

Rise of Islam

Chapter 8, Part I



The Sasanid Empire

224-651

The Sasanids

- 3rd century Iran
- Established by Ardashir
- Last pre-Islamic heir to Persian Empire
- Successful maintenance of empire
 - Money and military
 - Hired Arab nomads to help protect borders
- Frequently at war with Byzantines
 - During times of peace, trade flourished
 - Goods from Silk Road entered Byzantine/Mediterranean
- Trade
 - Cotton, sugar cane, rice, citrus trees, eggplant (Indian and Chinese origin)



Society and Religion

- Cities
 - Small, walled community
 - Military stronghold
 - Local aristocracies
- Zoroastrian
 - Comparable to Byzantine Christianity
 - Religion used as political tool
 - Paved the way for Islamic caliphates
 - Intolerance of other religions
- Most people associated with religion first and foremost
 - Schools, laws

Fall of Sasanid Empire

- Rulers manipulated by wealthy aristocracy
- Muslim invasions
- 651: last ruler assassinated

Islamic Foundations

Arabian Peninsula



Landscape was dry and inhospitable, although coastal regions had extensive agriculture.

Pre-Islamic Arabia

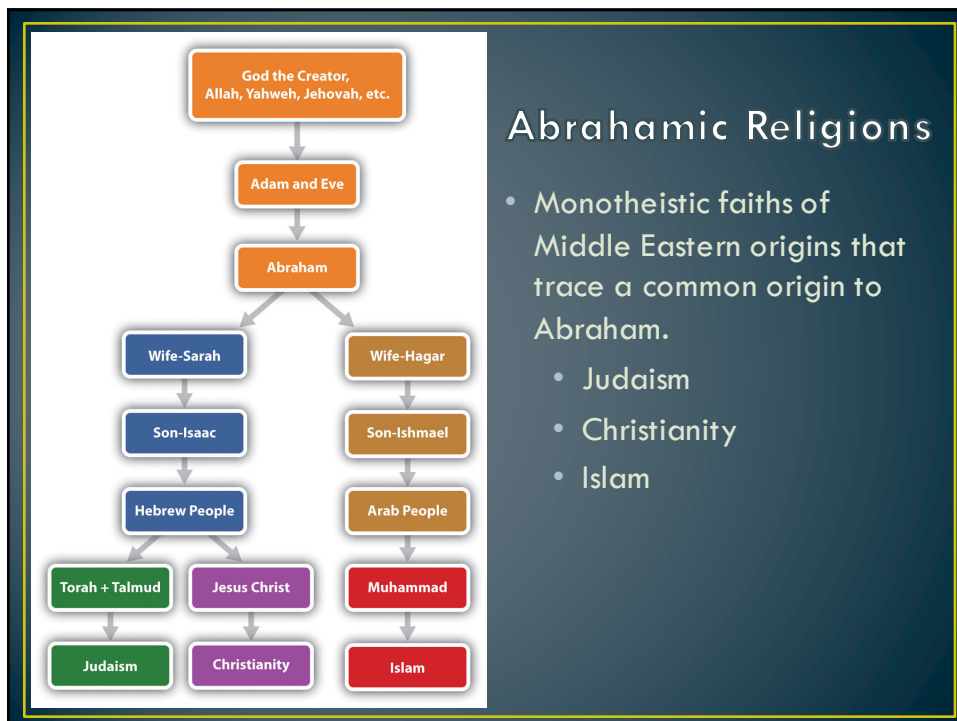
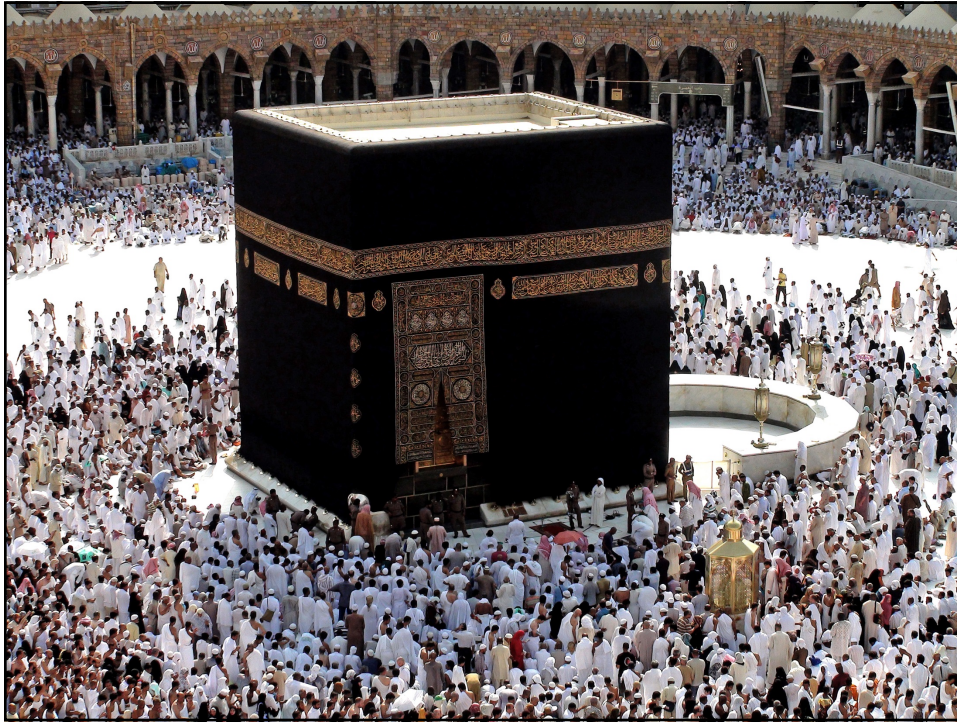
- Bedouin
 - First civilizations on Arabian peninsula
 - Nomadic
- Clans: kin related groups
- Tribes: groups of clans
- Wars over pasture land
- Matriarchal due to absence of men (trade)



