

World Religions

Free Lesson Plan

Some of the lessons in the attached lesson plan were designed to be an aid to use with “Map and Timeline of World Religions Poster”.

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MAP & TIMELINE OF WORLD RELIGIONS Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity Lesson Plan No BQ-9088 © Copyright © 2002 Performance Education

If the *majority* of the people in a country are Muslim,
we colored the country green!

Interpret the Poster

(Class Discussion)

What's the first thing that strikes you about this poster?
The religions are *not evenly spread* over the globe.

1. Let's talk about LOCATION:

Point to the **purple** = **Christianity**

How would you describe the location of Christians?

(North America, South America.
Europe. Southern Africa. Australia.)

What's the difference between Catholic and Eastern Orthodox?

(When the Roman Empire fell, it split into two parts.
The Catholic Church had its headquarters in Rome.
The Eastern Orthodox Church had its headquarters in
Constantinople = Istanbul, Turkey.)

What's the difference between Catholics and Protestants?

(Martin Luther, a Catholic priest, lived in Germany.
He *protested* against the Catholic Church.
He founded his own church - the Lutheran Church.
He had a lot of followers in Europe.)

Point to the **green** = **Islam**

How would you describe the location of Muslims?
(The Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia.)

Point to the **blue** = **Judaism**

How would you describe the location of Jews? (Israel.)

Point to the **maroon** = **Hinduism**

How would you describe the location of Hindus? (India.)

Point to the **yellow** = **Buddhism**

How would you describe the location of Buddhists? (East Asia.)
In Japan, the people follow Shinto. Are they also Buddhist? (Yes.)

2. Let's talk about PLACE:

Point to the pictures on the poster.

What **city** is sacred to the Jews?

(Jerusalem - is considered holy by 3 religions -
Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.)

What **river** is sacred to Hindus?

(The Ganges River.)

What **statue** is sacred to Buddhists?

(The Great Buddha at Kamakura.)

Can you name a famous Christian church?

(St. Peter's in Rome.)

What **hill** is sacred to Christians?

(Calvary - where Jesus was crucified.)

What **mosque** is sacred to Muslims?

(The Great Mosque in Mecca.)

Why do we put these famous places in a certain order?

(The photos form a timeline.)

The religions are in chronological order.)

Which is the oldest religion? (Judaism.)

Which is the youngest religion? (Islam.)

3. Let's talk about MOVEMENT:

The religion of Islam is one of the world's fastest-growing religions. How can you tell?

Hint: Westernmost point? Easternmost point?

(From Saudi Arabia, Islam spread westward to Africa
and eastward all the way to Indonesia.)

Although there is only one Jewish state (Israel),

Jewish people live in cities all over the world. How come?
(The Jews have been persecuted.)

The Romans drove the Jews out of the Middle East =
This is known as the *Diaspora*.

The Nazis exterminated 6 million Jews in Europe during
World War II. This is known as the *Holocaust*.

As a result, Jews have moved to cities around the world,
including the United States.)

4. Let's talk about REGION:

What region of the world has produced the greatest number of major religions?

(The Middle East! Three religions were born there -
Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.)

What else would you like to know about the world's major religions?

When you have finished the class discussion,
cover the poster and
pass out the blank map of the world.

Do you have a mental map of world religions?

