

## Mini-Q™s in World History

### Volume 2, Unit 3

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# Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

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## MINI-Q™ LESSON PLAN

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### DAY 1 – 45 minutes

**Step One: Hook** Refer to the Step One teacher notes in the Mini-Q. Read the directions aloud. The purpose is to get students engaged, talking, and wanting to do the Mini-Q.

**Step Two: Background Essay** Refer to the Step Two teacher notes in the Mini-Q. Students can write out answers to the BGE questions or the questions can simply be discussed.

**Step Three: Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing** The task of recognizing and defining key words in the question is a crucial habit of mind. The second task of pre-bucketing based on clues in the question and in document titles is a huge categorization skill.

**Step Four: Document Analysis** Do Document A with the whole class, modeling the kind of detail you expect in student answers to the Document Analysis questions.

Homework: Analyze the remaining documents and answer the questions that follow.

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### DAY 2 – 45 minutes

**Step Four (continued): Discussion of Documents**

*Option One:* Working in pairs or threesomes, have students discuss the answers to the first set of Document Analysis questions they did for homework. Using a different-colored pen than they used for homework, they may add to their answers. After five minutes, open the discussion of that document to the full class. Then proceed to the next document and repeat.

*Option Two:* Proceed as above, but have a volunteer group lead each of the three or four different document discussions. Students at their desks may add to their notes, again in a different pen.

**Step Five: Bucketing and Chicken Foot** Have students complete the bucketing and chicken foot work page. This step will help students clarify their thesis and road map.

**Step Six: From Thesis to Essay Writing** (For homework) Have students fill out the Outline Guide Sheet or write their multi-paragraph essay.

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### DAY 3 (Optional)

**Step Six (continued):** Conduct an in-class Writing Workshop.

## MINI-Q™ LESSON PLAN: CLEAN VERSION OPTION

If students are ready, use the Clean Version of the Mini-Q, which requires them to handle more of the analysis on their own. Estimated time to complete is 1-2 class periods.

## TEACHER DOCUMENT LIST (EV)

There are six documents in this Mini-Q. Students are provided with the same document list, but it is not divided into analytical categories or buckets. Students may develop categories that are different from these.

### Trade Routes

Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade Routes (map)

### The Message

Document B: Verses from the Qur'an

### Military Conquest

Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)

Document D: The Ghazu

Document F: The People of Hims

### Political Order

Document E: The Duties of the Caliph

Document F: The People of Hims

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# Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

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EV



A medieval caravan of Muslim pilgrims traveling to Mecca

**Overview:** According to the holy texts of the Muslims, in 610 CE a local merchant named Muhammad retreated to a cave outside the city of Mecca in Arabia to meditate. There, the archangel Gabriel appeared and gave Muhammad words to recite. These words were to give birth to a religion called Islam. Within 140 years, followers of Islam had created an empire that ruled the Middle East and stretched across North Africa into Europe. This Mini-Q explores why this new religion was able to spread so quickly.

## The Documents:

- Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade Routes (map)
- Document B: Verses from the Qur'an
- Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)
- Document D: The Ghazu
- Document E: The Duties of the Caliph
- Document F: The People of Hims

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A Mini Document Based Question (Mini-Q)

## Step One: The Hook

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**Teacher Note:** The purpose of the Hook Exercise is to create some initial interest in the Mini-Q. Have students work individually or in pairs and give them about five minutes to examine the flow charts and identify the mechanisms that sparked the cultural diffusion. Then have them complete their own cultural diffusion flow charts.

### Part 1:

The best answers to the flow chart exercise are probably:

1. trade
2. conquest
3. migration
4. technology

### Part 2:

5. Answers will vary, but each should demonstrate an understanding of cultural diffusion. Each response should feature at least three stages of each event that led to the cultural diffusion, as modeled in the examples.

## Hook Exercise: Cultural Diffusion

**Note:** Cultural diffusion is the process by which an object or an idea from one culture spreads to different cultures. When the Spanish brought the first horses to the Americas, that was cultural diffusion. So was the arrival of pizza from Italy.

Cultural diffusion has happened throughout history and is happening today. Whether it's food, a song, an illness, or a religion – a new event or idea is usually transported by some mechanism that causes it to move from one place to another. The mechanism may be migration, or war, or a diseased rat.

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**Part 1:** Examine the flow charts below. Each one shows a trigger event that resulted in significant cultural diffusion. Then, from the choices below, select the diffusion category that best matches the trigger event.

**Diffusion categories:** Technology    Trade    Conquest    Foreign Study    Migration

1. European merchants travel to Asia and bring back tea to Europe.

Tea becomes a very popular drink in Great Britain.  
Cultural diffusion sparked by:

2. Spanish invaders conquer parts of South America and introduce Catholicism to local people.

Most South Americans today are Catholic  
Cultural diffusion sparked by:

3. The musical style of the blues is developed by African Americans in the South.

African Americans move to the North for greater economic mobility.  
Blues become very popular in northern cities such as Chicago, New York and Detroit.  
Cultural diffusion sparked by:

4. New animation techniques are created in Japan.

Japanese cartoons are shown on American television and on the internet.  
Popularity of Japanese animation soars in the United States.  
Cultural diffusion sparked by:

**Part 2:** Develop your own cultural diffusion flow chart using an example of your own choosing.

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
↓  
\_\_\_\_\_  
↓  
\_\_\_\_\_  
↓  
Cultural diffusion sparked by:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Step Two: Establishing the Context

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### General Instructions

- Review the Timeline on the Background Essay questions page.
- Pre-teach the bold-faced vocabulary.
- Have students read the Background Essay or read it aloud.
- Have students answer the Background Essay questions.

### Specific Considerations

The main purpose of the Background Essay is to create a context for the Mini-Q exercise. Its job is to provide a sense of time, place and story, and to introduce important vocabulary and concepts. Doing this well gives all students a more equal chance to succeed with the Mini-Q.

**Time:** Be sure students review the timeline. Ask them to identify the main events of Muhammad's life. (He was born in 570, received his first revelation in 610, moved to Medina in 622, returned to Mecca in 628, and died in 632. He was about 62 years old.)

**Place:** Refer to a wall map showing the Middle East, or have students preview the map in Document A. Point out the Arabian Peninsula, also called Arabia, and identify the bodies of water around it: the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf. Explain that Arabia is the region of Asia closest to Africa. Almost the entire peninsula is a desert wasteland, dotted by a few oases. For most of history, it was considered a land with few economic resources. (This would change with the discovery of oil deposits in the 20th century.) At the time Muhammad was born, Arabs had two main ways of life: nomadic herding or trading in towns. They did not yet have the complex religious or political institutions found in other regions.

**Story:** We suggest reading the Background Essay aloud. It is good for many students, even good readers, to hear the words as they see them. For many, it is important to hear the cadence of the language, to experience pauses and emphasis. Use the Background Essay questions to review the text.

**Vocabulary and Concepts:** You may want to pre-teach the six bold-faced terms in the essay. Our feeling about vocabulary is that some pre-teaching is good, but keep the word list short. When reading aloud, see how much students can get from context.

## Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

In 610 CE, a merchant trader from Mecca made one of his frequent visits to a cave on nearby Mount Hira. For Muhammad ibn Abdallah it was a time to pray, to get away from the scramble for money and wealth he felt was causing his people to lose their way. According to Muhammad, it was on this visit to Mt. Hira that the archangel Gabriel squeezed him hard and caused words to flow from his mouth. The words said that **Allah** was the one God. No doubt a bit shaken, Muhammad reported the event to his wife and her cousin but otherwise stayed silent. The words continued to come.

In 610 Mecca was a bustling Arabian trade town with camel caravans arriving regularly from points north and south. It was also the site of an annual pilgrimage where Arab pagans came to perform rituals at the sacred **Ka'ba** (the holy shrine in Mecca). The Meccan population included a number of Jewish families and some Christians. There may have been a feeling among the pagan Arabs that their religious world was less sophisticated than that of the Jews and the Christians. They had nothing to match the Torah and the Bible. They had no Abraham or Moses or Jesus. But all that was about to change.

After receiving Allah's words for two years, Muhammad decided it was time to talk. Encouraged by the support of close friends and his wife, Kadija, Muhammad began to recite the received words in public. He spoke of the one god, Allah, and the importance of charity – sharing wealth with the weak and poor. Together these teachings would be given the name **Islam**, the Arabic word for “submission.” A follower of Islam was to be called a Muslim, meaning one “who submits to the will of Allah.” After

Muhammad's death in 632, Allah's words that Muhammad was reciting would be written down and called the **Qur'an**.

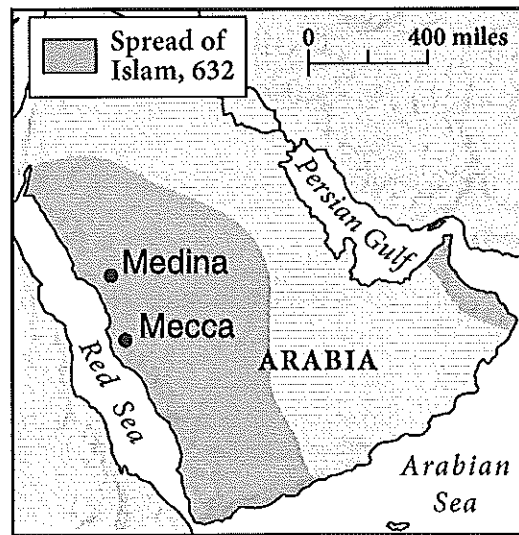
At first, many in Mecca resisted Muhammad's preaching. What would happen to idol worship? Surely pilgrimages to Mecca would stop. Business would suffer. By 622 resistance was so strong that Muhammad decided to leave. Together with 70 families, he migrated 250 miles north. There, in the town of Medina, he established a new base. He also made a symbolic break with the past. Muham-

mad had respect for Jews and Christians, “people of the Book,” as he called them. However, at a prayer session in 624, Muhammad symbolically turned his body to the south – away from Jerusalem and toward Mecca. It was as much as saying that a new religion had been born.

In 628, Muhammad made the hard decision to return to Mecca. Despite

opposition, he was allowed back in the city. He soon had enough support to order that the idols in the Ka'ba be destroyed and the shrine dedicated to Allah. Pilgrimages to the Ka'ba became one of the Five Pillars, or essential duties, of Islam. These duties – confession of belief, prayer five times a day, **Ramadan**, an annual month-long fast, giving alms to the poor, and the pilgrimage to Mecca – would become the bedrock practices of Islam.

From this modest beginning in west-central Arabia, Islam exploded in size. Within 100 years of Muhammad's death, it had reached Europe and Asia. The question before us is why. Examine the documents that follow and answer the question: *Why did Islam spread so quickly?*



## Step Two: Establishing the Context (continued)

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### Answers to Background Essay Questions

1. When and where did Muhammad first receive words from Allah?  
610 CE in a cave on Mount Hira
2. What were the two main ideas expressed by these words?  
Allah is the one god; society's wealth must be shared with the poor and the weak
3. What were the three religious groups one could find in Mecca before Muhammad's revelations?  
Christians, pagans, Jews
4. Why did Muhammad leave Mecca for Medina?  
There was resistance in Mecca to Muhammad because Meccans feared pilgrimages to the pagan shrines would end and business would slack off.
5. Can you explain why Muhammad's turning from Jerusalem and facing Mecca is called a symbolic break with the past?  
Jerusalem was the spiritual center of Judaism and Christianity. By turning to Mecca, Muhammad was saying that Islam was a separate teaching from Judaism and Christianity.
6. What are the Five Pillars of Islam?  
Confession of belief; prayer five times a day; an annual month-long fast; giving alms to the poor; and the pilgrimage to Mecca
7. Define these terms:  
Allah: The supreme being in the Muslim religion; God  
  
pagan: one who believes in many gods; common before Judaism, Christianity, and Islam  
  
Ka'ba: Holy shrine in Mecca  
  
Islam: the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad  
  
Qur'an: the holy book of Islam  
  
Ramadan: The ninth month of the Muslim year; a month of fasting



## Background Essay Questions

1. When and where did Muhammad first receive words from Allah?
2. What were the two main ideas expressed by these words?
3. What were the three religious practices one could find in Mecca before Muhammad's revelations?
4. Why did Muhammad leave Mecca for Medina?
5. Can you explain why Muhammad's turning from Jerusalem and facing Mecca is called a symbolic break with the past? (A symbolic break would be a change with special meaning. Why was this act significant?)
6. What are the Five Pillars of Islam?
7. Define these terms:
  - Allah
  - pagan
  - Ka'ba
  - Islam
  - Qur'an
  - Ramadan

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**570 CE** – Muhammad is born in Mecca.