Mecca



- Caravan city
 - Settled in 5th century
- Ka'ba
 - Cubical shrine
 - Idols inside
 - Becomes Islamic symbol
- Zamzam: holy well
- Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael
 - (Ibrahim, Ishaq, Isma'il)



Muhammad



- Born in 570 in Mecca
- Orphan
- Married a widow and became a trader
- 610: begins meditation and revelations/visions
 - Gabriel
 - “Proclaim! In the name of your Lord...created man from a clog of...blood...”
 - One god who created the universe and everything
 - Paradise and Hellfire
- “Demon possessed”

Revelations

- Submit to God (Allah)
- Muhammad is Allah’s last messenger
- Muslim: one who makes Islam (submission) to the will of Allah
- Jews and Christians are negligent in preserving Allah’s word
- Abraham = first Muslim
- Muhammad’s revelations are purer and more perfect than the Bible
 - No editing process



Flight to Medina (622)

- Threatened the power of Meccan leaders
- Hijra = beginning of Muslim calendar
- Umma: Muslim community
 - Acceptance of Islam
 - Muhammad is Allah's Messenger



Muslims vs. Jews

- Attempt to convert Mecca and Jewish clans
 - Charged Jews with disloyalty
 - Ultimate expulsion or elimination
- Mecca convinced that Medina blessed/favored
 - 630: surrender of Mecca
- Changed direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca and Ka'ba
- Muhammad remained in Medina until death
 - Gained unchallenged control of Islamic state on Arabian Peninsula

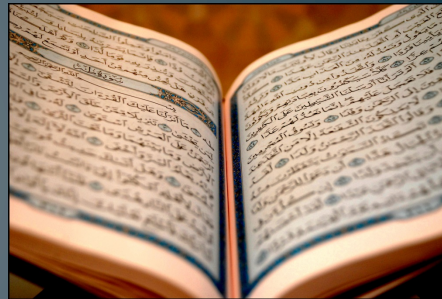
Succession



- NO successor to Muhammad named
- Abu Bakr named khalifa (caliph) = “successor”
 - Early believer
 - Father of A'isha (favorite wife of Muhammad)
- Reinforced Muhammad's teachings
- Expanded Muslim authority in Arabia
- Compilation of the Qu'ran

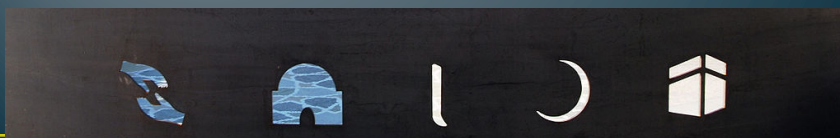
Qu'ran

- the Recitation (Koran)
 - Compiled after Muhammad's death
 - Collection of Muhammad's revelations in book form
 - Unalterable word of Allah
 - Jesus vs. Bible comparison



Five Pillars of Islam

- Shahada (The Creed)
 - There is only one god
 - Muhammad is his messenger
- Sawm (Fasting)
 - Ramadan
- Hajj (Pilgrimage)
 - To Mecca at least once
- Zakat (Alms Giving)
 - Alms giving
- Salat (Prayer)
 - Pray 5x per day
 - Face Mecca



Shari'a (law)

- Foundation of Islamic civilization
- Umma needed a legal system with death of Muhammad
 - Same traditions, moral values, politics, across entire Islamic area
 - Little variation in civilization from Morocco to India
- Hadith
 - 1000s of reports with Muhammad's words, teachings, examples
 - Ritual washings
 - Legal matters
- Problems with Hadith
 - Political motivation
 - Non-Muslim tradition
- Shi'ites vs. Sunnis
 - Shi'ites: 4 books
 - Sunnis: 6 books