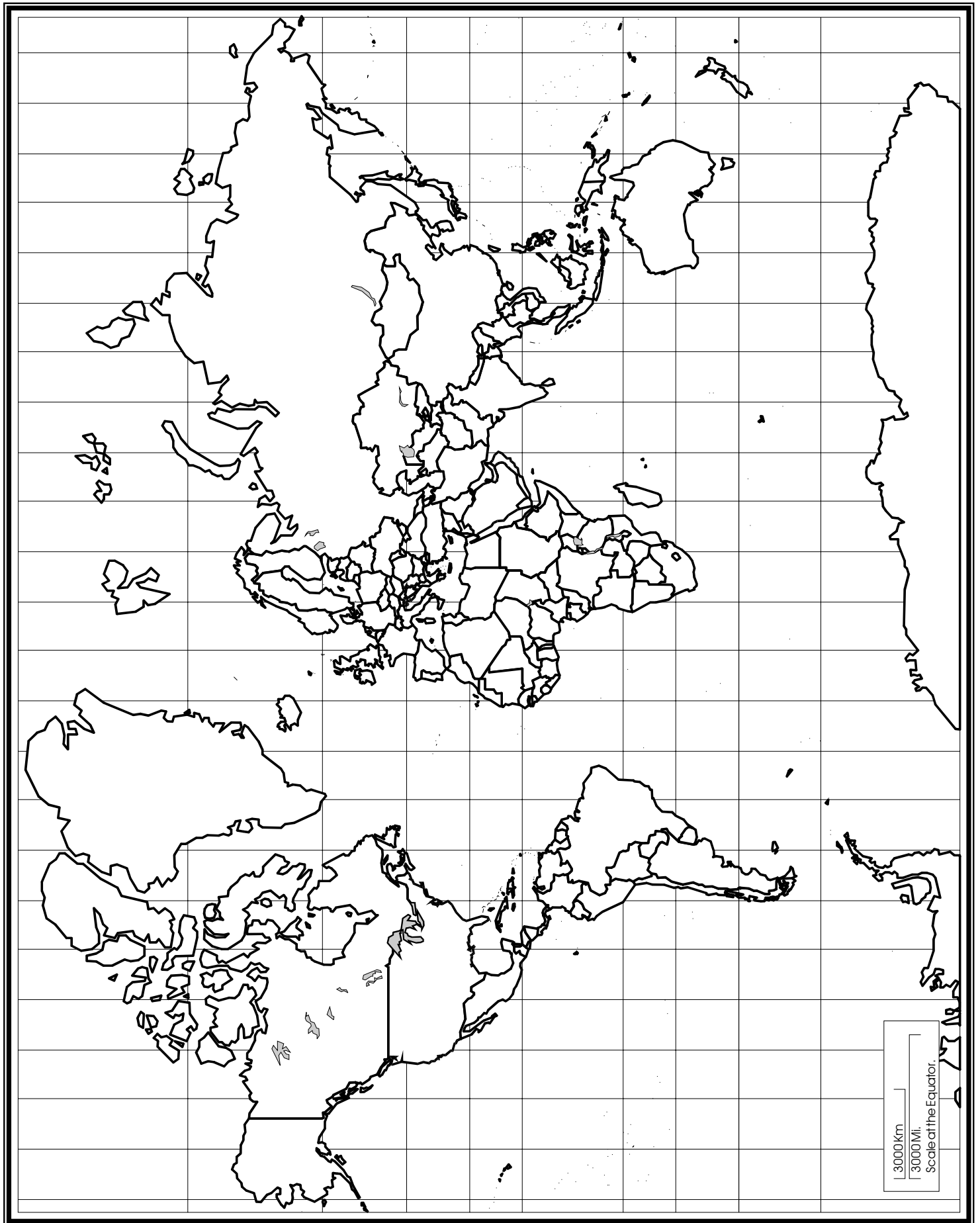
Color the Christian countries purple.

Color the Muslim countries green.

Color the Jewish countries blue.

Color the Hindu countries red.

Color the Buddhist countries yellow.



The ABCs of Judaism

Before you begin studying each religion,
take a quick trip to the library!

Ask students to fill in a memorable thing for each letter.

When finished, go around the room alphabetically.

Then try the game without this worksheet!

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J is for Jerusalem - where the Temple was built.
K
L
M
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X
Y
Z

The ABCs of Christianity

Before you begin studying each religion,
take a quick trip to the library!

Ask students to fill in a memorable thing for each letter.

When finished, go around the room alphabetically.

Then try the game without this worksheet!

A
B is for Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.
C
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The ABCs of Islam

Before you begin studying each religion,
take a quick trip to the library!

Ask students to fill in a memorable thing for each letter.

When finished, go around the room alphabetically.

Then try the game without this worksheet!

A
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Z

M is for Muhammad - the founder of the religion of Islam.

The ABCs of Hinduism

Before you begin studying each religion,
take a quick trip to the library!

Ask students to fill in a memorable thing for each letter.

When finished, go around the room alphabetically.

Then try the game without this worksheet!

A
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X
Y
Z

G is for the Ganges River. In India, it is considered sacred.

The ABCs of Buddhism

Before you begin studying each religion,
take a quick trip to the library!

Ask students to fill in a memorable thing for each letter.

When finished, go around the room alphabetically.

Then try the game without this worksheet!

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

is for Gautama Siddhartha (Buddha).

H

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J

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The life of Confucius

Once upon a time around 500 B.C., Confucius was born into a poor but aristocratic family in Shantung province, China. He was orphaned at an early age.

Confucius hated the chaos that had spread across China - children disrespecting their parents, peasants slaughtering their landlords. He wanted an orderly society, where rulers were men of good moral character, and where peasants learned to respect people of higher rank.

Confucius held several government jobs, but he spent most of his life teaching young people how to develop good moral character in order to govern China. By the time he died, he had taught 3,000 students. **Confucianism** can be summed up in three ideas:

Ritual propriety is right behavior toward each person, depending on his rank in society. Every person should act properly toward his "*bettors*" (people of higher rank). By acting out specific rituals, the youngest son should show proper respect to the eldest brother, the peasant should show proper respect to his landlord, the student should show proper respect to his teacher.

Confucius believed that the truly **Superior Man** should practice benevolence toward *all* - regardless of their rank in society. You can become a wise man of good moral character by rigorous study. (In 100 B.C., the Chinese government set up the Imperial University to give an exam on Confucianism. Those who received the highest scores were given top jobs in government.)

Benevolence means putting yourself in the other person's shoes and then treating him/her as you would like to be treated. Confucius said the Golden Rule in his own words: "*Do unto others what you wish to do unto yourself.*" (He also said: "*Do not do to others what you would not like yourself.*")

Most scholars believe that Confucianism helped maintain order in China. It is based on tradition and peasants (the majority group in China) were traditionalists. Whenever China veered from tradition, the peasants revolted.

During China's Communist Revolution (1949-1976), **Mao Tse-tung** overturned all traditions: The landlord class and the business class were destroyed. Peasants and factory workers were elevated in status. Teenagers (backed by the army) rounded up and humiliated adults in authority. Teachers, college professors, and mayors were forced to wear dunce caps. The universities were closed. Confucius must

The life of Buddha

Once upon a time (500 B.C.), there was a real man named **Siddhartha Gautama**. According to legend, he was the son of a prince in Nepal. (Nepal lay in the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world.) Coming from a rich and powerful family, he led a sheltered life. One day he went beyond the palace: He met an *old* man and wondered whether he would grow old. He met a *sick* man and worried that he might get sick. He saw a *corpse* and feared his own death. He met a *holy* man and hoped he could discover the cause of all suffering.

After six years as a poor wanderer in India, he began to believe in **reincarnation**: You are born, die, and are reborn as someone else. Your suffering in *this* life depends upon your **karma**: If you are suffering today, you were bad in your *last* life. Be good now and your *next* life will be more pleasant.

Because he wanted to be free from the cycle of suffering and rebirth, he began preaching the **Four Noble Truths**: This life is suffering. Suffering comes from selfish desires. You can stop your suffering if you follow the **Eightfold Path**: Know the truth. Resist evil. Say nothing to hurt others. Respect other peoples' property. Get a job that does no harm to others. Free your mind of evil. Control your feelings and thoughts. Practice meditation. Those who follow this path could reach **nirvana** - oneness with the universe.

