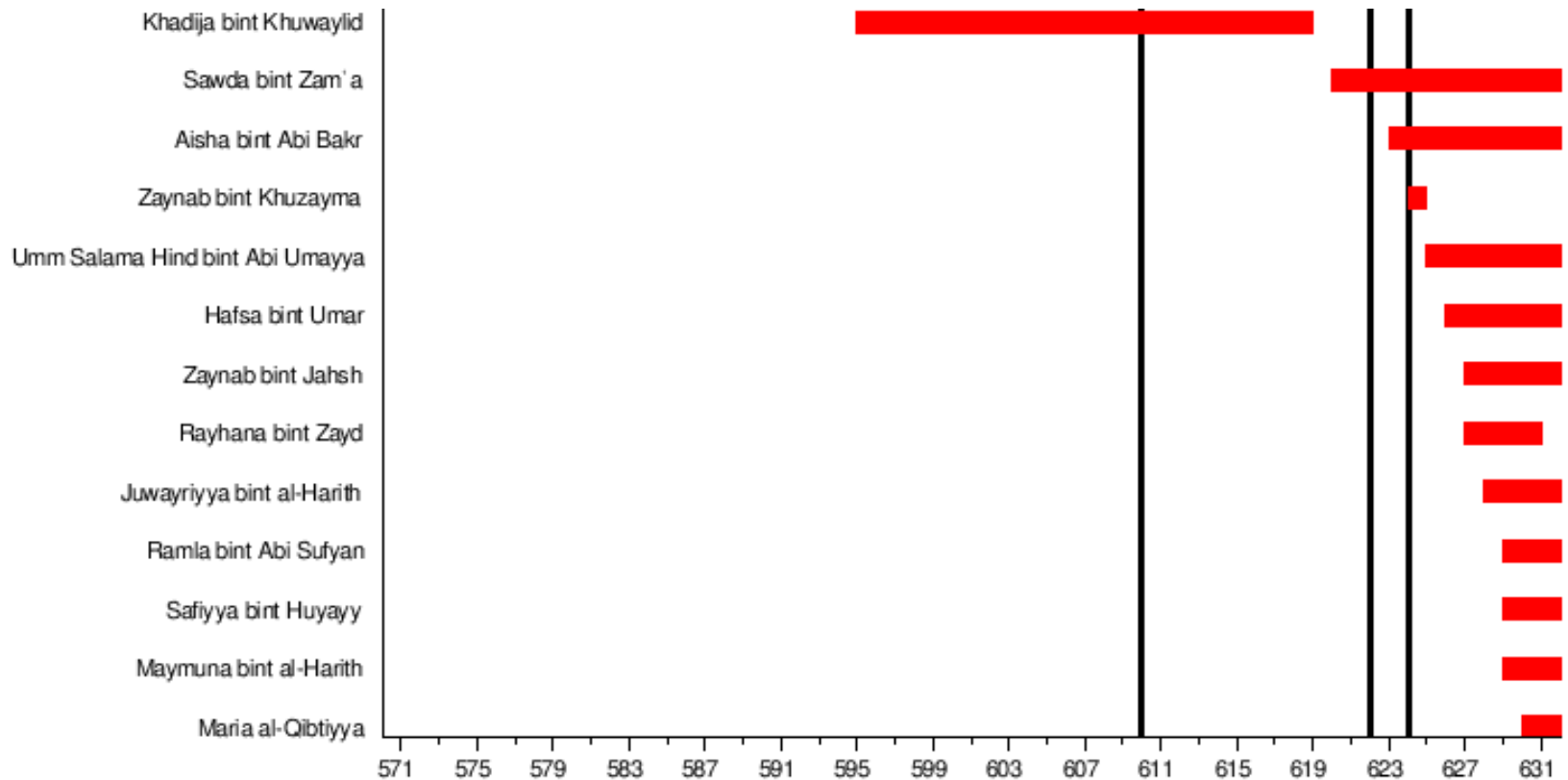
- The first Muslim community formed in 622 CE as Muhammad's followers fled from Mecca to Medina (polytheists from Mecca rejected him).
- Today this event is known as the *hijra* (emigration) and marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. (A.H. meaning "in the year of hijra").
2013 CE/AD = 1434 AH
- After his death the tradition split into two main branches over the matter of Muhammad's successor - Sunni and Shia.