**610** – Muhammad receives first revelation at Mt. Hira.

**622** – Muhammad leads the first Muslims to safety in Medina.

**628** – Muhammad returns to Mecca.

**632** – Muhammad dies.

**636** – Battle of Yarmuk takes place on the modern-day border between Syria and Jordan.  
Muslims defeat the army of the Byzantine Empire.

**692** – The Dome of the Rock, a Muslim shrine, is finished in Jerusalem.

**710** – Muslim forces land in Spain.

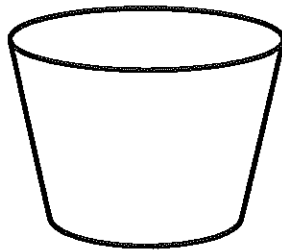
## Step Three: Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing

### Understanding the Question

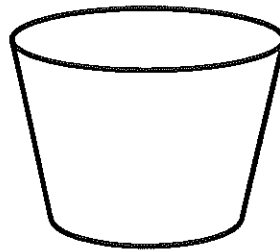
1. What is the analytical question asked by this Mini-Q?  
Why did Islam spread so quickly?
2. What terms in the question need to be defined?  
Islam
3. Rewrite the question in your own words.  
Why did the new religion called Islam spread so rapidly throughout the world?

### Pre-Bucketing

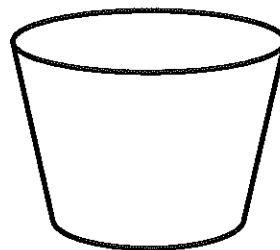
**Teacher Note:** As students suggest their bucket labels, draw bucket sets on the board. At this stage, students are simply looking for general labels that provide the framework for organizing the essay.



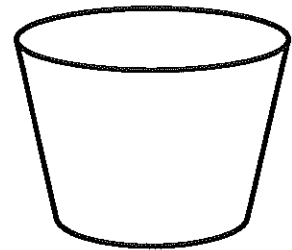
Reason #1  
Islam Spread  
So Quickly



Reason #2  
Islam Spread  
So Quickly



Reason #3  
Islam Spread  
So Quickly



Reason #4  
Islam Spread  
So Quickly

## Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing

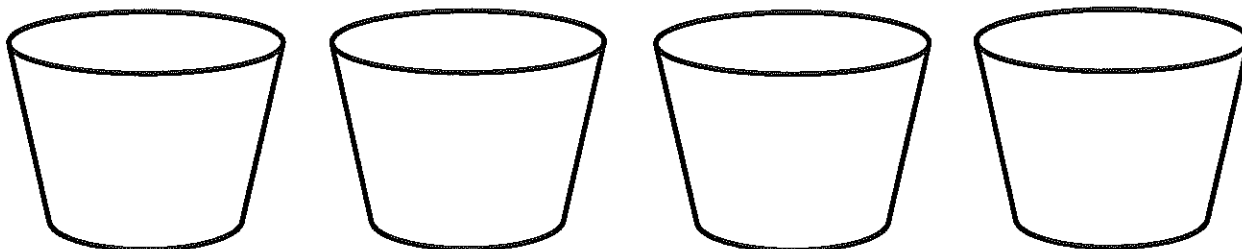
### Understanding the Question

1. What is the analytical question asked by this Mini-Q?
2. What terms in the question need to be defined?
3. Rewrite the question in your own words.

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### Pre-Bucketing

**Directions:** Using clues from the Mini-Q question, suggest general analytical categories and label the buckets.



## Step Four: Document Analysis

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### Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade

#### Content Notes:

- Muhammad's father died before he was born, and his mother died when he was six. After Muhammad was orphaned, first his grandfather and then his uncle raised him. With his grandfather, he tended the zamzam, or sacred well, for the pilgrims who came to the Ka'ba. His uncle had a caravan business, which Muhammad joined, and he traveled around Arabia on many of these routes. In both of these jobs, Muhammad encountered people of many different religions, including Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians, who followed a Persian prophet named Zoroaster.
- Many historians (such as Reza Aslan, author of *No God but God*) today believe that Mecca became a trading center only as a result of the Ka'ba and its collection of idols. As seen on the map, Mecca is an important city on the route between Yemen and the Byzantine Empire, but it is off the track of the larger trade routes that connected Arabia and empires in Europe and Asia.
- The Quraysh, of which Muhammad's family was a part, was the most powerful tribe in Mecca, and they collected the idols and placed them within the Ka'ba. They then charged people to enter the city, which demonstrates their economic motives for maintaining the Ka'ba—and for later opposing Muhammad's message of monotheism.
- Muhammad met his first wife, Khadijah, through the caravan trade. She was the wealthy widow of a merchant and had continued to run the business after her husband's death. She hired Muhammad to be her business agent because of his reputation for honesty. After he had worked for her for some time, she proposed marriage. According to legend, Khadijah was 40 at the time, while Muhammad was only 25. They had a happy marriage, and she was one of the first to support him when he began to receive his revelations. They had six children: four daughters and two sons who died. Khadijah died in about 619, and as long as she was alive, Muhammad took no other wives.

#### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:

1. What year is shown on this map? How does this relate to the history of Islam?

It depicts the year 570. This map pre-dates the beginning of Islam, but is from around the year Muhammad was born. This shows that Mecca was an important trading center even before Muhammad's life began.

2. Name three cities that are easy to reach by trade routes from Mecca.

Medina, Aden, Petra

3. What two empires are shown on this map, and where are they in relation to Arabia?

The Byzantine Empire was to the north-west. The Persian Empire was to the north-east.

4. Name four regions these trade routes went to that are not on this map

East Africa, India, Spain, China

5. Judging from both the map and the quotation on this page, why was Mecca a trade center for the Arabian Peninsula?

There are land and sea routes that connect to Mecca. It is in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula, but also close to the coast, therefore making it attractive for both types of trade. Sea routes allow easier access to other civilizations, including Europe, India, and East Africa. Also, the presence of the Ka'ba drew many people to Mecca.

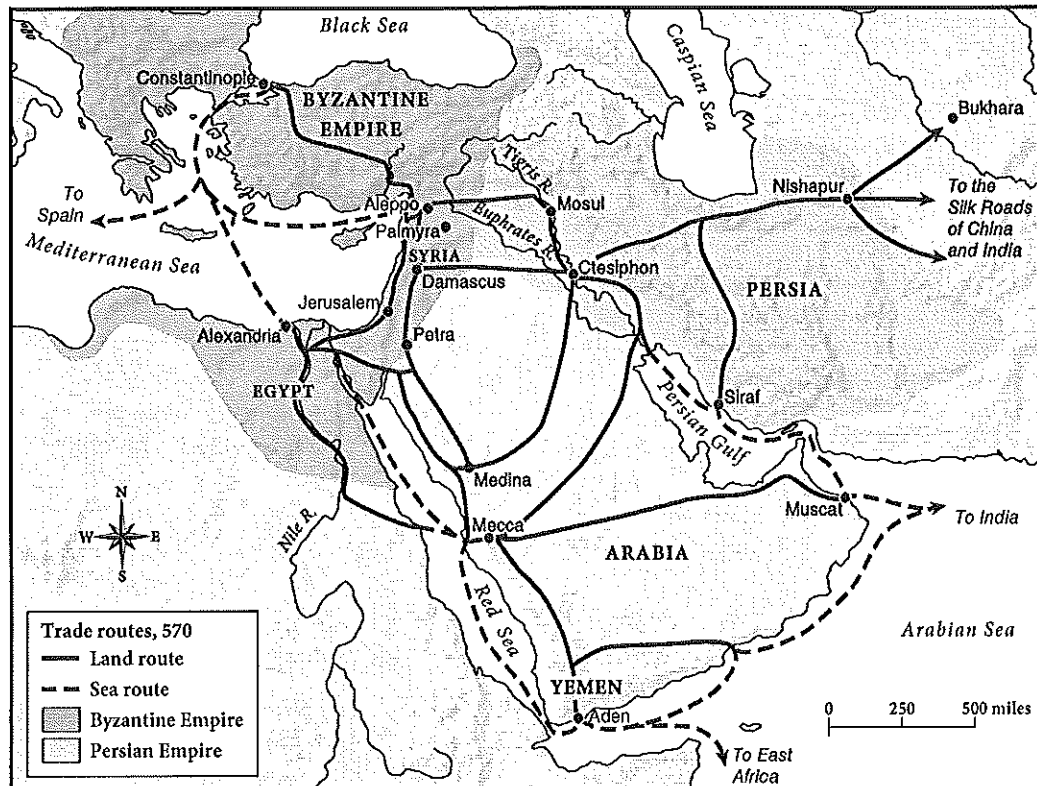
6. How does this document explain why Islam might have spread so quickly?

This document shows how trade routes allowed people to interact with each other and to travel to economic centers away from their homes. As caravans traversed these trade routes and merchants traveled to distant towns, they carried their ideas and beliefs with them. Muslim merchants probably spoke to others of their beliefs and perhaps behaved in new ways that sparked curiosity. It's logical to presume that Islam would have spread along the trade routes.

## Document A

**Sources:** Desmond Stewart and the Editors of Time-Life Books, *Great Ages of Man: Early Islam*, Time-Life Books, 1967.  
Map created from various sources.

By the middle of the sixth century ... Mecca was ... prosperous and important. First, it was at the crossroads of the lucrative caravan trade. Vast camel trains, bearing spices, perfumes, precious metals, ivory and silk, filed through the town, headed north on the way from Yemen ... to the markets of Syria, and headed east from the Red Sea across the desert to Iraq. Adding to the profits from caravans was a brisk pilgrimage trade, for Mecca was the site of Arabia's holiest pagan shrine [the Ka'ba].



## Document Analysis

1. What year is shown on this map? How does this relate to the history of Islam?
2. Name three cities that are easy to reach by trade routes from Mecca.
3. What two empires are shown on this map, and where are they in relation to Arabia?
4. Name four areas these trade routes went to that are outside the boundaries of this map.
5. Judging from both the map and the quotation on this page, why was Mecca a trade center for the Arabian Peninsula?
6. How does this document explain why Islam might have spread so quickly?

## Step Four: Document Analysis (continued)

### Document B: Verses from the Qur'an

#### Content Notes:

- The Qur'an is in Arabic, but many English translations exist. When translating sacred writings, translators must take care not to change the text's meaning. They must decide whether to translate word-for-word or use English phrases with a similar meaning. Also, many Arabic words have several meanings, and translators must choose among them. In this version, the translator tried to make the Qur'an easy for English readers to understand. It is not an exact translation.
- Muslims view the Qur'an as having been revealed to Muhammad by God and Arabic as the sacred language of that revelation. Therefore, Muslims believe the Qur'an is untranslatable and should be studied in Arabic. We chose the translation by the Iraqi scholar N.J. Dawood because it is one of the easiest for students to read.
- This translation uses the term God instead of Allah. Clear up any potential confusion by explaining that Allah is the Arabic word for God. Muslims use Allah to refer to the same all-powerful God that Jews and Christians worship.
- Muhammad received revelations until his death in 632. During his lifetime, his followers memorized these recitations, and some were written down. However, after Muhammad's death, different recitations of the text emerged. Most Muslims agree that the definitive written version of the Qur'an was compiled during Caliph Uthman's reign (644-656).
- Sometimes, Qur'an is spelled "Koran." These different spellings are a result of the way the Arabic alphabet is transliterated into English. This is also why you might see Muhammad as "Mohammad" or Ka'ba as "Kaaba" or Ka'bah."
- It is often incorrectly assumed that Islam spread so quickly because Muslims forced people to convert. Although this sometimes happened, the Qur'an forbids the practice (see Qur'an 5:69 and 29:46), especially in regard to "People of the Book." This phrase referred mainly to Christians and Jews, whom Muslims viewed as part of a greater monotheistic community who worshiped the same God. When People of the Book came under Muslim rule, they could choose to convert voluntarily, or they could pay a tax called a *jizyah*. If they chose to maintain their religion and pay the *jizyah*, they were granted certain religious and political rights and protections (see Document E).

#### Teaching Tips:

- Explain that the Qur'an is divided into chapters, called suras, and verses. The numbers following each verse give the sura and verse number.
- The Qur'an is meant to be recited, so we suggest you read these verses aloud to the students.
- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. According to verse 33:35 of the Qur'an, what are the qualities of someone who is favored by God?  
devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable, chaste, ever mindful of God, and one who fasts
  2. What does verse 5:32 suggest about the value of human life?  
Human life is very valuable and all humans are interconnected. The only reasons one should kill another is if the person committed murder or "other villainy." (vicious act)
  3. Examine verse 2:188. What does it suggest about Islam's view of private property?  
It suggests that an ideal society is one that protects property.
  4. According to verse 22:39, when are Muslims allowed to fight?  
When you are attacked.
  5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?  
There are several ideas that might explain the spread:  
First, paradise was available to all who perform good works, including women. Second, justice is emphasized and promised to all people. Third, personal property was not to be stolen. In a culture that had frequently experienced inter-clan raids, this would be a welcome relief. Fourth, the emphasis on traits like humility and charity and chasteness could be very appealing to people who lived in a rather harsh, rough-and-tumble world.

## Document B

Source: Verses from the Qur'an.

*Those who submit to God and accept the true Faith; who are devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable, and chaste; who fast and are ever mindful of God – on these, both men and women, God will bestow forgiveness and rich recompense [reward]. (33:35)*

*... (W)hoever killed a human being, except as punishment for murder or other villainy..., shall be deemed as having killed all mankind; and ... whoever saved a human life shall be deemed as having saved all mankind.... (5:32)*

*But the believers who do good works, both men and women, shall enter Paradise. They shall not suffer the least injustice. (4:124)*

*Do not devour one another's property by unjust means, nor bribe the judges with it in order that you may wrongfully and knowingly usurp [take] other people's possessions.... (2:188)*

*Permission to take up arms is hereby given to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged. God has power to grant them victory. (22:39)*

### Document Analysis

1. According to verse 33:35 of the Qur'an, what are the qualities of someone who is favored by God?
2. What does verse 5:32 suggest about the value of human life?
3. Examine verse 2:188. What does it suggest about Islam's view of private property?
4. According to verse 22:39, when are Muslims allowed to fight?
5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?

## Step Four: Document Analysis (continued)

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### Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)

#### Content Notes:

- The 7th and 8th century expansion of Islam occurred in three distinguishable bursts. The first occurred in the last years of Muhammad's life and united many of the tribes on the Arabian peninsula into one Arabic Islamic ummah, or family. The second burst was the 30 years that followed Muhammad's death. This is frequently called "the time of the rightly-guided caliphs." All of these caliphs – Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656) and Ali (656-661) – were relatives or close friends of Muhammad. It was during these 30 years that much of the Middle East came under Muslim control. The third wave of expansion was during a 90-year between 661 and 750, when Islam was under the rule of the Umayyad clan. During this period, Islam spread from southern France to India.
- Oman adopted Islam during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime (by 632) even though the region was geographically separated from the rest of the early Muslim lands. Omanis converted to Islam voluntarily, largely because Muhammad sent an emissary to visit them.
- The Battle of Tours, also called the Battle of Poitiers, in 732, effectively halted the spread of Islam into Europe. Islam was driven back militarily by Charles Martel and, culturally, by the rise of a unified European Christian Church.

#### Teaching Tips:

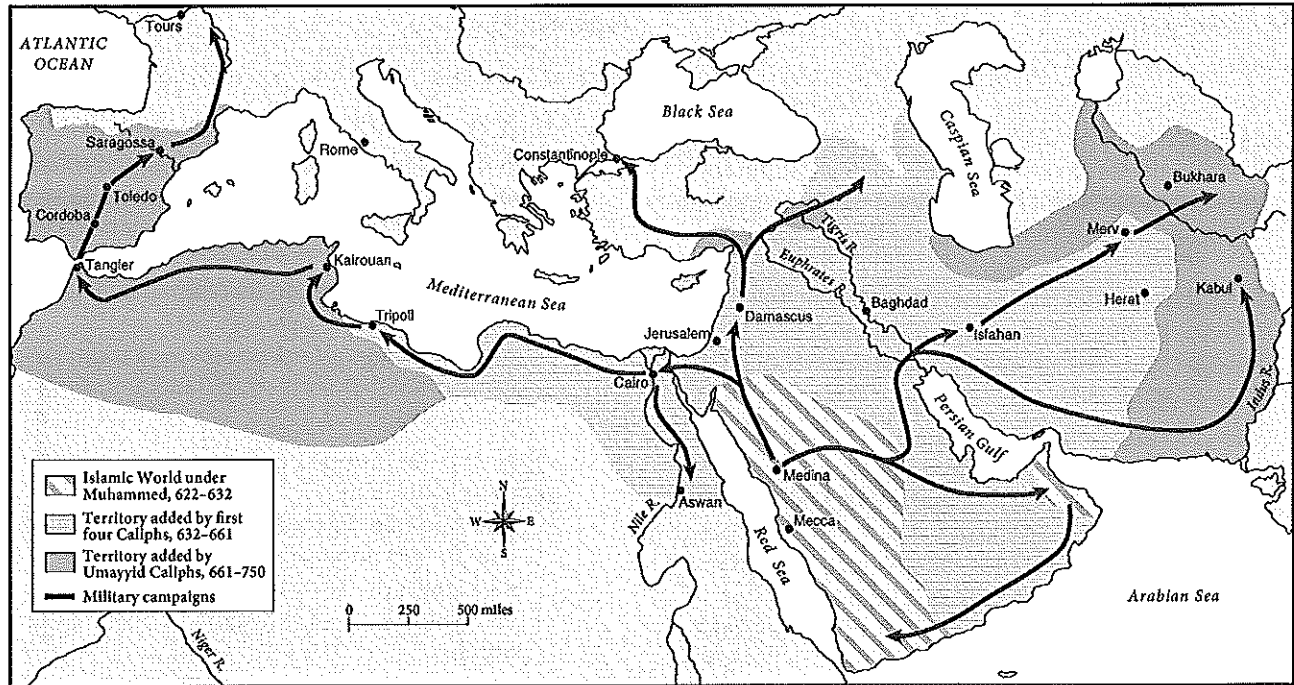
- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. By what year had each of the following come under Moslem control?  
 Mecca (632 or before), Jerusalem (661 or before), Cairo (661 or before), Baghdad (661 or before), Saragossa (750 or before)
  2. How far north did Islam spread in the 600s?  
 How far east?  
 It spread as far north as France and as far east as India.
  3. What does this map tell you about Muhammad's followers?  
 To take control over such a large area, they must have been not only devoted to their prophet but also skilled and well-organized fighters.
  4. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?  
 The success of the Muslim military campaigns allowed Islam to spread far and wide. The fact that it happened in the relatively short span of 140 years says that either the message of Islam had appeal or the Muslim military used coercive tactics. Perhaps both!



Document C

Source: Map created from various sources.

The Spread of Islam



EV

Document Analysis

1. By what year had each of the following come under Muslim control?

- Mecca
- Jerusalem
- Cairo
- Baghdad
- Saragossa

2. How far north did Islam spread in the 600s? How far east?

3. What does this map tell you about Muhammad's followers?

4. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?

## Step Four: Document Analysis (continued)

### Document D: The *Ghazu*

#### Content Notes:

- Historian Karen Armstrong is the author of over 20 books and is a leading authority on comparative religion. Much of her scholarship has focused on what Islam, Judaism and Christianity have in common, and how these faiths have shaped world history and current events. Born in 1944, the former nun summarized her personal view on faith in 2009, saying, "I say that religion isn't about believing things. It's ethical alchemy. It's about behaving in a way that changes you, that gives you intimations of holiness and sacredness."
- One of Muhammad's primary concerns was that the ummah, or Muslim community, would live up to the ideals of egalitarianism and social justice. Alms giving is central to Islam, as is the care of widows and orphans. (Muhammad was himself an orphan, so he empathized with their plight.) Later, when Muslim armies went on raids against non-Muslims, one-fifth of the plunder was turned over to the state so it could be used to support the ummah. Similarly, Muslim armies were not allowed to settle on the lands they won. Instead, the state collected various taxes from conquered peoples and used that revenue to support the ummah. One result of these policies was that Muslim armies became a professional fighting force that never settled down, and military expansion continued because the empire needed revenue to pay out salaries to the ummah.
- Armstrong emphasizes that the *ghazu* was not about spreading Islam, at least in its early years. The purpose was to plunder, that is to take treasure from non-Muslim groups and use it to fortify the growing community of Islamic believers. However, restraints were put on this practice. People of "the book," that is, Jews and Christians, were not to be plundered because they, like the Muslims, believed in one god and provided a line of prophets among whom Muhammad was simply the last. Muhammad's goodwill towards Jews and Christians lessened later in his life when he realized that many in these two faith groups would not accept Muhammad as their spiritual leader.

#### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. What was the *ghazu*? What was the *ummah*?  
A *ghazu* was a raid on another Arab tribe; Arabia did not have enough resources for everyone, so tribes plundered each other. The *ummah* was the Muslim community of believers. It began as a small circle of Muhammad's followers and grew to include many but not all Arabs. It did not, for example, include Arab Jews and Arab Christians.
  2. What was the purpose of the *ghazu* in the years before Islam?  
The purpose was quite simply for one Arab clan to raid another Arab clan and take their property. Resources were tight and this was a way for the clans to make ends meet.
  3. How did Islam change the way the *ghazu* worked?  
Muhammad did not allow followers of Islam to raid each other. Therefore, he changed the *ghazu* rules so that Muslims could only raid non-Muslim groups. This meant that raiding parties reached further out into the Arabian peninsula and eventually into Persia, Byzantium, and beyond. The plunder was to be used to benefit members of the *ummah*, that is, all Muslims throughout the area.
  4. Why were the Arabs able to conquer much of Persia and parts of Byzantium?  
According to Armstrong, the Persians and the Byzantines had weakened each other with constant fighting. This created a power vacuum in the Middle East which the Muslims were able to fill.
  5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?  
The document provides two main reasons: 1. *ghazu* raiders in non-Muslim regions took treasure and doled it out to fellow Muslims. The prospect of treasure must have boosted the pace of raiding and expansion. 2. a power vacuum made lands that used to be dominated by Persia and Byzantium more vulnerable and enabled the spread to occur quickly.

**Document D**

Source: Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History*, Random House, 2000.