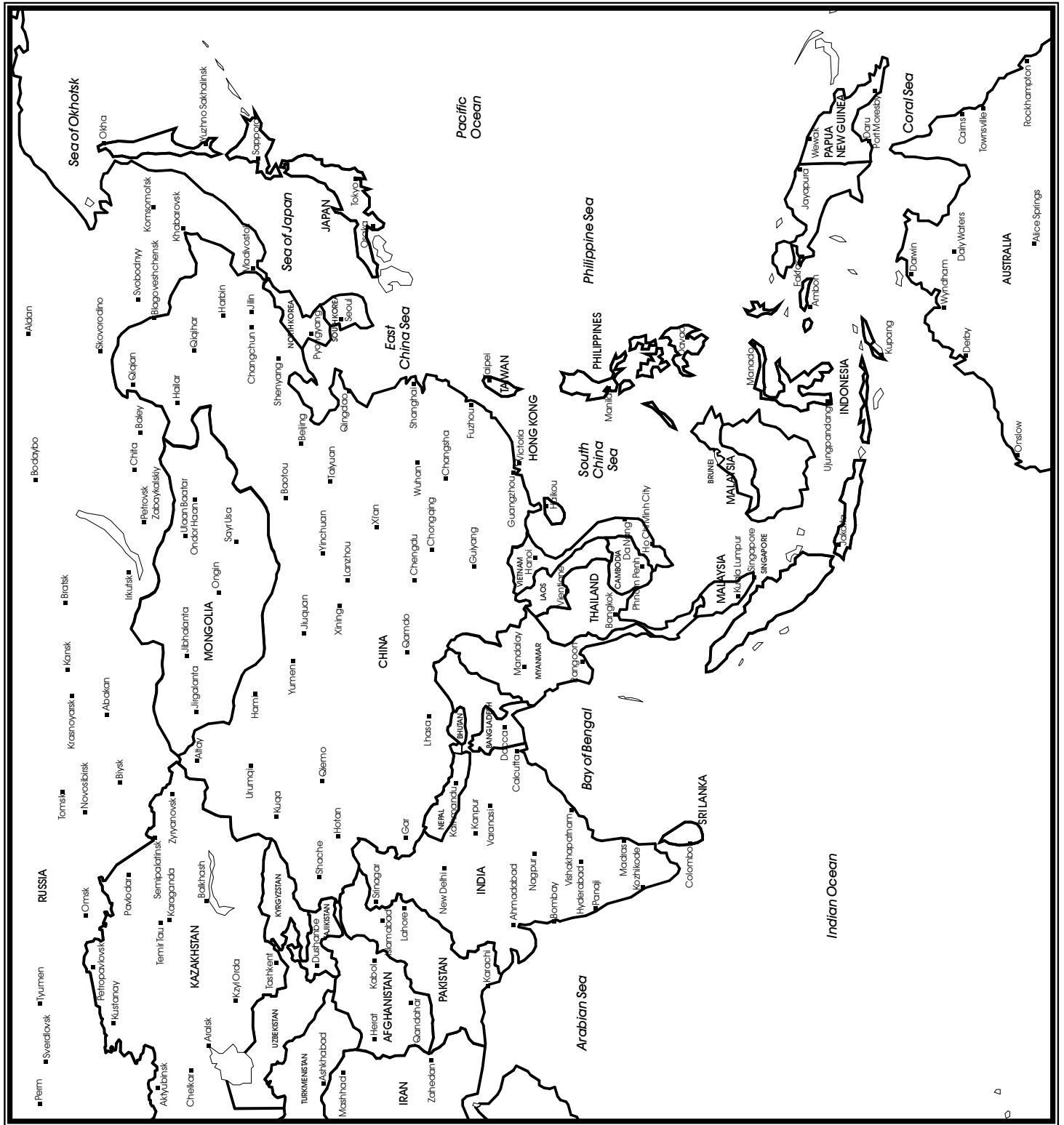
At first, people made fun of him, calling him "**Buddha**" (**The Enlightened One**). But he eventually attracted many followers in India and formed a community of Buddhists. At the age of 80, he died. Today, Buddhist monks live celibate and in poverty. Dressed in saffron (yellow) robes, they study and **meditate** - hoping to achieve *nirvana*.

