

# The Beginnings of Islam: An Introduction via Early-Mid 7th Century Timeline

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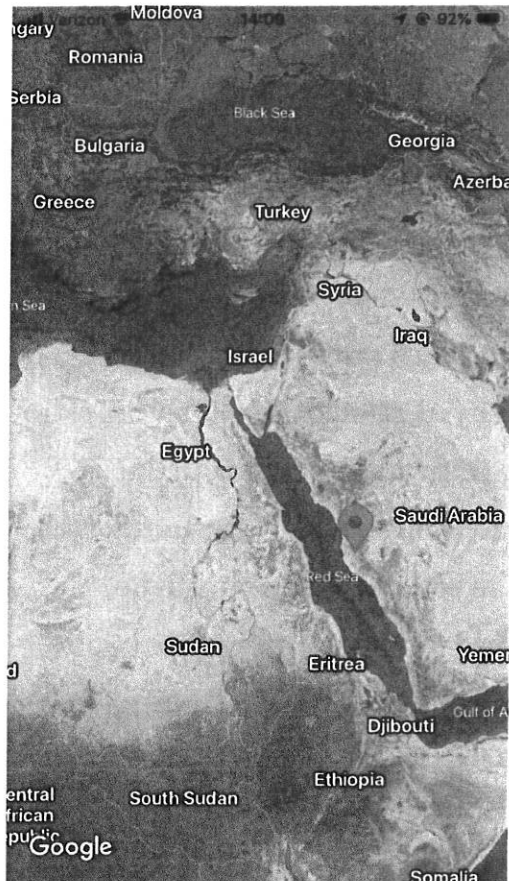
**Guiding Questions:** What major events highlight the beginnings of Islam?

**570**

**Muhammad** is born in Mecca.

**610**

**Muhammad** receives his first revelation on Mount Hira.



**622**

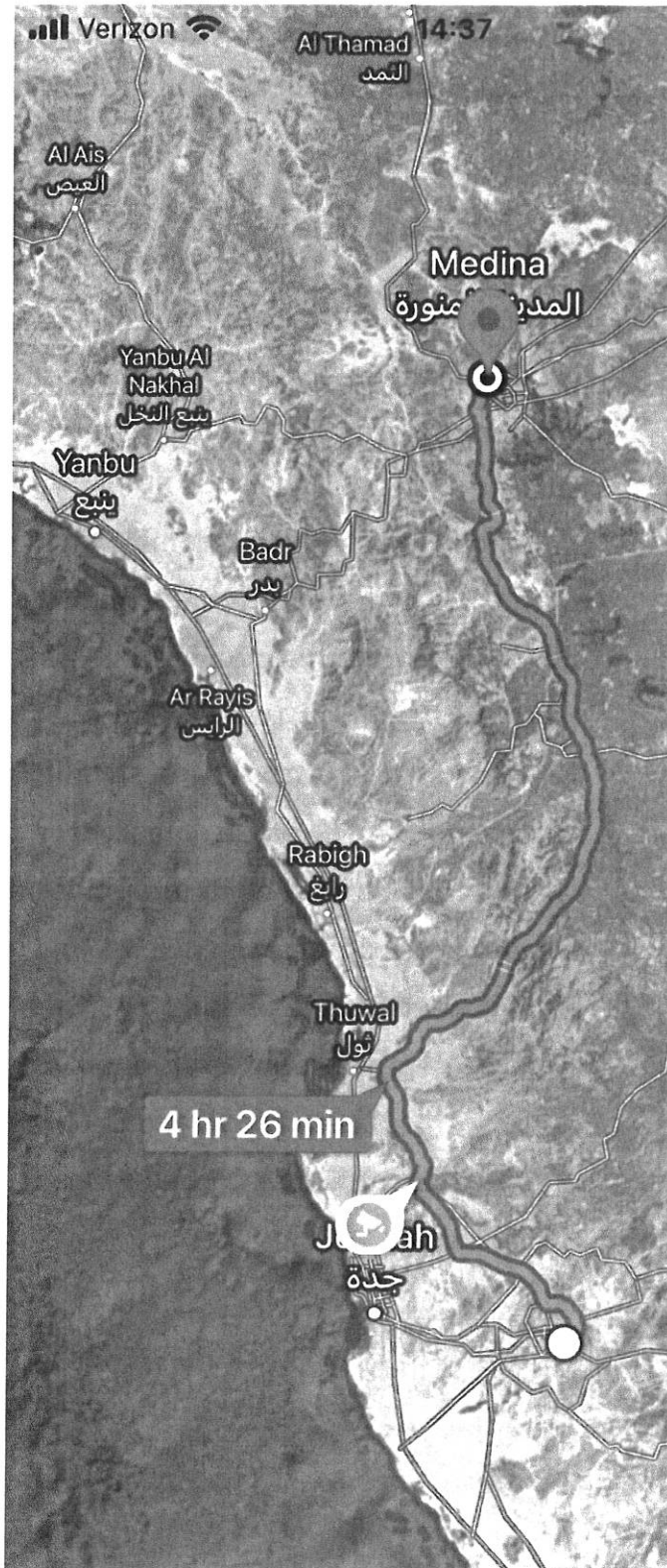
**Muhammad** undertakes the Hegira (Hijra), the migration from Mecca to Medina, establishing the start of the Islamic calendar.