Rebellion

- Abu Bakr, Omar, Uthman
- Uthman assassinated by rebels
- Ali nominated to be new caliph
 - Muhammad's son-in-law / 1st cousin
 - Passed over 3x
 - "Prophet's natural heir"
- Challenged by Muhammad's friends and A'isha
- Battle of the Camel: Ali wins



Shi'ites and Sunnis

- Mu'awiya challenges Ali-arbitration
 - Ali is assassinated
- Yazid (Mu'awiya's son) establishes the Umayyad Caliphate
 - Orders the death of Ali's descendants in response to another rebellion
 - Creates divisive split among Muslims
- Shi'ites (Shia)
 - 15%
 - Party of Ali
 - Hereditary line of Muhammad
- Sunni
 - 85%
 - People of Tradition and Community
 - Caliphs should be chosen from umma

Geographical Distribution



THE ROOTS

632 AD
PROPHET MUHAMMAD DIES

There was no such thing as **SHIA** and **SUNNI** during the Prophet's time. Both sects agree Muhammad was the last Prophet of Islam. But while **SHIA** believe only the descendants of the Prophet can rule, **SUNNI** believe any qualified Islamic ruler can take over.

SHIA
"PARTY OF ALI"

WHO SUCCEEDS AS LEADER OF ISLAM?

SUNNI
"PEOPLE OF TRADITION"

SUCCESSORS

ALI

COUSIN & SON-IN-LAW OF MUHAMMAD

HASAN

SON OF ALI

HUSAYN

SON OF ALI

ALI

SON OF HUSAYN

THE PROPHET'S GRANDSON WAS KILLED IN THE BATTLE OF KARBALA. SHIA BELIEVE HE DIED TRYING TO SAVE ISLAM FROM THOSE IN POWER. THE SPIRIT BECAME MORE APPARENT. HUSAYN IS KEY TO SHIA IDENTITY.

ABU BAKR

COMRANION OF MUHAMMAD

UMAR

COMRANION

UTHMAN

COMRANION

ALI

COUSIN & SON-IN-LAW OF MUHAMMAD

RECOGNISED **ABU BAKR** AS FIRST CALIPH TO AVOID CONFLICT

SHIA debate the legitimacy of the first three caliphs whom **SUNNI** follow.

SUNNI recognise **ALI** as the fourth caliph.

BELIEFS

PRAY FIVE TIMES A DAY, PLACING HEAD ON CLAY

PRAYER

PRAY FIVE TIMES A DAY

PRAYER

PRAY ONCE SUN SETS

PRAY AFTER SUN SETS

CAN BE UPDATED BASED ON NEW INTERPRETATIONS BY CLERICS

SHARIA LAW

MORE CODIFIED SYSTEM OF ISLAMIC LAW

FOLLOWERS OF THE 12 IMAMS, RIGHTFUL SUCCESSORS TO THE PROPHET

IMAMS

NOT SEEN AS SUCCESSORS, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED

GLOSSARY

CALIPH: Successor

IMAM: Religious leaders for Shia. The 12 main ones are descendants of the Prophet, their deaths are mourned throughout the year.

SHARIA LAW: Rules and regulations of Islam.

HADITH: Sayings reported from the Prophet and the Imams outside the holy book Quran.

KARBALA: Ali's son Husayn was killed in this city in Iraq. It is a holy city for Shia Muslims.

ASHURA: Holy day during Islamic month of Muharram, day of mourning for death of Husayn and his family members.

Muslims in the Mideast

Less than 15 percent of the world's Muslims are Shiite, or Shia; most Muslims are Sunni.

Percentage of Shiites in selected countries

Less than 1%	1-20
21-55	56-100

Who the Shiites are

- Name derives from the phrase "Shiatu Ali," or followers of Ali
- Believe that Ali, cousin and son-in-law of founder Mohammad, is his rightful successor
- Reject the legitimacy of the first three caliphs (leaders), whom the Sunni follow
- Have some doctrinal, as well as political differences with Sunnis

Basic Differences Between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims

Sunni	Shi'a
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe that the first four caliphs were "rightly guided" • Believe that Muslim rulers should follow the Sunna, or Muhammad's example • Claim that the Shi'a have distorted the meaning of various passages in the Qur'an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe that Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, should have succeeded Muhammad • Believe that all Muslim rulers should be descended from Muhammad; do not recognize the authority of the Sunna • Claim that the Sunni have distorted the meaning of various passages in the Qur'an

Source: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

Percentage Today of Sunni and Shi'a Muslims Worldwide

Sunni	85%
Shi'a	15%
Other	1%