For centuries... Arabs had [added to] their inadequate resources by means of the ghazu [raids against other tribes], but Islam had put a stop to this because the ummah [Muslim community] was not permitted to attack one another. What would replace the ghazu, which had enabled Muslims to scratch out a meager livelihood?... The obvious answer was a series of ghazu raids against the non-Muslim communities in the neighboring countries. The unity of the ummah would be preserved by an outwardly directed offensive [attack].

There was nothing religious about these campaigns.... The objective ... was plunder and a common activity that would preserve the unity of the ummah. For centuries the Arabs had tried to raid the richer settled lands beyond the [Arabian] peninsula: the difference was that this time they encountered a power vacuum. Persia and Byzantium had both been engaged for decades in a long ... series of wars with one another. Both were exhausted.

EV

**Document Analysis**

1. What was the ghazu? What was the ummah?
2. What was the purpose of the ghazu in the years before Islam?
3. How did Islam change the way the ghazu worked?
4. Why were the Arabs able to conquer much of Persia and parts of Byzantium?
5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?

## Step Four: Document Analysis (continued)

### Document E: The Duties of the Caliph

#### Content Notes:

- Al-Mawardi was an Iraqi Muslim legal scholar who wrote *The Ordinances of Government* in the late 900s or early 1000s. This codified the role of the caliph, or imam, that had developed over the three hundred years since Abu-Bakr was named the first caliph.
- In early Islam, the titles “imam” and “caliph” were used interchangeably to refer to the political and religious leader of the Muslim community. The term ‘caliph’ has not been used officially since 1924 when the Republic of Turkey, which replaced the last Muslim empire, abolished it.
- Initially, the offer to enter into “the Pact” was extended only to Jews and Christians, whom Muslims considered “people of the book.” Later, in some parts of the Muslim empire, it was extended to Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists, and others. Those who entered the Pact could continue to practice their own religion and were entitled to protection by the caliph and his armies. However, in return the groups were expected to be loyal to the ruler. In addition, they had fewer political and legal rights, and they had to pay the *jizyah*. Not all Muslim rulers implemented this policy nor was it applied uniformly, but in general, Muslim empires tolerated people of other faiths.
- Prior to reading the document, discuss with the students the meaning of jihad. Often, it is translated as “holy war.” This is only partly accurate, as the literal translation of the word is “strive,” “struggle,” or “effort.” This means striving or struggling to fulfill the will of Allah, as Islam means “submission to the will of Allah.” Muhammad advocated for both a “greater jihad” and a “lesser jihad.” The greater involved the internal struggle to be an ideal Muslim and live up to the requirements of the Five Pillars and the religion in general. Lesser jihad is the fight against an outer enemy, waging war according to the rules set out by Allah in the Qur’an and by Muhammad’s example in his lifetime.

#### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. What responsibility is given to the caliph in the first duty?  
Religious duties having to do with keeping the teachings of Muhammad pure
  2. What responsibilities are listed in duties 2, 3, and 4?  
Settling legal disputes, military defense, protecting the rights of servants
  3. In American society, who is responsible for these tasks?  
People in government (judges, the military, police, the executive branch at state and local levels)
  4. What was the Pact?  
It was an agreement that allowed conquered non-Muslims, including Jews and Christians, to continue practicing their religion if they paid an exemption tax called the *jizyah*.
  5. How does this document help explain why Islam spread so quickly?  
The caliph had powers to uphold Islam and see that it was practiced faithfully and fairly. This is important because people who are considering a religion often look to see if its followers practice what they preach. In addition, the caliph had the power to fight against those who refused to accept Islam. This could lead to the spread of Muslim rule by conquest. Finally, the Ordinances suggest a sweetener. People who joined the Pact, or agreement, and paid the *jizyah* tax, could continue to practice their own religion. This would have made it easier for Muslim rulers to gain acceptance.

## Document E

**Source:** Abu al-Hasan Al-Mawardi, *The Ordinances of the Government*, circa 975 CE.

**Note:** In 632, following the death of Muhammad, the first caliph (a spiritual ruler, sometimes called an imam) was selected to lead the Muslim community. Over the next three centuries, the duties of the caliph were firmly established, with the understanding that the caliph would not delegate these duties to others. The excerpt below, from a book of Islamic law written by an Arab judge in the 10th century, outlines four of the ten public duties of the caliph.

EV

### The Ordinances of Government

1. To maintain the religion according to established principles and the consensus of the first generation of Muslims. If . . . some dubious person deviates from it, the Imam must clarify the proofs of religion to him, expound that which is correct, and apply to him the proper rules and penalties so that religion may be protected from injury and the community safeguarded from error.
2. To execute judgments between litigants [people involved in lawsuits] and to settle disputes between contestants so that justice may prevail and so that none commit or suffer injustice.
3. To defend the lands of Islam and to protect them from intrusion so that people may earn their livelihood and travel at will without danger to life or property.
4. To enforce the legal penalties for the protection of God's commandments from violation and for the preservation of the rights of his servants from injury or destruction. . . .
6. To wage . . . jihad [holy war] against those who, after having been invited to accept Islam, persist in rejecting it, until they either become Muslims or enter the Pact\* so that God's truth may prevail over every religion.

\* The Pact was an arrangement often made by Muslim rulers that permitted conquered Christians, Jews and other non-Muslims to continue to practice their religion if they paid a special tax called the *jizyah* and obeyed Islamic laws.

### Document Analysis

1. What responsibility is given to the caliph in the first duty?
2. What responsibilities are listed in duties 2, 3, and 4?
3. In American society, who is responsible for these tasks?
4. What was the Pact?
5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?

## Step Four: Document Analysis (continued)

### Document F: The People of Hims

#### Content Notes:

- Before this battle, the united Muslim army had fought against the Sassanid Persian Empire and successfully taken modern-day Iraq. Even so, the Battle of Yarmuk is seen as a turning point. With this victory, the Muslims took over the lands of present-day Syria and Palestine. This was the beginning of the transformation from a smaller, local power to a larger, regional empire.
- Prior to the battle, the Muslims had taken the town of Hims in Syria and the people there paid a land tax to them. This was the beginning of the jizyah.
- Few Byzantine sources exist for this battle and therefore it is hard to verify the accuracy of the numbers given in this document. As a result, contemporary and modern estimates of the troop size vary greatly.
- The Battle of Yarmuk took place near the Yarmuk River, which today forms the boundary between Syria and Jordan. The Muslim forces were greatly outnumbered; today's estimates claim that between 25,000 and 40,000 Muslims fought against up to 100,000 Byzantine soldiers. However, the Muslims, united under a strong leader, had greater familiarity with the terrain and used superior battle tactics. In addition, the day before the battle, a terrible sandstorm blew in from the desert. The Arabs had more experience with such brutal conditions and were able to drive the confused Byzantine forces into a network of ravines, where they were slaughtered.
- By the time Islam began to spread, Christianity was centuries old, and deep divisions had occurred among Christians. The Byzantine Church harshly persecuted the Christians of Egypt and Syria, whom it viewed as heretics. Similarly, the Sassanid rulers of Persia often persecuted people who were not Zoroastrian. As a result, many Jews and Christians in the Middle East preferred Muslim rule.
- Muslim women also helped in the fight. When their army retreated, the women in the camps fought against the Byzantines, some using pots and tent poles, inspiring the men to return to the front lines.

#### Teaching Tips:

- Instruct the students that when reading the account of al-Baladhuri, they should pay attention to his explanation of the Muslim victory over the Byzantines, and to the way the Christians and Jews of Syria reacted to the Muslim invaders.
- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. Who was the Muslim army fighting in this account?  
the Byzantine army of Emperor Heraclius
  2. To whom did the Muslims attribute their victory?  
Allah
  3. Whose version of the battle is this? Why is this important to note?  
This is a Muslim account of the battle. This means that it shows their perspective and does not show the perspective of the Byzantines. The two sides could see the battle very differently.
  4. How did the people of Hims (Syrians) feel about the Muslims?  
They are shown to be very respectful of the Muslims, even offering to protect them from the Byzantines by closing the gates of the city and guarding them. The Hims also celebrate the Muslims' victory and gladly pay a land tax to help support them.
  5. How does this document help explain why Islam spread quickly?  
The Muslims are portrayed as brave and effective warriors, which could have helped them spread Islam through conquest and defend it from takeover. They are also shown to be admired by other peoples, such as the Hims, and this admiration could have resulted in openness to the adoption of Islam. It also depicts a belief in a powerful and protective God (Allah) that might lead many people to be attracted to a faith that promised such security and benefits.

## Document F

**Source:** Ahmad ibn-Jabir al-Baladhuri, *The Origins of the Islamic State*, circa 850 CE.

**Note:** In the year 636, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (“hair-uh-kli-us”) gathered an army at the Yarmuk River in Syria to resist the expansion of Islam. The people of Hims are the Syrians, non-Muslims who had been under Byzantine rule. This account was written by the Arabic Muslim historian al-Baladhuri about 200 years after the battle.

EV

Heraclius gathered [a] large Byzantine army ... numbering about 200,000. This army he put under the command of one of his choice men.... The Moslems gathered together and the [Byzantine] army marched against them. The battle they fought at al-Yarmuk was of the fiercest and bloodiest kind.... In this battle 24,000 Moslems took part. The [Byzantines] and their followers in the battle tied themselves to each other by chains, so that no one might set his hope on flight. By Allah’s help, some 70,000 of them were put to death....

When Heraclius massed his troops against the Moslems and the Moslems heard that they were coming to meet them at al-Yarmuk, the Moslems re-

funded to the inhabitants of Hims the [land tax] they had taken from them saying, “We are too busy to support and protect you. Take care of yourselves.” But the people of Hims replied, “We like your rule and justice far better than the state of oppression and tyranny in which we were. The army of Heraclius we shall indeed . . . repulse from the city.” . . . Saying this, they closed the gates of the city and guarded them... When by Allah’s help the “unbelievers” were defeated and the Moslems won, they opened the gates of their cities, went out with the singers and music players who began to play, and paid the [land tax].

### Document Analysis

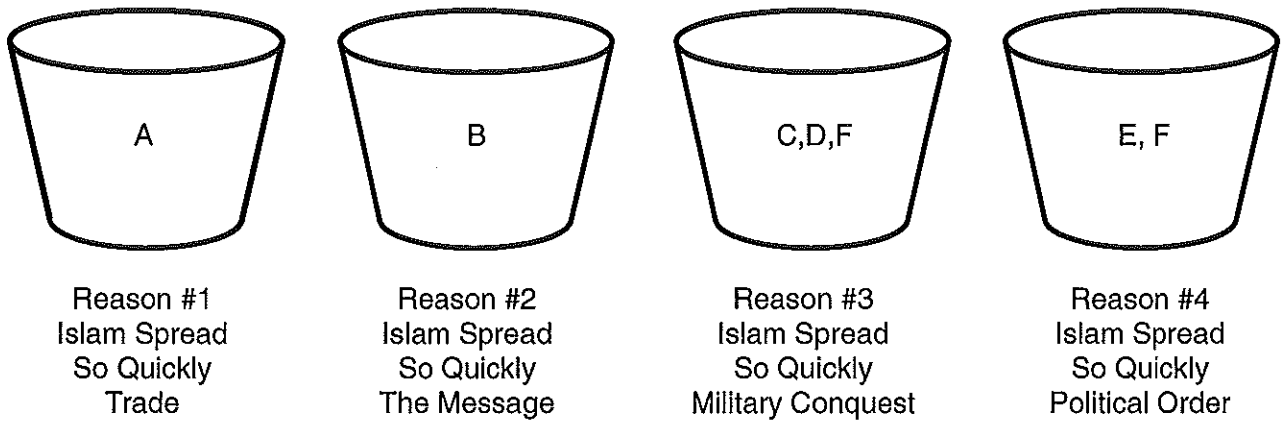
1. Who was the Muslim army fighting in this account?
2. To whom did the Muslims attribute their victory?
3. Whose version of the battle is this? Why is this important to note?
4. How did the people of Hims (the Syrians) feel about the Muslims?
5. How does this document help explain why Islam spread quickly?

## Step Five: Bucketing – Getting Ready To Write

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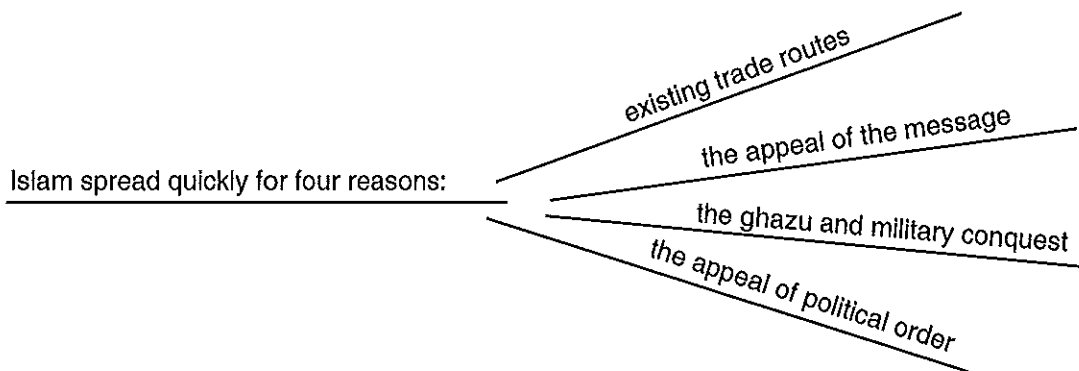
### Task One: Bucketing

**Teacher Note:** The Mini-Q is organized around four buckets. You may want your students to develop only three.



### Task Two: Thesis Development and Road Map

Have students develop their thesis and road map using the chicken foot. One possible example is below using the bucket format displayed above.



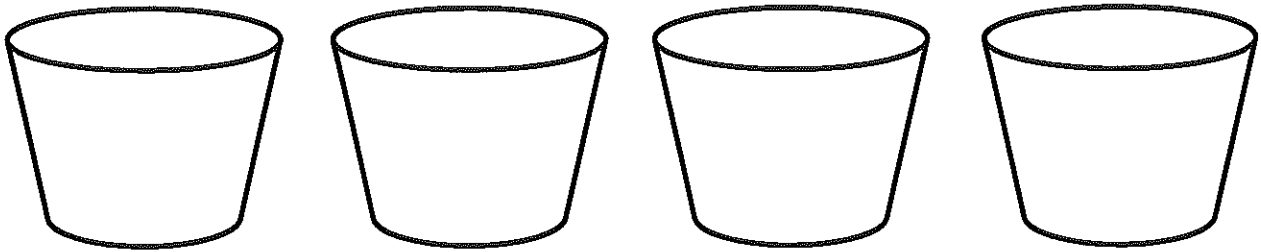


## Bucketing – Getting Ready to Write

### Bucketing

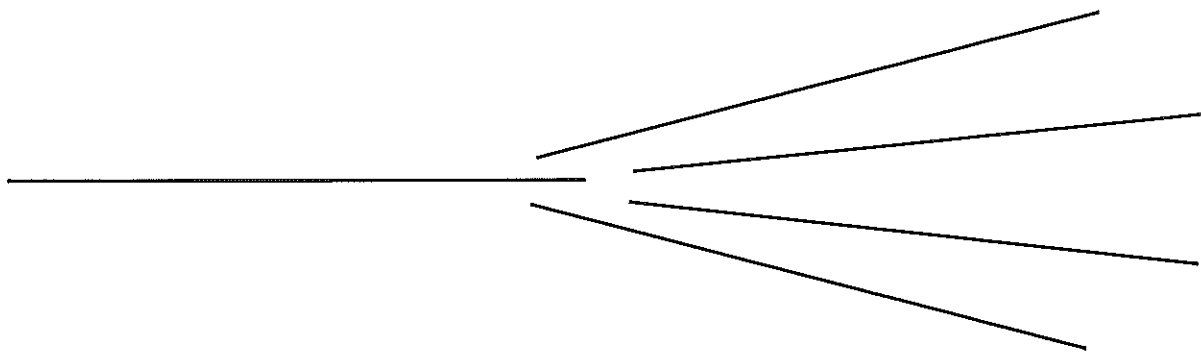
Look over the documents and organize them into your final buckets. Write labels under each bucket and place the letters of the documents in the buckets where they belong. Plan out either a three- or four-paragraph essay and remember—your bucket labels are going to become your body paragraphs.

EV



### Thesis Development and Road Map

On the chicken foot below, write your thesis and your road map. Your thesis is always an opinion that answers the Mini-Q question. The road map is created from your bucket labels and lists the topic areas you will examine in order to prove your thesis.



## Step Six: From Thesis to Essay Writing

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### Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

**Working Title:** Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

#### Paragraph #1

**Grabber:** In the year 610 CE a man went to a cave to pray.

**Background:** Led to a religion called Islam that would change the world.

**Stating the question with key terms defined:** How was Islam, in 120 years, able to spread so fast?

**Thesis and road map:** There were three main factors that caused Islam to spread so quickly:  
military success, religious appeal, and political order.

#### Paragraph #2

**Baby Thesis for bucket one:** A major reason for the swift spread was the military conquest

**Evidence:** Land controlled by Muslims expanded greatly in short time (about 140 years).

Muslims not allowed to attack other Muslims by Qur'an, but were allowed to conduct ghazu raids against other peoples, which helped increase their territory (Doc D).

Military victories across Middle East (al-Yarmuk), North Africa, and Spain. (Docs C and F)

**Argument:** The military success led to territorial expansion and exposure to Islamic thought.

#### Paragraph #3

**Baby Thesis for bucket two:** Another reason for the spread of Islam were the trading routes

**Evidence:** Mecca already a center of a vast trade route system (Doc A)

**Argument:** Ideas spread through human contact. Trade led to discussion and learning—this is sometimes called cultural diffusion. Maybe some people became Muslim because they would get more trade.

#### Paragraph #4

**Baby Thesis for bucket three:** A second reason for the quick spread: appeal of the message.

**Evidence:** Qur'an emphasis on sincerity, patience and charity (Doc B)

Everlasting life in Paradise for true believers (Doc B)

Tolerance for non-Muslims: the Pact (Doc B)

**Argument:** Concern for poor and tolerance for non-Muslims increased acceptance of Islamic rule

#### Paragraph #5

**Baby Thesis for bucket four:** Finally, Islam spread quickly because of its political order.

**Evidence:** The Duties of the Caliph: clear obligations, like settle lawsuits and provide security (Doc E)

People under Byzantine (the people of Hims in Syria) control often preferred Muslims (Doc F)

**Argument:** The political order after the death of Muhammad, helped stabilize Muslim-controlled regions throughout empire. Eventually helped spread the faith.

#### Paragraph #6

**Conclusion:** True that there were other factors, like the existence of trade routes, that helped Islam spread, but the main vehicles were military raids and campaigns, the appeal of the faith, and the establishment of political order.

# From Thesis to Essay Writing

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## Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

### Working Title

#### Paragraph #1

Grabber

Background

Stating the question with key terms defined

Thesis and road map

#### Paragraph #2

Baby Thesis for bucket one

Evidence: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Argument: connecting evidence to the thesis

#### Paragraph #3

Baby Thesis for bucket two

Evidence

Argument

#### Paragraph #4

Baby Thesis for bucket three

Evidence

Argument

#### Paragraph #5

Baby Thesis for bucket four

Evidence

Argument

#### Paragraph #6

Conclusion: Restatement of main idea along with possible insight or wrinkle

EV

### **Mini-Q Sample Essay: Non-Proficient Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?**

How would you like to live in a cave? I wouldn't and Muhammad wouldn't either. He mostly just prayed there and got ideas for his new religion. These ideas were the *ghazu* attacks, setting up new trade routes, and having a good organization.

One of Muhammad's best ideas was to spread his religion quickly with *ghazu* attacks. It isn't so clear but *ghazus* were very fast camels who led great attacks all the way to Spain (Doc C).

An even better idea was trade. The idea is talk to a lot of merchants and get them on your side. Then build a lot of roads across the desert and spread the news about paradise (Doc B). This will happen fast because of all those camels I mentioned.

Islam also spread because people liked their government. They had people who were called caliphs who did a great job. They also sang Hims which the people loved and they signed up.

So that's how Islam spread very quickly. Each reason was more important than the one above it.

### **Mini-Q Sample Essay: Basic Proficiency Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?**

It all began in a cave. Muhammad started Islam in 610 CE and after that it spread throughout Arabia and regions near it. Islam was able to do this quickly because of its military success, trade connections, and political order.

One reason Islam spread fast was because Muslims used force. From the beginning, Muhammad believed that Arab Muslims should not attack other Muslims. However, they could raid non-Muslims and take their things. These were called *ghazu* raids (Doc D). Later the raids got bigger and became military campaigns and spread across the middle east, North Africa, and into Spain (Doc C). Without force, Islam would not have spread so quickly.

Another thing that helped spread Islam quickly was how good they were with trade. There were a lot of busy trade routes with the holy city of Mecca at the center that included trade of many different goods, like silk and spices (Doc A). The more they traded, the more they were able to meet new people and spread Islam.

Finally, Islam had a good political system. The caliph had certain duties, like settling legal problems and providing security (Doc E). Some conquered people, like the people of Hims in Syria, preferred the Muslims over the Byzantines and the Persians (Doc F). These people said they liked Muslim justice better than Byzantine tyranny. They simply agreed to the Pact and paid the *jizyah* tax and they could go about their business. It is clear that Muslim justice and the Pact helped Islam to spread quickly because it reduced opposition.

Although Islam spread for other reasons as well like, the Qur'an's promise of everlasting life to the faithful (Doc B), the main reasons seem to be military force, trade, and order.



### Mini-Q Sample Essay: High Proficiency Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

In the year 610 CE a man went to a cave to pray. His name was Muhammad and he would change the world. Inside that cave, Muhammad said, he received the word of God, who was called Allah in his language of Arabic. The religion that came out of this event, Islam, grew very rapidly. But why was it able to become so big, so fast? There were four main factors that caused Islam to spread so quickly: military success, economic trade, religious appeal, and political order.

Perhaps the major reason for the swift spread of Islam was raids followed by military conquest. Land controlled by Muslims expanded greatly in a relatively short period of time (about 120 years). Why? Muslims were not allowed by the Qur'an to attack other Muslims. However, they were allowed to conduct *ghazu* raids against pagans, which helped increase their territory (Doc D). The *ghazu* raids, which began against non-Muslims in Arabia, soon expanded into full-blown military campaigns across the Middle East, North Africa and even into Spain (Doc C). The military success of the Muslims greatly helped increase the area they controlled and boosted their ability to fight off others who might want to harm them.

Another key factor that helped Islam become popular very quickly was the trading routes of Muslims. The center of Islam was Mecca, a very prosperous trading town in western Arabia (Doc A). Traders on camels carried products such as spices, metals, and Chinese silk from Arabia to Persia, North Africa, and regions of the Mediterranean. No doubt the teachings of Islam traveled with them. Islam spread because of this.

A third important factor that led to Islam's spread was the appeal of its message. The Qur'an described the importance of being sincere, patient, and charitable (Doc B). It also promised good things, like everlasting life in paradise, for people who are true to Islam (Doc B). Even non-Muslims appreciated that they could still follow their faith as long as they agreed to a Pact that had them pay a bit extra for rights and protections (Doc E). The Qur'an and the Muslim tolerance for other people provided ideas about God and ways of living that many people found very attractive, and because of this, many more people became Muslims.

Finally, Islam spread quickly because of its political order. The Duties of the Caliph, which were written by Al-Mawardi, clearly listed what the leaders of the Muslim community were responsible for and that helped Islam become strong and well established (Doc E). Some of the duties of the Muslim leaders included defining the meaning of the faith, serving as a judge, defending the lands of Islam, and waging jihad against those who threaten the faith (Doc E). This was a welcome change for many people who had been under the control of the Byzantines and the Persians. For example, Syrians like those in Hims (Doc F) after the Muslim victory at al-Yarmuk announced their preference for Islamic rule. This order and balance and fairness enabled Islam to capture new land because it reduced opposition.

The world was changed because of Muhammad's visit to that cave near Mecca over 1,500 years ago. That moment gave birth to Islam, which would soon establish itself as a major world religion. Islam's quick spread was due to its initial military success, the boost given by established trade routes, an appealing religious message, and its welcome political order.



## TEACHER DOCUMENT LIST (CV)

There are six documents in this Mini-Q. Students are provided with the same document list, but it is not divided into analytical categories or buckets. Students may develop categories that are different from these.

### Trade Routes

Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade Routes (map)

### The Message

Document B: Verses from the Qur'an

### Military Conquest

Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)

Document D: The Ghazu

Document F: The People of Hims

### Political Order

Document E: The Duties of the Caliph

Document F: The People of Hims



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# Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

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A medieval caravan of Muslim pilgrims traveling to Mecca

**Overview:** According to the holy texts of the Muslims, in 610 CE a local merchant named Muhammad retreated to a cave outside the city of Mecca in Arabia to meditate. There, the archangel Gabriel appeared and gave Muhammad words to recite. These words were to give birth to a religion called Islam. Within 140 years, followers of Islam had created an empire that ruled the Middle East and stretched across North Africa into Europe. This Mini-Q explores why this new religion was able to spread so quickly.

## The Documents:

Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade Routes (map)

Document B: Verses from the Qur'an

Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)

Document D: The Ghazu

Document E: The Duties of the Caliph

Document F: The People of Hims

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A Mini Document Based Question (Mini-Q)

## The Hook

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**Teacher Note:** The purpose of the Hook Exercise is to create some initial interest in the Mini-Q. Have students work individually or in pairs and give them about five minutes to examine the flow charts and identify the mechanisms that sparked the cultural diffusion. Then have them complete their own cultural diffusion flow charts.

### Part 1:

The best answers to the flow chart exercise are probably:

1. trade
2. conquest
3. migration
4. technology

### Part 2:

5. Answers will vary, but each should demonstrate an understanding of cultural diffusion. Each response should feature at least three stages of each event that led to the cultural diffusion, as modeled in the examples.



## Establishing the Context

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### General Instructions

- Review the Timeline on the Background Essay questions page.
- Pre-teach the bold-faced vocabulary.
- Have students read the Background Essay or read it aloud.

### Specific Considerations

The main purpose of the Background Essay is to create a context for the Mini-Q exercise. Its job is to provide a sense of time, place and story, and to introduce important vocabulary and concepts. Doing this well gives all students a more equal chance to succeed with the Mini-Q.

**Time:** Be sure students review the timeline. Ask them to identify the main events of Muhammad's life. (He was born in 570, received his first revelation in 610, moved to Medina in 622, returned to Mecca in 628, and died in 632. He was about 62 years old.)

**Place:** Refer to a wall map showing the Middle East, or have students preview the map in Document A. Point out the Arabian Peninsula, also called Arabia, and identify the bodies of water around it: the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf. Explain that Arabia is the region of Asia closest to Africa. Almost the entire peninsula is a desert wasteland, dotted by a few oases. For most of history, it was considered a land with few economic resources. (This would change with the discovery of oil deposits in the 20th century.) At the time Muhammad was born, Arabs had two main ways of life: nomadic herding or trading in towns. They did not yet have the complex religious or political institutions found in other regions.

**Story:** We suggest reading the Background Essay aloud. It is good for many students, even good readers, to hear the words as they see them. For many, it is important to hear the cadence of the language, to experience pauses and emphasis. Use the Background Essay questions to review the text.

**Vocabulary and Concepts:** You may want to pre-teach the six bold-faced terms in the essay. Our feeling about vocabulary is that some pre-teaching is good, but keep the word list short. When reading aloud, see how much students can get from context.

## Why Did Islam Spread So Quickly?

In 610 CE, a merchant trader from Mecca made one of his frequent visits to a cave on nearby Mount Hira. For Muhammad ibn Abdallah it was a time to pray, to get away from the scramble for money and wealth he felt was causing his people to lose their way. According to Muhammad, it was on this visit to Mt. Hira that the archangel Gabriel squeezed him hard and caused words to flow from his mouth. The words said that **Allah** was the one God. No doubt a bit shaken, Muhammad reported the event to his wife and her cousin but otherwise stayed silent. The words continued to come.

In 610 Mecca was a bustling Arabian trade town with camel caravans arriving regularly from points north and south. It was also the site of an annual pilgrimage where Arab pagans came to perform rituals at the sacred **Ka'ba** (the holy shrine in Mecca). The Meccan population included a number of Jewish families and some Christians. There may have been a feeling among the pagan Arabs that their religious world was less sophisticated than that of the Jews and the Christians. They had nothing to match the Torah and the Bible. They had no Abraham or Moses or Jesus. But all that was about to change.

After receiving Allah's words for two years, Muhammad decided it was time to talk. Encouraged by the support of close friends and his wife, Kadija, Muhammad began to recite the received words in public. He spoke of the one god, Allah, and the importance of charity – sharing wealth with the weak and poor. Together these teachings would be given the name **Islam**, the Arabic word for “submission.” A follower of Islam was to be called a Muslim, meaning one “who submits to the will of Allah.” After

Muhammad's death in 632, Allah's words that Muhammad was reciting would be written down and called the **Qur'an**.

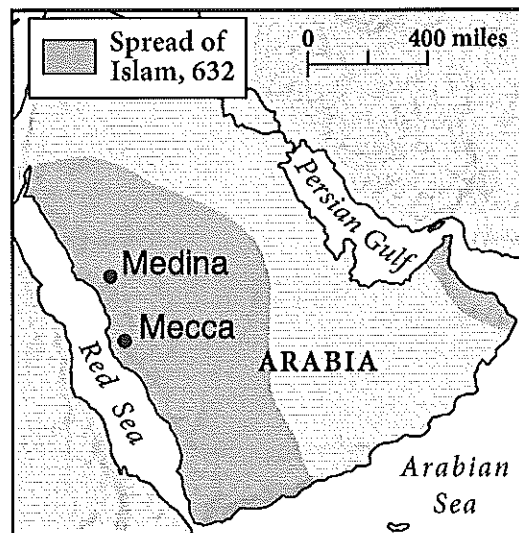
At first, many in Mecca resisted Muhammad's preaching. What would happen to idol worship? Surely pilgrimages to Mecca would stop. Business would suffer. By 622 resistance was so strong that Muhammad decided to leave. Together with 70 families, he migrated 250 miles north. There, in the town of Medina, he established a new base. He also made a symbolic break with the past. Muham-

mad had respect for Jews and Christians, “people of the Book,” as he called them. However, at a prayer session in 624, Muhammad symbolically turned his body to the south – away from Jerusalem and toward Mecca. It was as much as saying that a new religion had been born.

In 628, Muhammad made the hard decision to return to Mecca. Despite

opposition, he was allowed back in the city. He soon had enough support to order that the idols in the Ka'ba be destroyed and the shrine dedicated to Allah. Pilgrimages to the Ka'ba became one of the Five Pillars, or essential duties, of Islam. These duties – confession of belief, prayer five times a day, **Ramadan**, an annual month-long fast, giving alms to the poor, and the pilgrimage to Mecca – would become the bedrock practices of Islam.

From this modest beginning in west-central Arabia, Islam exploded in size. Within 100 years of Muhammad's death, it had reached Europe and Asia. The question before us is why. Examine the documents that follow and answer the question: *Why did Islam spread so quickly?*



## Document A: Arabian Peninsula Trade

### Content Notes:

- Muhammad's father died before he was born, and his mother died when he was six. After Muhammad was orphaned, first his grandfather and then his uncle raised him. With his grandfather, he tended the zamzam, or sacred well, for the pilgrims who came to the Ka'ba. His uncle had a caravan business, which Muhammad joined, and he traveled around Arabia on many of these routes. In both of these jobs, Muhammad encountered people of many different religions, including Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians, who followed a Persian prophet named Zoroaster.
- Many historians (such as Reza Aslan, author of *No God but God*) today believe that Mecca became a trading center only as a result of the Ka'ba and its collection of idols. As seen on the map, Mecca is an important city on the route between Yemen and the Byzantine Empire, but it is off the track of the larger trade routes that connected Arabia and empires in Europe and Asia.
- The Quarysh, of which Muhammad's family was a part, was the most powerful tribe in Mecca, and they collected the idols and placed them within the Ka'ba. They then charged people to enter the city, which demonstrates their economic motives for maintaining the Ka'ba—and for later opposing Muhammad's message of monotheism.
- Muhammad met his first wife, Khadijah, through the caravan trade. She was the wealthy widow of a merchant and had continued to run the business after her husband's death. She hired Muhammad to be her business agent because of his reputation for honesty. After he had worked for her for some time, she proposed marriage. According to legend, Khadijah was 40 at the time, while Muhammad was only 25. They had a happy marriage, and she was one of the first to support him when he began to receive his revelations. They had six children: four daughters and two sons who died. Khadijah died in about 619, and as long as she was alive, Muhammad took no other wives.

### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. What year is shown on this map? How does this relate to the history of Islam?
 

It depicts the year 570. This map pre-dates the beginning of Islam, but is from around the year Muhammad was born. This shows that Mecca was an important trading center even before Muhammad's life began.
  2. Name three cities that are easy to reach by trade routes from Mecca.
 

Medina, Aden, Petra
  3. What two empires are shown on this map, and where are they in relation to Arabia?
 

The Byzantine Empire was to the north-west. The Persian Empire was to the north-east.
  4. Name four regions these trade routes went to that are not on this map
 

East Africa, India, Spain, China
  5. Judging from both the map and the quotation on this page, why was Mecca a trade center for the Arabian Peninsula?
 

There are land and sea routes that connect to Mecca. It is in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula, but also close to the coast, therefore making it attractive for both types of trade. Sea routes allow easier access to other civilizations, including Europe, India, and East Africa. Also, the presence of the Ka'ba drew many people to Mecca.
  6. How does this document explain why Islam might have spread so quickly?
 