Map the life of Buddha and the spread of Buddhism

Buddha was born in Nepal (**Underline Nepal**), home of the Himalayas, the world's highest mountains. Buddha wandered through India (**Underline India**). Today, there are few Buddhists in Nepal and India.

Monks and merchants spread Buddhism overseas.
Shade the following majority-Buddhist countries:

China, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, North Korea, Japan

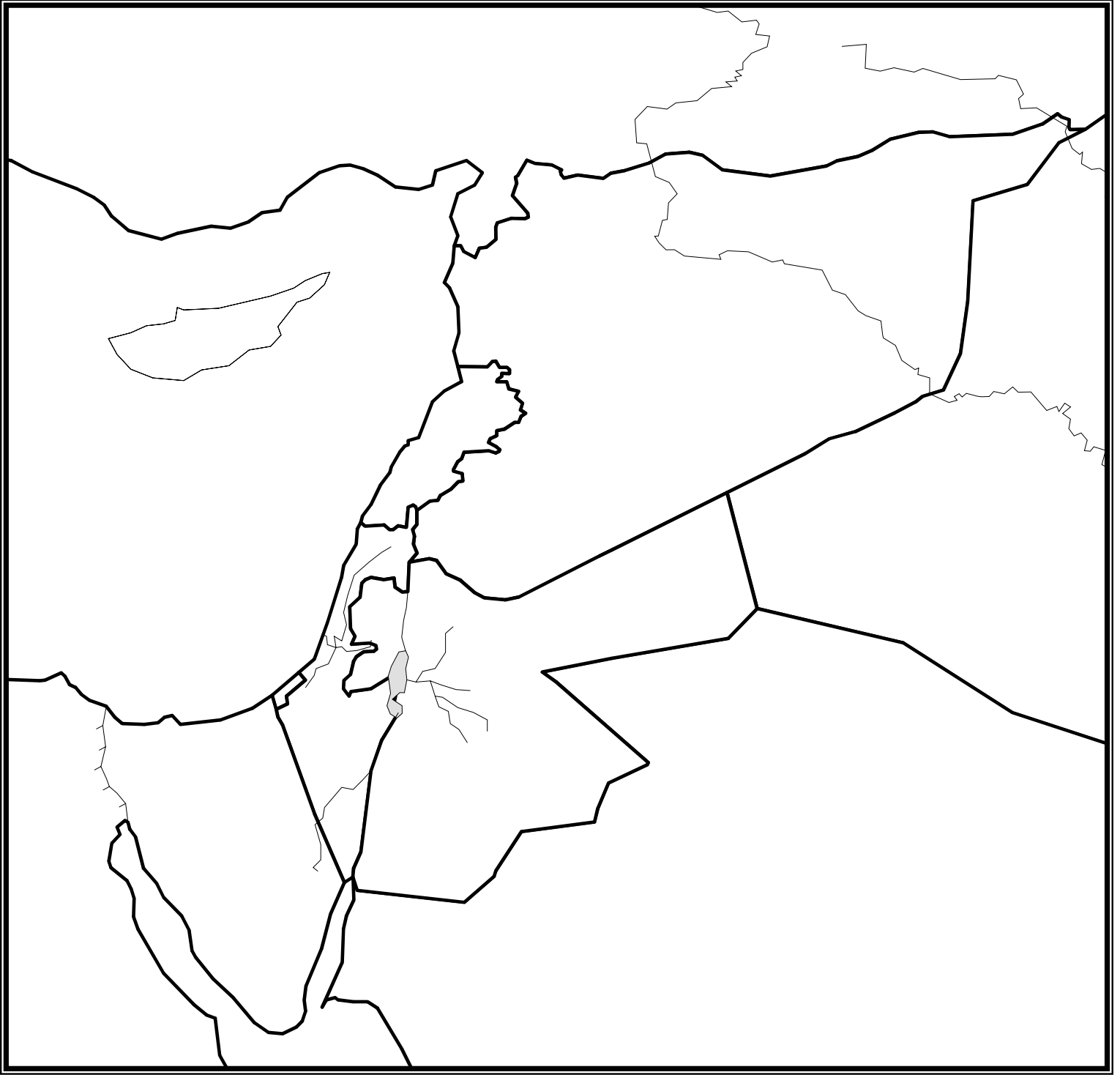


Map the events in the history of Jews and Christians.

Map of the HOLY LAND

Working in pairs, use an atlas to label the blank map with both the name and the number.
Connect the dots with a dotted line.

1. **EGYPT** - The Jewish people were enslaved by Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.
2. **THE NILE RIVER** - Afraid of the growing numbers of Jews, Pharaoh ordered that all male Jewish babies be killed. One Jewish mother put her baby in a basket and floated him down the river, where he was found and raised by Pharaoh's daughter. The baby was Moses.
3. **MIDIAN** (southeast of the Sinai Peninsula in Saudi Arabia) - According to the Bible, Moses was in this desert when God commanded him to lead the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt and into the promised land.
4. **CAIRO** - In the ancient capital of Egypt (east of here), Moses told Pharaoh, "*Let my people go.*" When Pharaoh refused, nine plagues befell Egypt, destroying the crops. The 10th plague killed all the first-born sons of Egypt, including Pharaoh's son and heir. (Death *passed over* the Jewish boys, creating the Jewish holiday of Passover.)
5. **THE RED SEA** - Although Pharaoh let the Jewish people go, he soon sent his army to recapture them. According to the Bible, as the army grew closer, Moses raised his walking stick to divide the waters of the Red Sea. The Jews crossed safely, but the Egyptian army drowned as the waters closed in on them.
6. **MOUNT SINAI** - Moses led the Jews to freedom on the Sinai Peninsula. According to the Bible, Moses spent 40 days on this mountain, during which time God gave him the Ten Commandments, the rules by which the Jewish people must live. Jews believe that it was at this time that they became the nation of Israel.
7. **THE SINAI DESERT** (Located in the Sinai Peninsula) - According to the Bible, the Jews spent 40 years wandering in this desert wilderness.
8. **THE DEAD SEA** - The Jews could not drink water from the Dead Sea, for it is so salty not even fish can live in it.
9. **MOUNT NEBO** (Located northeast of the Dead Sea) - Just before the Jewish people were about to reach Israel, the promised land, Moses stopped to climb this mountain. From the top he could see the promised land, but he would never enter it. He died on this mountain.