**624**

**Battle of Badr:** **Muhammad's** forces win, resulting in a turning point for **Islam** against the ruling Quraysh tribe (Muhammad's origin tribe).

"...in Islamic history, major military victory led by the Prophet Muhammad that marked a turning point for the early Muslim community (*ummah*) from a defensive stance toward one of stability and expansion. The battle damaged Meccan trade and boosted the morale of the *ummah* as a viable force in its pursuit of control of the holy city. The prestige of the battle in the Islamic consciousness is marked by the fact that it is the only battle mentioned by name in the Qur'ān.

In 622 Muhammad and his Meccan followers settled in Medina



upon invitation, having fled their native city in an event known as the Hijrah (“Emigration”). Although the new Constitution of Medina gave them a modicum of acceptance among the Medinese, the *muhājirūn*, as Muhammad’s Meccan followers came to be known, remained a separate class, unabsorbed into the socio-economic fabric of the city. They began raiding caravans whose wares fed Mecca’s merchant economy, while new revelations of the Qur’ān sanctioned aggression against Mecca’s ruling Quraysh tribe for its own aggression against Muhammad’s followers and for its prevention of their worshipping at al-Masjid al-Ḥaram (back in Mecca), Islam’s holiest site.

Nearly two years after the Hijrah, in the middle of the month of Ramadan, a major raid was organized against a particularly wealthy caravan escorted by Abū Sufyān, head of the Umayyad clan of the Quraysh. According to the traditional accounts, when word of the caravan reached Muhammad, he arranged a raiding party of about 300, consisting of both *muhājirūn* and *anṣār*

(Muhammad's Medinese supporters), to be led by Muhammad himself. By filling the wells on the caravan route near Medina with sand, Muhammad's army lured Abū Sufyān's army into battle at Badr, near Medina. There the two parties clashed in traditional fashion: three men from each side were chosen to fight an initial skirmish, and then the armies charged toward one another for full combat. As his army charged forward, Muhammad threw a handful of dust, which flew into the eyes and noses of many of the opposing Meccans. Despite the superior numbers of the Meccan forces (about 1,000 men), Muhammad's army scored a complete victory, and many prominent Meccans were killed.

The victory at Badr was a watershed so momentous for the nascent Muslim community that it was believed to be miraculous. Not only did it confirm to the *umma* divine sanction of the new religion of Islam—for the Qur'ān attributed the success to divine intervention (3:123)—but it confirmed the vitality of the *umma* in challenging the hegemony of the Quraysh.

Successive victories for the *umma*, save for the setback at the Battle of Uḥud (625), eventually forced the Quraysh to allow Muhammad's followers to worship at al-Masjid al-Ḥaram in 629. In 630, after years of struggle, the Quraysh surrendered Mecca to Muhammad and became Muslims. Those who had fought under Muhammad at Badr became known as the *badriyyūn* and made up one group of the Companions of the Prophet (*ṣaḥābah*).” (Bagot)

## 625

**Battle** of Uhud: Quraysh tribe defeats the Muslims.

## 627

**Battle** of the Trench: Quraysh troops attempt to siege Medina (then called Yathrib), but lose to the Muslim force.

## 628

Treaty of Hudaibiyyah: A peace agreement is signed between **Muhammad's** Muslims and the people of Mecca.

