

INSIDE ISLAM

(History Channel)

Timeline

I. The Age of the Prophet (610 – 632 AD)

1. Muhammad born c. 570 AD, lived in Mecca
2. c. 610 begins receiving revelations from angel Jibril (Gabriel) – message to fellow Arabs: strict monotheism, ethical conduct, judgment and afterlife
3. centered on spiritual submission to God
4. first followers: Khadijah (wife), Ali (son-in-law, husband of daughter Fatimah)
5. 622 AD forced to flee Mecca to Yathrib (later called Medina)
Hijra (flight) = year 0 in Islamic calendar
6. many followers in Medina – large community (ummah)
7. revelations/sayings collected after his death: Qur'an (recitation)
8. other traditions of Muhammad's life and custom (Sunnah) also collected into narrative lives and collections of sayings and stories (Hadith)

II. The Age of the Companions (632 – 661 AD)

1. After Muhammad's death, his friend Abu Bakr becomes leader (caliph) followed by other companions: (a) Umar (extended the ummah into Egypt, Syria and Palestine), (b) Uthman (extended into North Africa, Cyprus, Central Asia)
2. Uthman assassinated; rival caliphs (Ali [Muhammad's son-in-law] vs. Muawiyah [son of Uthman])
3. Ali is caliph until he dies in 661 AD
4. Muawiyah becomes caliph, rules from Damascus
5. Shi'i movement: leaders of Islam must be holy men (imams) descended from Muhammad through Ali/Fatimah (Sunni = any holy person can be elected leader)

III. The Caliphates (661 – 935 AD)

1. Islam spreads into India in east, Spain in west
2. "people of the book" (Jews, Christians) protected, not converted
3. Abbasids take control of caliphate and rule from Bagdad
4. Bagdad becomes home of schools of Islamic law (Shari'a); religion and culture flourish
5. new forms of Islam develop: mystics (Sufis), Islamic philosophy, messianic Shi'ites
6. 10th century – Abbasid dynasty slowly collapses

IV. Medieval Islamdom (935 – 1300s AD)

1. Spain (Al-Andalus): Umayyads created universities at Toledo and Cordova
2. Egypt: Fatimids establish Shi'i kingdom with capitol in Cairo
3. several Sunni and Shi'ite kingdoms in near east and western Asia
4. 10th century Turkey: Seljuks convert to Sunni Islam, control Syria, Palestine, Mecca and Medina
5. 11th and 12th centuries: Umayyad kingdom falls to smaller Islamic groups; Christians conquer Spain (small Islamic kingdom of Grenada all that remains)
6. 11th century: crusades launched by western Europeans; eventually defeated by Saladin
7. Saladin establishes the Ayyubid dynasty (from Egypt to Bagdad)
8. 13th century: Mongols attack, sweep from China to Turkey; eventually convert to Islam

9. legal schools create common standards of Shari'a law
10. Islamic philosophy (falsafa) and mysticism (Sufism) flourish

V. **The Age of Islamic Empires (1400s – 1700s AD)**

1. Mogul and other Islamic empires fade
2. Turkey: Ottoman Empire unites Turkey, Arabia, Palestine and Egypt
3. 1453: Ottoman Turks conquer Constantinople (change name to Istanbul)
remain in control until early 20th century (World War I)
4. Persia: military leader converts to Shi'i Islam – becomes state religion there
(Iran today is still a stronghold of Shi'ites)
5. Moghul Empire emerges in Central Asia and controls entire region
religiously and culturally tolerant until 17th century

VI. **Modern and Global Islam (1700s – present)**

1. British control of India wakens and eliminates Moghul rule
2. Ottomans and Safavids outgunned and outmanned by industrialized western Europeans
3. World War I – Ottomans back Germans
4. after WWI – England controls Egypt, Palestine; France controls Libya, Morocco, Algeria, etc.
5. borders drawn to suit needs of England, France, USA – oil
6. 1919-1939 western imperialism collapses on itself
7. after World War II: secular governments in Turkey and Iran
Islamic governments in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt
8. creation of Israel splits the Islamic middle east
9. creation of Pakistan splits southern Asia
10. 1979 – (US supported) Shah of Iran overthrown
11. growing tensions between many Islamic states and western governments
12. after Sept 11, 2001, many Muslims perceive the American “war on terrorism” as a war
on Islam