

The Essentials of Islamic History

- I. The Three Principal Periods of Islamic History.
 - A. The Classical Period (7th–10th centuries).
 - B. The Medieval Period (11th–17th centuries).
 - C. The Modern Period (18th–20th centuries).
- II. The Classical Period (7th–10th centuries).
 - A. The Muslim *Umma* developed into a world civilization with extraordinary speed in less than 100 years.
 - B. In its formative first 400 years, the Muslim civilization displayed remarkable adaptive powers, absorbing many different peoples into a single coherent cultural unit stretching from Spain to Central Asia and northern India.
 - C. Important Dates:
 1. c. 570 Birth of Muḥammad
 2. 622 The *hijra* from Mecca to Medina
 3. 624 Battle of Badr
 4. 625 Battle of Uḥud (one of the rare Muslim defeats)
 5. 628 Destruction of Jewish settlements at Khaibar
 6. 632 Muḥammad dies (b. ca. 570)
 7. 632-634 Caliphate of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq
 8. 633 Death of Fāṭima, wife of ‘Alī and daughter of the Prophet
 9. 634-644 Caliphate of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb
 10. 638 ‘Umar takes Jerusalem
 11. 639 Muslim conquest of Egypt under Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ
 12. 644-656 Caliphate of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān
 13. c. 653 Official recension of the Qur’ān issued by ‘Uthmān
 14. 656-661 Caliphate of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib
 15. 661-750 Umayyad Dynasty ruling from Damascus
 16. 677 Death of ‘Ā’isha
 17. 680 The massacre at Kerbala. Death of al-Ḥusain ibn ‘Alī.
 18. 732 Charles Martel defeats Muslims at Battle of Tours, France, halting expansion of Islam into Europe
 19. 750-1258 ‘Abbāsīd Dynasty ruling from Baghdad.
 20. 756-1037 Umayyad Dynasty in Spain.
 21. 786-809 Caliphate of Hārūn ar-Rashīd.
 22. 909-1171 Fāṭimid Dynasty in North Africa.
 23. 969 Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt and founding of Cairo.
 24. 996-1021 Al-Ḥākīm, the mad Caliph, rules in Egypt.
 25. 1099 Capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders.
 26. 1193 Death of the Kurd Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn al-Ayyūbī (Saladin).
 27. 1254-1517 Mameluke rule in Egypt.
 28. 1258 Hūlāgū the Mongol takes Baghdad.
- III. The Medieval Period (11th–17th centuries).
 - A. There were a number of barbarian invasions in the 11th century.
 - B. The 500 years that followed witnessed a series of successful adaptations and internal transformations to accommodate this situation, while at the same time the original unity of culture was replaced by distinct local cultural zones.
 - C. Important Dates:
 1. 1453 Fall of Constantinople to the Turks.
 2. 1492 Fall of Granada and end of Moorish domination in Spain.
 3. 1501 start of Ṣafavīd dynasty in Persia, which made Twelve-Imām Shī’ism the state religion of Persia.
 4. 1529 Failed siege of Vienna by Ottomans
 5. 1571 Battle of Lepanto—Europeans block Ottoman advance into Mediterranean
 6. 1745 Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb makes an alliance with Muḥammad ibn Sa’ūd.
- IV. The Modern Period (18th–20th centuries).
 - A. This is the period of European dominance over the Islamic World, which Islamicist (“fundamentalist”) movements are now trying to undo.
 - B. Important Dates:
 1. 1798 Napoleon conquers Egypt
 2. 1802 The Wahhābīs sack the Shī’a holy city of Kerbala in 1802, massacring its inhabitants.
 3. 1885 Khartoum falls to the Mahdist forces
 4. 1924 Atatürk abolishes the caliphate and *shariah* court system
 5. 1928 Hasan al-Banna founds the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt
 6. 1948 State of Israel created
 7. 1967 “The Six-Day” War in which Israel routed the forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria