

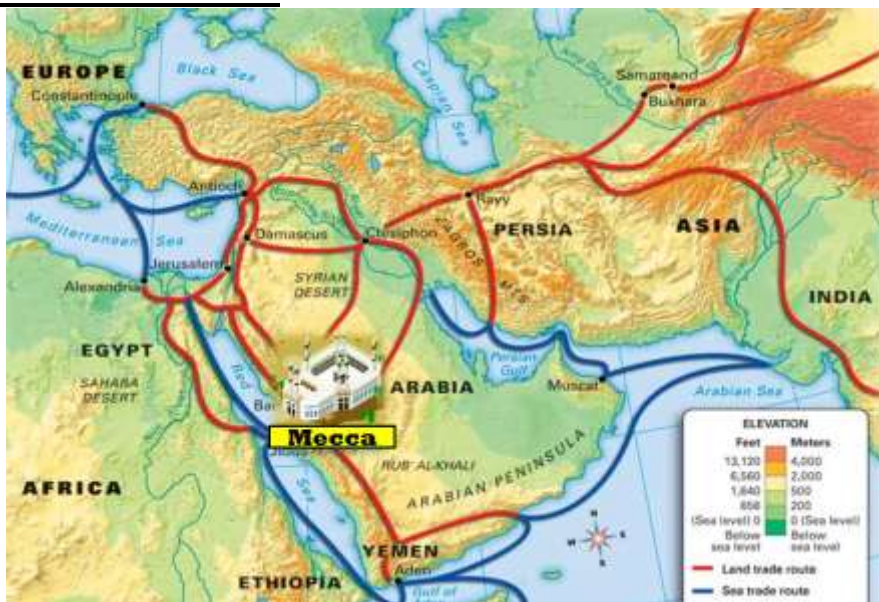
Islam



Review of Monotheistic Religions

You have previously learned about two major world religions, Judaism and Christianity. Both religions are monotheistic, meaning a belief in only one god. Judaism, founded by Abraham, teaches to believe in Yahweh through the *Torah*, the holy book of the religion. Christianity, founded by a Hebrew named Jesus of Nazareth, teaches that he was God's son sent to Earth to save man from sin in the *Bible*. There is a third major world religion that is monotheistic, and which is also related to both Judaism and Christianity: **Islam**.

The Arabian Peninsula



"Islam (Mini Unit)." *Learwood 7th Grade Social Studies*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 June 2014.

Mohammad the Prophet

Mohammad was from the town of **Mecca** in Arabia, a region of the world known as the Middle East. Mecca was a wealthy town at the time because it was along many of the trade routes the Arabs were using to trade between Africa and Asia.

The Founder of Islam and Religion's Beliefs

The ideas of **Islam** were revealed to a man named **Mohammed (Muhammad)**. Mohammed was from the town of Mecca in Arabia, a region of the world known as the Middle East and is dominated by sandy deserts. Mohammed, the founder of Islam, is referred to as the **prophet**. A prophet is a person who is said to receive messages from God to be taught to others. These ideas that **Allah**, the God of Islam, told Mohammed were collected in a book known as the **Koran (or Qu'ran)**.

Islam considers Abraham, Moses, and Jesus to also be important prophets. However, the difference is that Mohammed is Allah's greatest prophet. It is important to understand that in Islam, Mohammed is *not* considered a god or someone to be worshipped, like Christians worship Jesus. He was just a prophet of Allah.

The Five Pillars of Islam

Islam is based on the **Five Pillars**. These pillars are what every **Muslim** (follower of Islam) are expected to accept in every aspect of their lives.

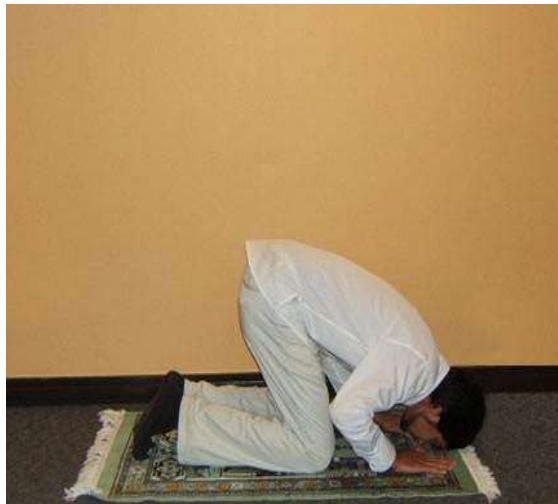


1. Faith



To be a **Muslim**, one must believe that there is one true God, Allah, and that Mohammed was his prophet.

2. Prayer



"Warren Fyfe News.org." Warren Fyfe Newsorg. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 June 2014.

A Muslim must pray five times a day, each time facing the direction of Mecca.

3. Fasting



During the holy month of **Ramadan** (the month Mohammed received his messages from Allah), all Muslims must fast when it is daylight. The purpose of fasting is to remind Muslims of those who aren't as fortunate and may not have enough to eat throughout the year.

4. Alms



This is giving **2.5%** of their money to charity and the poor. This donation is called the **zakat**.

5. Pilgrimage



"Mansa Musa." *الإسلام في حياة موسى ع*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 June 2014.

At least once in his/her life, a physically and financially able Muslim must take a **pilgrimage** (trip/journey) to Mecca. This pilgrimage is also known as the **hajj**.

Question: How does charity (alms-giving) tie into other pillars of Islam?

Question: How do the Five Pillars of Islam compare to the Ten Commandments?

Muslim Achievements

The Islamic world contributed many achievements that we still use today. Muslim scientists studied astronomy, and improved on the **astrolabe**, an important tool for sea navigation using the stars. Their maps of the known world were much more accurate, which also helped with travel and trade. Unlike in Europe at the time, education was extremely important to Arabs. Muslims invented **algebra**. In fact, the numbers we use today (0-9) were a creation of the Muslims (and the Indians). Their best advances were in medicine. Muslims

started the first pharmacy school to teach people how to make medicine. Another doctor discovered how to treat smallpox.

Diffusion

Islam spread through conquest at first. During the first 100 years following Mohammad's death, Muslims conquered the **Middle East**, Persia, the Arabian Peninsula and northern Africa. Here, they made Islam the religion of the region. In later centuries, Islam spread through trade routes and peaceful ways across the Indian Ocean, Central Asia and West Africa, as well as into parts of Europe through armed conquest into the Balkans and **Iberian Peninsula**.

A Split In Islam

After the death of Mohammad, his followers disagreed with who should be his successor. They formed two separate denominations (branches) of Islam, based on who they supported to lead the empire, the **Shiite** and the **Sunni**. The Shiite Muslims felt that the next leader had to be a blood relative of Mohammad. The Sunni Muslims felt that the next leader should be any man deemed worthy. This split still exists today.

Question: How did Islam spread?

Question: What are the two branches of Islam? How do they differ?