“The Treaty is very important in Islam, as it was an indirect recognition of the Islamic state in Medina. The treaty also allowed the Muslims who were still in Mecca to practice Islam publicly. Further, as there was no longer a constant struggle between the Muslims and the polytheists, many people saw Islam in a new light, which led to many more people accepting Islam<sup>[citation needed]</sup>.

In addition, the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah paved the way for the conquering of other tribes, through the use of treaties with the Muslims. The treaty also serves as an example that Islam was not merely spread with the sword as Muhammad had an army that could have attacked Mecca, but Muhammad chose to make a peace treaty. After the polytheists broke the treaty, he marched on Makkah and conquered the polytheists.<sup>[15]</sup>

The oath that Muhammad took "under the tree" at al-Hudaibiyyah made him a true ruler over parts of western Arabia. In early Islamic Egypt, having an forefather who had

"pledged allegiance under the tree" conferred considerable social prestige.<sup>[16]</sup>

A verse of the Quran was revealed about the treaty, which means, "Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory" (Quran 48:1)." ("Treaty of Hudaibiyyah")

## 629

First Pilgrimage ("lesser" pilgrimage or "umrah") made by **Muhammad** and his Muslims to Mecca after migrating to Medina.

## 629

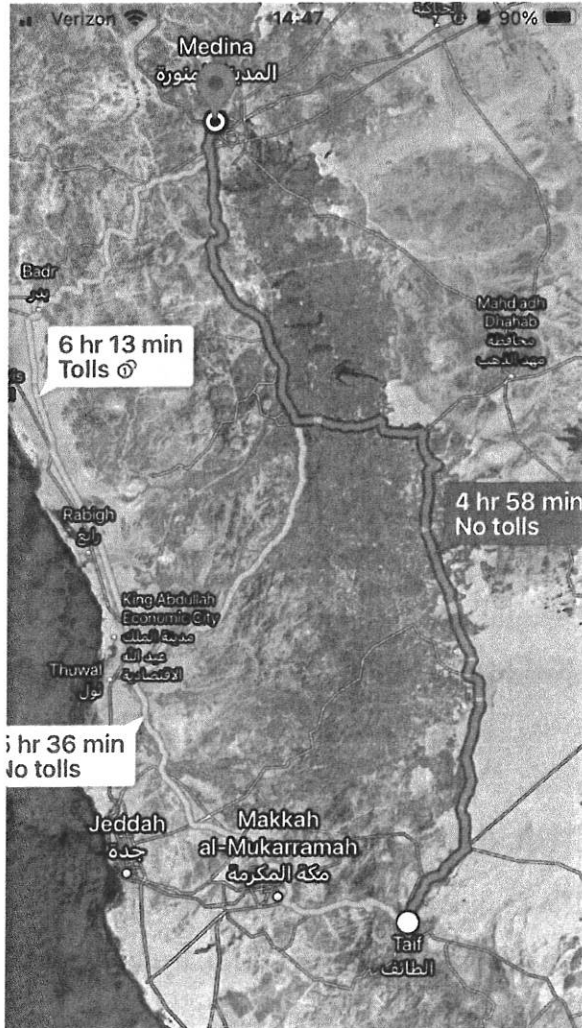
**Battle of Mu'tah:** Muslims attempt to capture the village east of the **Jordan River** from the **Byzantine Empire** to show their expanding dominance, resulting in a Muslim defeat.

## 630

Submissive **conquest** of Mecca: The Quraysh realize that the Muslims now greatly outnumber them and allow the Muslims to capture their **city**, Mecca, and rule it as they please.

### 630

**Battle of Hunayn:** Ending in a decisive victory for the Muslims over the Bedouin tribe of Hawazin.



### 630

**Attempted Siege of Ta'if:** **Muhammad's** forces are initially unable to siege Ta'if and convert its people to **Islam**.

### 632

"Farewell Hajj Pilgrimage": This is the only Hajj pilgrimage in which **Muhammad** participates.

### 632

**Muhammad** dies in Medina, not clearly naming a successor to lead the Muslim people.

### 632 - 634

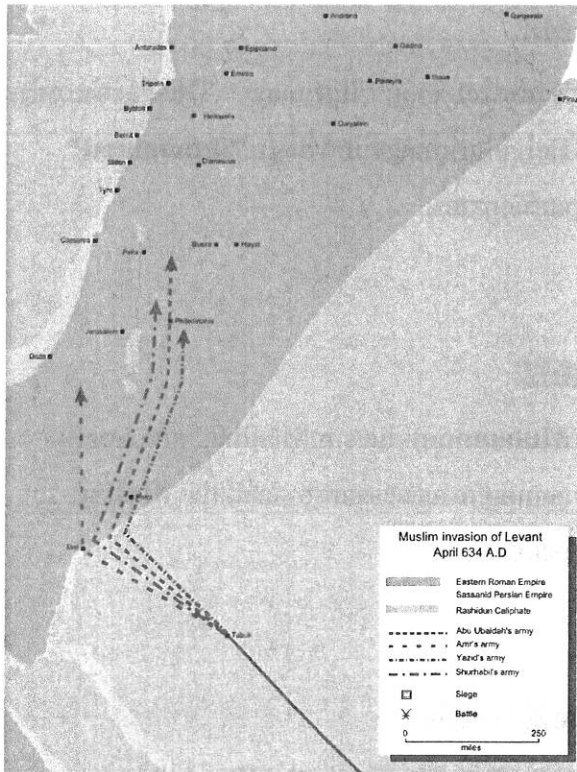
**Abu Bakr** becomes the first caliph (successor to **Muhammad**) of the **Rashidun Caliphate**.

### 634 - 644

**Umar ibn al-Khattab** succeeds **Abu Bakr**, becoming the second caliph of the **Rashidun Caliphate**.

### 637

Muslim invasion of the **Levant**. The Byzantines are driven out.



("Muslim conquest of the Levant")

### 644 - 656

**Uthman** ibn 'Affan succeeds **Umar** to become the third caliph of the **Rashidun Caliphate**.

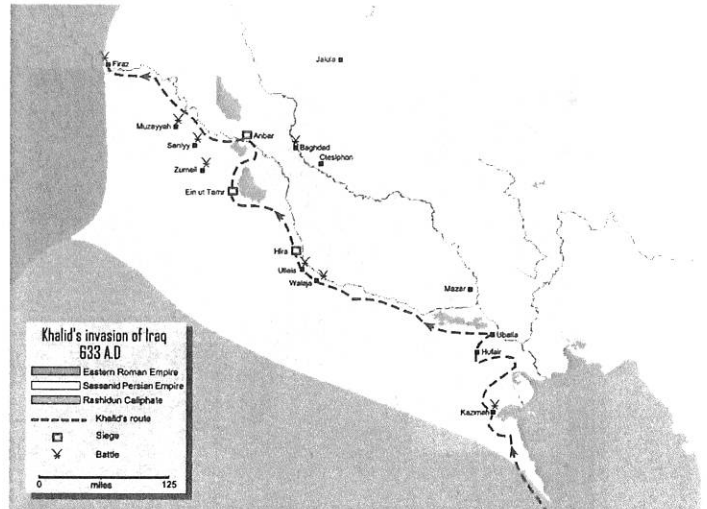
### c. 650

**Uthman** orders the establishment of one "true" Quran while destroying the others.

### 651

Muslim **Conquest of Mesopotamia**.

(Invasion spanned decades prior. See visual below).



### 656 - 661

**Ali ibn Abi Talib** succeeds **Uthman** to become the fourth and final caliph of the **Rashidun Caliphate**.

### Mar 670

**Hasan ibn Ali**, Shia **Islam's** second imam (his father, **Ali ibn Abi Talib**, being the first imam), is poisoned to **death**.

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