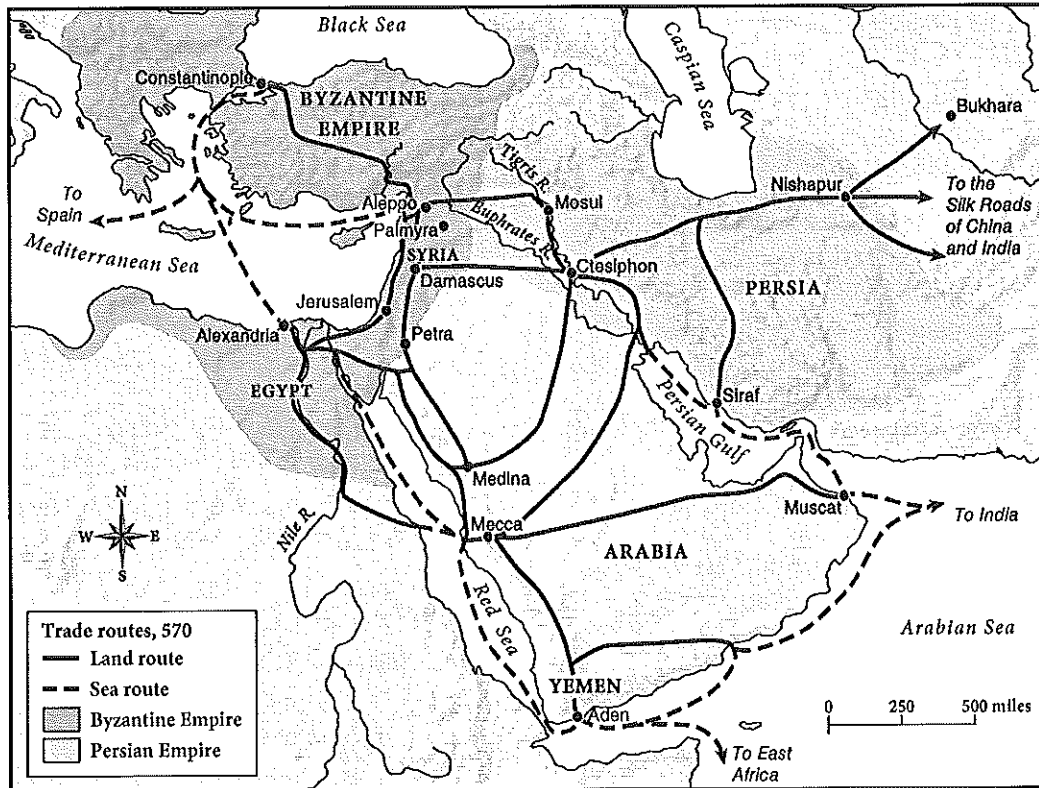
This document shows how trade routes allowed people to interact with each other and to travel to economic centers away from their homes. As caravans traversed these trade routes and merchants traveled to distant towns, they carried their ideas and beliefs with them. Muslim merchants probably spoke to others of their beliefs and perhaps behaved in new ways that sparked curiosity. It's logical to presume that Islam would have spread along the trade routes.

### Document A

Sources: Desmond Stewart and the Editors of Time-Life Books, *Great Ages of Man: Early Islam*, Time-Life Books, 1967. Map created from various sources.

By the middle of the sixth century ... Mecca was ... prosperous and important. First, it was at the crossroads of the lucrative caravan trade. Vast camel trains, bearing spices, perfumes, precious metals, ivory and silk, filed through the town, headed north on the way from Yemen ... to the markets of Syria, and headed east from the Red Sea across the desert to Iraq. Adding to the profits from caravans was a brisk pilgrimage trade, for Mecca was the site of Arabia's holiest pagan shrine [the Ka'ba].

CV



## Document B: Verses from the Qur'an

### Content Notes:

- The Qur'an is in Arabic, but many English translations exist. When translating sacred writings, translators must take care not to change the text's meaning. They must decide whether to translate word-for-word or use English phrases with a similar meaning. Also, many Arabic words have several meanings, and translators must choose among them. In this version, the translator tried to make the Qur'an easy for English readers to understand. It is not an exact translation.
- Muslims view the Qur'an as having been revealed to Muhammad by God and Arabic as the sacred language of that revelation. Therefore, Muslims believe the Qur'an is untranslatable and should be studied in Arabic. We chose the translation by the Iraqi scholar N.J. Dawood because it is one of the easiest for students to read.
- This translation uses the term God instead of Allah. Clear up any potential confusion by explaining that Allah is the Arabic word for God. Muslims use Allah to refer to the same all-powerful God that Jews and Christians worship.
- Muhammad received revelations until his death in 632. During his lifetime, his followers memorized these recitations, and some were written down. However, after Muhammad's death, different recitations of the text emerged. Most Muslims agree that the definitive written version of the Qur'an was compiled during Caliph Uthman's reign (644-656).
- Sometimes, Qur'an is spelled "Koran." These different spellings are a result of the way the Arabic alphabet in transliterated into English. This is also why you might see Muhammad as "Mohammad" or Ka'ba as "Kaaba" or Ka'bah."
- It is often incorrectly assumed that Islam spread so quickly because Muslims forced people to convert. Although this sometimes happened, the Qur'an forbids the practice (see Qur'an 5:69 and 29:46), especially in regard to "People of the Book." This phrase referred mainly to Christians and Jews, whom Muslims viewed as part of a greater monotheistic community who worshiped the same God. When People of the Book came under Muslim rule, they could choose to convert voluntarily, or they could pay a tax called a *jizyah*. If they chose to maintain their religion and pay the *jizyah*, they were granted certain religious and political rights and protections (see Document E).

### Teaching Tips:

- Explain that the Qur'an is divided into chapters, called suras, and verses. The numbers following each verse give the sura and verse number.
- The Qur'an is meant to be recited, so we suggest you read these verses aloud to the students.
- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. According to verse 33:35 of the Qur'an, what are the qualities of someone who is favored by God?
    - devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable, chaste, ever mindful of God, and one who fasts
  2. What does verse 5:32 suggest about the value of human life?
    - Human life is very valuable and all humans are interconnected. The only reasons one should kill another is if the person committed murder or "other villainy." (vicious act)
  3. Examine verse 2:188. What does it suggest about Islam's view of private property?
    - It suggests that an ideal society is one that protects property.
  4. According to verse 22:39, when are Muslims allowed to fight?
    - When you are attacked.
  5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?
    - There are several ideas that might explain the spread:
      - First, paradise was available to all who perform good works, including women. Second, justice is emphasized and promised to all people. Third, personal property was not to be stolen. In a culture that had frequently experienced inter-clan raids, this would be a welcome relief. Fourth, the emphasis on traits like humility and charity and chasteness could be very appealing to people who lived in a rather harsh, rough-and-tumble world.



## Document B

Source: Verses from the Qur'an.

*Those who submit to God and accept the true Faith; who are devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable, and chaste; who fast and are ever mindful of God – on these, both men and women, God will bestow forgiveness and rich recompense [reward]. (33:35)*

*... (W)hoever killed a human being, except as punishment for murder or other villainy..., shall be deemed as having killed all mankind; and ... whoever saved a human life shall be deemed as having saved all mankind.... (5:32)*

*But the believers who do good works, both men and women, shall enter Paradise. They shall not suffer the least injustice. (4:124)*

*Do not devour one another's property by unjust means, nor bribe the judges with it in order that you may wrongfully and knowingly usurp [take] other people's possessions.... (2:188)*

*Permission to take up arms is hereby given to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged. God has power to grant them victory. (22:39)*

CV

## Document C: The Spread of Islam (map)

### Content Notes:

- The 7th and 8th century expansion of Islam occurred in three distinguishable bursts. The first occurred in the last years of Muhammad's life and united many of the tribes on the Arabian peninsula into one Arabic Islamic ummah, or family. The second burst was the 30 years that followed Muhammad's death. This is frequently called "the time of the rightly-guided caliphs." All of these caliphs – Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656) and Ali (656-661) – were relatives or close friends of Muhammad. It was during these 30 years that much of the Middle East came under Muslim control. The third wave of expansion was during a 90-year between 661 and 750, when Islam was under the rule of the Umayyad clan. During this period, Islam spread from southern France to India.
- Oman adopted Islam during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime (by 632) even though the region was geographically separated from the rest of the early Muslim lands. Omanis converted to Islam voluntarily, largely because Muhammad sent an emissary to visit them.
- The Battle of Tours, also called the Battle of Poitiers, in 732, effectively halted the spread of Islam into Europe. Islam was driven back militarily by Charles Martel and, culturally, by the rise of a unified European Christian Church.

### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:

1. By what year had each of the following come under Moslem control?

Mecca (632 or before), Jerusalem (661 or before), Cairo (661 or before), Baghdad (661 or before), Saragossa (750 or before)

2. How far north did Islam spread in the 600s?  
How far east?

It spread as far north as France and as far east as India.

3. What does this map tell you about Muhammad's followers?

To take control over such a large area, they must have been not only devoted to their prophet but also skilled and well-organized fighters.

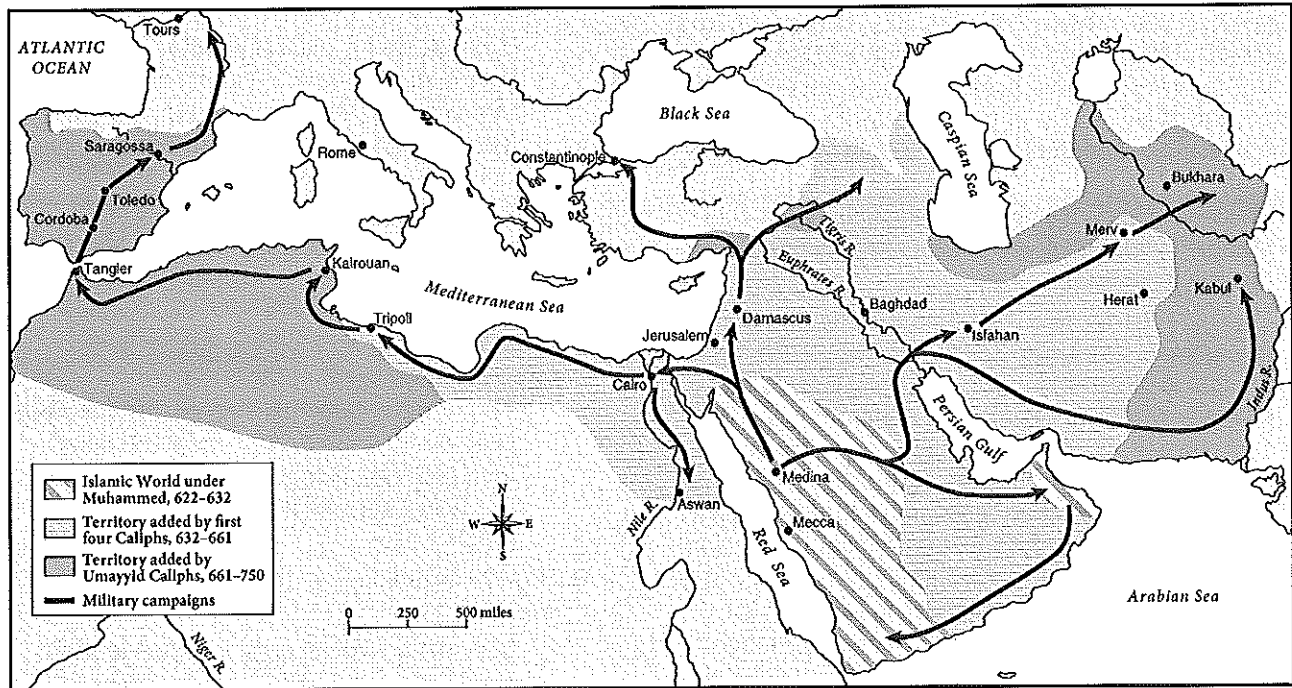
4. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?

The success of the Muslim military campaigns allowed Islam to spread far and wide. The fact that it happened in the relatively short span of 140 years says that either the message of Islam had appeal or the Muslim military used coercive tactics. Perhaps both!

### Document C

Source: Map created from various sources.

### The Spread of Islam



CV

## Document D: The *Ghazu*

### Content Notes:

- Historian Karen Armstrong is the author of over 20 books and is a leading authority on comparative religion. Much of her scholarship has focused on what Islam, Judaism and Christianity have in common, and how these faiths have shaped world history and current events. Born in 1944, the former nun summarized her personal view on faith in 2009, saying, “I say that religion isn’t about believing things. It’s ethical alchemy. It’s about behaving in a way that changes you, that gives you intimations of holiness and sacredness.”
- One of Muhammad’s primary concerns was that the ummah, or Muslim community, would live up to the ideals of egalitarianism and social justice. Alms giving is central to Islam, as is the care of widows and orphans. (Muhammad was himself an orphan, so he empathized with their plight.) Later, when Muslim armies went on raids against non-Muslims, one-fifth of the plunder was turned over to the state so it could be used to support the ummah. Similarly, Muslim armies were not allowed to settle on the lands they won. Instead, the state collected various taxes from conquered peoples and used that revenue to support the ummah. One result of these policies was that Muslim armies became a professional fighting force that never settled down, and military expansion continued because the empire needed revenue to pay out salaries to the ummah.
- Armstrong emphasizes that the *ghazu* was not about spreading Islam, at least in its early years. The purpose was to plunder, that is to take treasure from non-Muslim groups and use it to fortify the growing community of Islamic believers. However, restraints were put on this practice. People of “the book,” that is, Jews and Christians, were not to be plundered because they, like the Muslims, believed in one god and provided a line of prophets among whom Muhammad was simply the last. Muhammad’s goodwill towards Jews and Christians lessened later in his life when he realized that many in these two faith groups would not accept Muhammad as their spiritual leader.

### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. What was the *ghazu*? What was the *ummah*?  
A *ghazu* was a raid on another Arab tribe; Arabia did not have enough resources for everyone, so tribes plundered each other. The *ummah* was the Muslim community of believers. It began as a small circle of Muhammad’s followers and grew to include many but not all Arabs. It did not, for example, include Arab Jews and Arab Christians.
  2. What was the purpose of the *ghazu* in the years before Islam?  
The purpose was quite simply for one Arab clan to raid another Arab clan and take their property. Resources were tight and this was a way for the clans to make ends meet.
  3. How did Islam change the way the *ghazu* worked?  
Muhammad did not allow followers of Islam to raid each other. Therefore, he changed the *ghazu* rules so that Muslims could only raid non-Muslim groups. This meant that raiding parties reached further out into the Arabian peninsula and eventually into Persia, Byzantium, and beyond. The plunder was to be used to benefit members of the *ummah*, that is, all Muslims throughout the area.
  4. Why were the Arabs able to conquer much of Persia and parts of Byzantium?  
According to Armstrong, the Persians and the Byzantines had weakened each other with constant fighting. This created a power vacuum in the Middle East which the Muslims were able to fill.
  5. How does this document explain how Islam spread so quickly?  
The document provides two main reasons: 1. *ghazu* raiders in non-Muslim regions took treasure and doled it out to fellow Muslims. The prospect of treasure must have boosted the pace of raiding and expansion. 2. a power vacuum made lands that used to be dominated by Persia and Byzantium more vulnerable and enabled the spread to occur quickly.

## Document D

Source: Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History*, Random House, 2000.

For centuries... Arabs had [added to] their inadequate resources by means of the ghazu [raids against other tribes], but Islam had put a stop to this because the ummah [Muslim community] was not permitted to attack one another. What would replace the ghazu, which had enabled Muslims to scratch out a meager livelihood?... The obvious answer was a series of ghazu raids against the non-Muslim communities in the neighboring countries. The unity of the ummah would be preserved by an outwardly directed offensive [attack].

There was nothing religious about these campaigns.... The objective ... was plunder and a common activity that would preserve the unity of the ummah. For centuries the Arabs had tried to raid the richer settled lands beyond the [Arabian] peninsula: the difference was that this time they encountered a power vacuum. Persia and Byzantium had both been engaged for decades in a long ... series of wars with one another. Both were exhausted.

CV

## Document E: The Duties of the Caliph

### Content Notes:

- Al-Mawardi was an Iraqi Muslim legal scholar who wrote *The Ordinances of Government* in the late 900s or early 1000s. This codified the role of the caliph, or imam, that had developed over the three hundred years since Abu-Bakr was named the first caliph.
- In early Islam, the titles "imam" and "caliph" were used interchangeably to refer to the political and religious leader of the Muslim community. The term 'caliph' has not been used officially since 1924 when the Republic of Turkey, which replaced the last Muslim empire, abolished it.
- Initially, the offer to enter into "the Pact" was extended only to Jews and Christians, whom Muslims considered "people of the book." Later, in some parts of the Muslim empire, it was extended to Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists, and others. Those who entered the Pact could continue to practice their own religion and were entitled to protection by the caliph and his armies. However, in return the groups were expected to be loyal to the ruler. In addition, they had fewer political and legal rights, and they had to pay the *jizyah*. Not all Muslim rulers implemented this policy nor was it applied uniformly, but in general, Muslim empires tolerated people of other faiths.
- Prior to reading the document, discuss with the students the meaning of jihad. Often, it is translated as "holy war." This is only partly accurate, as the literal translation of the word is "strive," "struggle," or "effort." This means striving or struggling to fulfill the will of Allah, as Islam means "submission to the will of Allah." Muhammad advocated for both a "greater jihad" and a "lesser jihad." The greater involved the internal struggle to be an ideal Muslim and live up to the requirements of the Five Pillars and the religion in general. Lesser jihad is the fight against an outer enemy, waging war according to the rules set out by Allah in the Qur'an and by Muhammad's example in his lifetime.

### Teaching Tips:

- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. What responsibility is given to the caliph in the first duty?
 

Religious duties having to do with keeping the teachings of Muhammad pure
  2. What responsibilities are listed in duties 2, 3, and 4?
 

Settling legal disputes, military defense, protecting the rights of servants
  3. In American society, who is responsible for these tasks?
 

People in government (judges, the military, police, the executive branch at state and local levels)
  4. What was the Pact?
 

It was an agreement that allowed conquered non-Muslims, including Jews and Christians, to continue practicing their religion if they paid an exemption tax called the *jizyah*.
  5. How does this document help explain why Islam spread so quickly?
 

The caliph had powers to uphold Islam and see that it was practiced faithfully and fairly. This is important because people who are considering a religion often look to see if its followers practice what they preach. In addition, the caliph had the power to fight against those who refused to accept Islam. This could lead to the spread of Muslim rule by conquest. Finally, the Ordinances suggest a sweetener. People who joined the Pact, or agreement, and paid the *jizyah* tax, could continue to practice their own religion. This would have made it easier for Muslim rulers to gain acceptance.

## Document E

**Source:** Abu al-Hasan Al-Mawardi, *The Ordinances of the Government*, circa 975 CE.

**Note:** In 632, following the death of Muhammad, the first caliph (a spiritual ruler, sometimes called an imam) was selected to lead the Muslim community. Over the next three centuries, the duties of the caliph were firmly established, with the understanding that the caliph would not delegate these duties to others. The excerpt below, from a book of Islamic law written by an Arab judge in the 10th century, outlines four of the ten public duties of the caliph.

### The Ordinances of Government

1. To maintain the religion according to established principles and the consensus of the first generation of Muslims. If . . . some dubious person deviates from it, the Imam must clarify the proofs of religion to him, expound that which is correct, and apply to him the proper rules and penalties so that religion may be protected from injury and the community safeguarded from error.
2. To execute judgments between litigants [people involved in lawsuits] and to settle disputes between contestants so that justice may prevail and so that none commit or suffer injustice.
3. To defend the lands of Islam and to protect them from intrusion so that people may earn their livelihood and travel at will without danger to life or property.
4. To enforce the legal penalties for the protection of God's commandments from violation and for the preservation of the rights of his servants from injury or destruction. . . .
6. To wage . . . jihad [holy war] against those who, after having been invited to accept Islam, persist in rejecting it, until they either become Muslims or enter the Pact\* so that God's truth may prevail over every religion.

\* The Pact was an arrangement often made by Muslim rulers that permitted conquered Christians, Jews and other non-Muslims to continue to practice their religion if they paid a special tax called the *jizyah* and obeyed Islamic laws.

## Document F: The People of Hims

### Content Notes:

- Before this battle, the united Muslim army had fought against the Sassanid Persian Empire and successfully taken modern-day Iraq. Even so, the Battle of Yarmuk is seen as a turning point. With this victory, the Muslims took over the lands of present-day Syria and Palestine. This was the beginning of the transformation from a smaller, local power to a larger, regional empire.
- Prior to the battle, the Muslims had taken the town of Hims in Syria and the people there paid a land tax to them. This was the beginning of the jizyah.
- Few Byzantine sources exist for this battle and therefore it is hard to verify the accuracy of the numbers given in this document. As a result, contemporary and modern estimates of the troop size vary greatly.
- The Battle of Yarmuk took place near the Yarmuk River, which today forms the boundary between Syria and Jordan. The Muslim forces were greatly outnumbered; today's estimates claim that between 25,000 and 40,000 Muslims fought against up to 100,000 Byzantine soldiers. However, the Muslims, united under a strong leader, had greater familiarity with the terrain and used superior battle tactics. In addition, the day before the battle, a terrible sandstorm blew in from the desert. The Arabs had more experience with such brutal conditions and were able to drive the confused Byzantine forces into a network of ravines, where they were slaughtered.
- By the time Islam began to spread, Christianity was centuries old, and deep divisions had occurred among Christians. The Byzantine Church harshly persecuted the Christians of Egypt and Syria, whom it viewed as heretics. Similarly, the Sassanid rulers of Persia often persecuted people who were not Zoroastrian. As a result, many Jews and Christians in the Middle East preferred Muslim rule.
- Muslim women also helped in the fight. When their army retreated, the women in the camps fought against the Byzantines, some using pots and tent poles, inspiring the men to return to the front lines.

### Teaching Tips:

- Instruct the students that when reading the account of al-Baladhuri, they should pay attention to his explanation of the Muslim victory over the Byzantines, and to the way the Christians and Jews of Syria reacted to the Muslim invaders.
- Discuss the Document Analysis questions:
  1. Who was the Muslim army fighting in this account?

the Byzantine army of Emperor Heraclius
  2. To whom did the Muslims attribute their victory?

Allah
  3. Whose version of the battle is this? Why is this important to note?

This is a Muslim account of the battle. This means that it shows their perspective and does not show the perspective of the Byzantines. The two sides could see the battle very differently.
  4. How did the people of Hims (Syrians) feel about the Muslims?

They are shown to be very respectful of the Muslims, even offering to protect them from the Byzantines by closing the gates of the city and guarding them. The Hims also celebrate the Muslims' victory and gladly pay a land tax to help support them.
  5. How does this document help explain why Islam spread quickly?

The Muslims are portrayed as brave and effective warriors, which could have helped them spread Islam through conquest and defend it from takeover. They are also shown to be admired by other peoples, such as the Hims, and this admiration could have resulted in openness to the adoption of Islam. It also depicts a belief in a powerful and protective God (Allah) that might lead many people to be attracted to a faith that promised such security and benefits.



## Document F

**Source:** Ahmad ibn-Jabir al-Baladhuri, *The Origins of the Islamic State*, circa 850 CE.

**Note:** In the year 636, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius ("hair-uh-kli-us") gathered an army at the Yarmuk River in Syria to resist the expansion of Islam. The people of Hims are the Syrians, non-Muslims who had been under Byzantine rule. This account was written by the Arabic Muslim historian al-Baladhuri about 200 years after the battle.

Heraclius gathered [a] large Byzantine army ... numbering about 200,000. This army he put under the command of one of his choice men.... The Moslems gathered together and the [Byzantine] army marched against them. The battle they fought at al-Yarmuk was of the fiercest and bloodiest kind.... In this battle 24,000 Moslems took part. The [Byzantines] and their followers in the battle tied themselves to each other by chains, so that no one might set his hope on flight. By Allah's help, some 70,000 of them were put to death....

When Heraclius massed his troops against the Moslems and the Moslems heard that they were coming to meet them at al-Yarmuk, the Moslems re-

funded to the inhabitants of Hims the [land tax] they had taken from them saying, "We are too busy to support and protect you. Take care of yourselves." But the people of Hims replied, "We like your rule and justice far better than the state of oppression and tyranny in which we were. The army of Heraclius we shall indeed . . . repulse from the city." . . . Saying this, they closed the gates of the city and guarded them... When by Allah's help the "unbelievers" were defeated and the Moslems won, they opened the gates of their cities, went out with the singers and music players who began to play, and paid the [land tax].

CV

