Place & Time: Islamic Civilization, 600 to 1629 C.E.
Islamic civilization extended across Southwest Asia, North Africa, and parts of Europe. It later spread into India and Southeast Asia. Over time, Islamic rule was challenged by rivalries within Islam and by invasions of outside groups. A series of Islamic empires ruled until the early 1900s.

Arab Empire 750 C.E.

The Spread of Islam 632-750 C.E.

After Muhammad’s death, the territory of the Arab Empire expanded.

Islamic Architecture
Elements of Spain’s Islamic past can be found in the architecture of its buildings, such as in the Alhambra. Some characteristics of Islamic architecture include courtyards, columns, arches, domes, and the repetition of geometric patterns.

La Mezquita in Cordoba, Spain is another example of Islamic architecture. The building was originally a church in the late 700s C.E. Then it became a mosque, and today it is once again a church. Elements of the site’s Islamic past remain. The building has over 800 columns made from decorative stones including onyx, jasper, granite and marble.

The palace of Alcazar in Seville, Spain, has Arabic-style arches, columns, carved patterns and a peaceful courtyard with a reflecting pool. Because Christians later took over the site, it blends Islamic and Gothic styles of architecture.

Gothic architecture is a medieval European style involving pointed arches, large windows. The palace features a 10-sided brick tower that was once part of its defenses.
The First Four Caliphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abu Bakr</th>
<th>Umar</th>
<th>Uthman</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship to Muhammad</strong></td>
<td>father-in-law</td>
<td>friend</td>
<td>son-in-law, member of the Umayyad family</td>
<td>first cousin, son-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career</strong></td>
<td>merchant</td>
<td>merchant</td>
<td>merchant</td>
<td>soldier, writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years as Caliph</strong></td>
<td>632-634</td>
<td>634-644</td>
<td>644-656</td>
<td>656-661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievements as Caliph</strong></td>
<td>spread Islam to all of Arabia; restored peace after death of Muhammad; created code of conduct in war; compiled Quran verses</td>
<td>spread Islam to Syria, Egypt, and Persia; redesigned government; paid soldiers; held a census; made taxes more fair; built roads and canals; aided poor</td>
<td>spread Islam into Afghanistan and eastern Mediterranean; organized a navy; improved the government; built more roads, bridges, and canals; distributed text of the Quran</td>
<td>reformed tax collection and other government systems; spent most of caliphate battling Muawiyah, the governor of Syria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Founding an Empire**

- After Muhammad’s death, new leaders called caliphs were chosen to protect and spread Islam.
- By the 660s, the Arab Empire included all of southwest Asia and northeast Africa.
- The Umayyad caliphs expanded Islam into Asia and Africa; in the early 700s C.E., Muslim warriors entered Spain from North Africa, expanding the empire.
- Conquering armies practiced religious tolerance as cultures mixed; preachers and merchants in trading posts helped Islam spread.

**The Abbasid Empire 800 C.E.**

Baghdad became the capital of the Abbasid empire and an important center for trade.

**Division and Growth**

- Shia Muslims believed caliphs must be descendants of Muhammad’s son-in-law Ali. Sunni Muslims recognized the Umayyad caliphs as rightful rulers.
- Shia rebels gained support and overthrew the Umayyad, after which Abbasid caliphs came to power.
Under Abbadid rule, the Arab Empire experienced a golden age, with the city of Baghdad as its capital.

In 1055, the Seljuk Turks seized Baghdad; in 1258, Mongols attacked Baghdad, killing more than 50,000 and bringing an end to the Arab Empire.

Three Muslim Empires

- After the Arab Empire ended, other Muslim groups created their own empires.
- The Ottoman Empire ruled over many religions, but Islam was the official religion and Muslims were given special privileges.
- During the Safavid dynasty, the Persian culture and language spread through trade.
- The Moguls in India shifted from religious tolerance to persecution of Hindus and Sikhs, creating rebellions in the region.

Chapter 3.2 Summary

- When Muhammad died, he left no instructions as to who should be the next leader of Islam. Muslim leaders chose a new leader called a caliph, or successor.
- Caliphs known as the Umayyads conquered new lands, including Spain. The Umayyads let the people they conquered follow their own religions.
- Spain was home to many of Islam’s greatest thinkers and a group called Sufis won followers by teaching Islam.
- Muslims divided into Shia and Sunni. As Muhammad left no sons, the Shia believe caliphs have to be descendants of Muhammad. The Sunni believe the caliphs do not have to be descendants of Muhammad and can be elected.
- The Shia and the Sunni agree on the principles of Islam, including the Five Pillars.
- Islamic Civilization Most Muslims today are Sunni, although in Iran and Iraq, there are many Shia.
- In 750 C.E., the Shia rebelled and the Abbasid caliphs ruled the Arab Empire from Baghdad. They focused not on conquest but on trade and culture.
- The Seljuk Turks from central Asia seized Baghdad in 1055. The Arab Empire ended in 1258 when the Mongols burned Baghdad.
- In the 1400s the Ottomans from Turkey conquered the Arab and Byzantine Empires. The Ottoman Empire lasted until the early 1900s.
- Suleiman I, known as the Lawgiver, was the greatest ruler of the Ottoman Empire. In Persia the Safavid dynasty ruled until the 1700s and was not conquered by the Ottomans. The Persian language and culture spread to South Asia.
- The Mughals set up a Muslim empire in India during the 1500s.