10. **THE RIVER JORDAN** - The Jews crossed this river and entered Israel.
11. **JERUSALEM** - In 1000 B.C., King David (of Goliath fame) made this the new capital of Israel. His son, King Solomon, built the first Temple of the Jews. Today one wall is still standing -- the Wailing Wall.
12. **BETHLEHEM** (located just southwest of Jerusalem) - Jesus was born here. At that Israel was part of the Roman Empire. King Herod, the Roman ruler, always murdered his rivals, including his own sons. Hearing of the new-born *King of the Jews*, Herod ordered the deaths of all infant boys. To save their baby, Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt.
13. **NAZARETH** (Halfway between the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea) - When King Herod died, the family returned to this town, where Jesus was raised as a Jew.
14. **JERUSALEM** - At 12 years old, Jesus travelled here for Passover. According to the Bible, Jesus surprised Jewish leaders with an amazing knowledge of religion.
15. **THE RIVER JORDAN** (at a point on the river just north of the Dead Sea) - At 30 years old, Jesus was baptized here by John the Baptist. John was later beheaded.
16. **CAPERNAUM** (located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee) - According to the Bible, Jesus chose this fishing village as the headquarters of his ministry. Many of his 12 followers were fishermen.
17. **CANA** (located northwest of Nazareth) - According to the Bible, Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding celebration here.
18. **IN THE DESERT** (at a point halfway between Jerusalem and the River Jordan) - According to the Bible, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert, fasting and being tempted with earthly power and wealth.
19. **BETHSAIDA** (located on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee) - According to the Bible, Jesus took 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes and fed 5,000 followers.
20. **SEA OF GALILEE** (label the point in the middle of the sea) - According to the Bible, Jesus calmed a storm on this sea.
21. **BETHANY** (located southeast of Jerusalem) - According to the Bible, Jesus brought a man named Lazarus back to life, even though he had been dead and buried for four days.
22. **JERUSALEM** - Jesus arrived here for Passover. He was welcomed into the city on *Palm Sunday*. According to the Bible, Jesus drove the money changers out of the Temple, shared the Last Supper with 12 followers, and was betrayed by Judas for 20 pieces of silver. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, sentenced Jesus to die on the cross, the traditional sentence for treason. He was nailed to a cross on Calvary, a hill just outside the city. Christians call this day *Good Friday*, for they believe Jesus died to save mankind and returned to life on *Easter Sunday*.