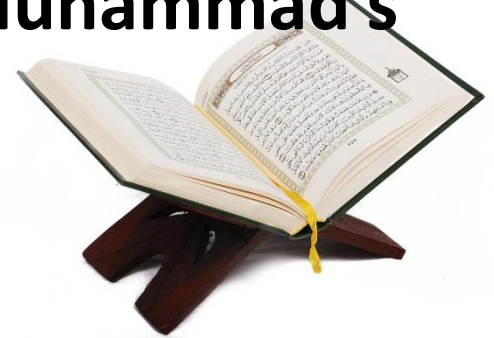
 *The Spread of Islam. The rapid spread of Islam created within a century a unified cultural and economic zone from India to the Atlantic Ocean within.*

Muhammad's wives



Quran

- **The perfect, unaltered, untranslatable word of God.**
- **Written by Allah, who gave it to an angel, who gave it to Muhammad, who recited it to his companions.**
- **It was passed on orally (although it possibly existed in scattered written form during Muhammad's life) and was written down and collected after Muhammad's death.**



Quran

- **The Quran is scripture only in Arabic.**
 - Translations may be helpful, but are not true scripture.
- **Only about 20% of the world's Muslims are able to read Arabic.**
- **Quran is recited today more than it is read.**
- **Quran means “recitation.”**



Quran

- **Accept the Torah of Moses and the gospels of Jesus but believe that they have been corrupted and are no longer trustworthy.**
- **Quran is about the same length as the NT.**
- **Contains almost no stories.**
- **Doctrinal and legal rather than narrative.**



Quran

- **114 suras (chapters).**
- **Order goes from longest ones to shortest.**
- **Instructions on how to worship God and live.**
- **Persistent social themes concerning justice and poverty.**
- **Glories in the next world not this one.**
- **More emphasis in it on the next life than in any other religion.**
- **Difficult to find a sura that does not mention the after life.**



Quran

- **Strong belief in a physical bodily resurrection.**
- **Hundreds of verses on the horrors of hell and the splendors of heaven.**
- **Hundreds of verses on God as compassionate and on God as wrathful.**
- **Torment/punishment/chastisement appears hundreds of times and is one of the most frequently used words.**
- **Seeks to shake us out of our forgetfulness and remind us of our dependence on God.**



Hadith

- **A scriptural collection of Muhammad's sayings and actions and second in authority only to the *Quran*.**
- **This has long provided a guide for Islamic law. (*Sharia*).**
- **Contains thousands of accounts of the words and deeds of Muhammad.**
- **Gathered in the 8th and 9th centuries.**

Hadith

- **For various reasons (unreliable transmitter, contradicts Quran, ect) Muslims also routinely disagree over whether a given *hadith* is authentic.**
- **Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims also disagree with each other over which *hadiths* are authentic and each have their own *hadiths*.**

The 5 Pillars of



Witness (*Shahadah*)

“I testify that there is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God.”

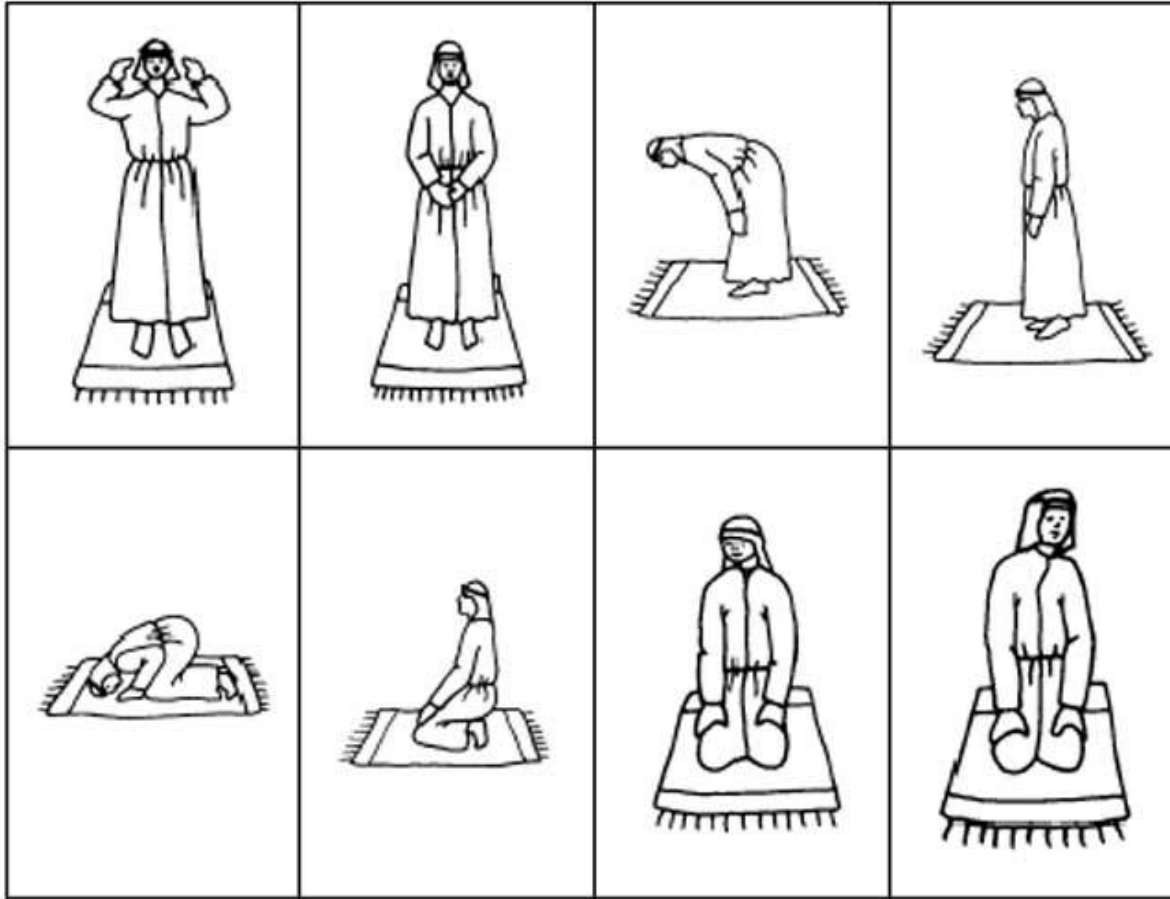
This is repeated in the call to prayer and in the five daily prayers themselves.

To become a Muslim you need to testify to this statement of faith and proclaim its two truths out loud.

Prayer (*Salat*)

- **5 times a day 365 days a year.**
- **Said out loud at dawn, sunset, and night.**
- **Said in silence at noon and in the afternoon.**
- **When called to pray you stop whatever you are doing.**
- **Wash yourself (of life's impurities).**
- **Face Mecca (Islam's holiest city).**
- **Pray with their whole body – standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting.**
- **Posture of total submission: planting knees, hands, forehead, and nose on the ground.**

Prayer



The “Lord’s Prayer of Islam”

*Praise be to God, Lord of the Universe,
The Compassionate, the Merciful, Sovereign of the Day
of Judgement!*

*You alone we worship, and to You alone we turn for
help.*

*Guide us to the straight path,
The path of those whom You have favoured,
Not of those who have incurred Your wrath,
Nor of those who have gone astray (1:1-7).*



Fasting during the lunar month of Ramadan.

- It commemorates the coming of revelation to Muhammad.**
- Falls in the 9th month of the Islamic year.**
- No eating, drinking, smoking, or sex from dawn to dusk.**
- Reciting and listening to the Quran instead.**
- Ends with a fast-breaking festival that brings families together to eat, pray, and exchange gifts.**

Almsgiving (*Zakat*)

2.5% of your assets to the poor.



Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)

A pilgrimage to Mecca (in Saudi Arabia) once during a lifetime provided one is physically and financially able.

- Symbolizes unity among Muslims by everyone wearing white robes.**
- Kabah shrine is the most sacred place in the Muslim world and is believed by Muslims to have first been built by Adam and later rebuilt by Abraham.**

Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)

- **According to Muslim belief “The Black Stone” originated in the time of Adam. Later an angel spoke to Abraham and told him to institute the rite of the stone in the hajj at Mecca.**
- **Islamic tradition holds that the stone fell from Heaven to show Adam and Eve where to build an altar, which became the first temple on Earth.**



Islamic Differences

- Islam is a big tent theologically: fundamentalist, feminists, legalists, mystics (Sufi), progressives, moderates.
- Largest difference is between Sunnis and Shias.
- They split after Muhammad's death.
- The majority backed his father-in-law Abu Bakr as his successor. (Sunni).
- A minority insisted that the leader share Muhammad's bloodline and backed son-in-law Ali. (Shia).

Sunnis

- **Sunnis (85% of world's Muslims).**
- **Sunnis decentralize religious authority by placing it in the Muslim community (and Sunni legal views can vary widely from community to community).**

Shias

- Shias (15% of world's Muslims).
- Centralize religious authority in the *Imam*.
- *Imam* means “leader” in Arabic.
- The *Imam* is the cleric who leads the weekly congregational worship services on Friday and the entire community throughout the week.
- For the Shia this person must be a direct descendant from Muhammad.
- According to Shias this person is also sinless and infallible.

Twelvers

- Shias also split into various branches.
- *Twelvers* are the largest branch.
- *Twelvers* believe there were 12 *Imams*, the 12th went into hiding in 873 CE and this “hidden” *Imam* will return at the end of the world as a messiah figure , leading an apocalyptic battle between good and evil.

Sharia law

- Means “right path”.
- No separation of sacred and secular – extends to all aspects of life.
- Interpretation based on the *Quran* and *Hadith*.

Jihad

- **Spiritual struggle against pride and self-sufficiency.**
- **Physical struggle against the enemies of Islam using preaching, teaching, working for social justice and sometime war.**

Friday Worship

Muslims believe that Allah created Adam on Friday.

Adam entered paradise on Friday.

The day of Judgement will fall on a Friday.

For this, and other reasons, Friday is a *extra* special day of the week for Muslims – but Muslims believe that all days are to be lived for God.

Hijab

- **Covers the head and chest and is particularly worn by a Muslim female beyond the age of puberty in the presence of adult males who are not family members.**
- **It can further refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by Muslim women (depending on the tradition) that conforms to a certain standard of modesty.**
- **It not only refers to the physical body covering for modesty, but also embodies a spiritual dimension, symbolizing "the veil which separates man or the world from God."**
- **Worn to identify oneself as a Muslim.**