The Life of Muhammad

Using an atlas, color a red dot on each location.

Map of the Middle East

1. **MECCA, Saudi Arabia** - Muhammad was born in Mecca around 570 A.D. to a wealthy merchant family.
2. **ARABIAN DESERT** (at the point just southeast of Mecca) - Muhammad was an orphan. He lived as a nomad with a desert tribe, raising camels.
3. **DAMASCUS, Syria** - Adopted by his uncle Abu Talib, a rich merchant, Muhammad travelled by caravan.
4. **MOUNT HIRA** (just outside Mecca) - Like many wealthy merchants, Muhammad often went out into the hills to pray. In those days, the people of the Arabian Peninsula believed in many gods. It was here, according to Muhammad, that the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad, explaining that he was to be a prophet, delivering God's last message to the people.
5. **MEDINA** (located directly north of Mecca) - Once Muhammad began to preach the message of Allah (the Muslim word for God), the political leaders of the city of Mecca began to persecute him and his followers. (Omar, one of Muhammad's angriest enemies, would later become a Muslim.) Threatened with death, Muhammad and his followers fled to the town of Medina. This flight is known as the Hegira. While there, Muhammad and his followers, as was the custom of the day, halted camel caravans travelling to Mecca, holding both people and camels for ransom.
6. **JERUSALEM, Israel** - At first, Muhammad tried to convince the Jewish citizens of Medina of his prophethood. He explained, as the Angel Gabriel had explained to him, that he descended from Abraham, the founder of Judaism, and, like Abraham, he was commanded to spread the word of Allah. To convince them and to pay respect to Jerusalem, where Abraham offered to sacrifice his son to show his faith in God, Muhammad told his followers to face Jerusalem when praying. During one night visit to Jerusalem, Muslims believe Muhammad rose into heaven to speak with Allah. On this site, Muslims built the Dome of the Rock (mosque).
7. **RIYADH, Saudi Arabia** - Although this city did not exist during Muhammad's lifetime, it does indicate the extent of Muhammad's travels. He decided that in order to convince the citizens of Mecca of the truth of his prophethood, he needed to convince the majority of the people of the Arabian Peninsula. By preaching the message of Allah, he gained an army of thousands of believers, which conquered the entire peninsula. Muhammad's symbol was the crescent, like a sliver of the moon.
8. **MECCA** - In the year 630 A.D., Muhammad returned to this city with an army of 100,000, which conquered and occupied the city. One of Muhammad's first acts as the new political and religious leader of Mecca was to destroy the pagan idols in the Kaaba. For the first time, the citizens of Mecca accepted him as *the Prophet*. The messages sent to Muhammad by Allah would be written down as the Koran, the Muslim holy book. The name of his religion is Islam. A

*Color all of the countries
where the majority of the people are Muslim.*

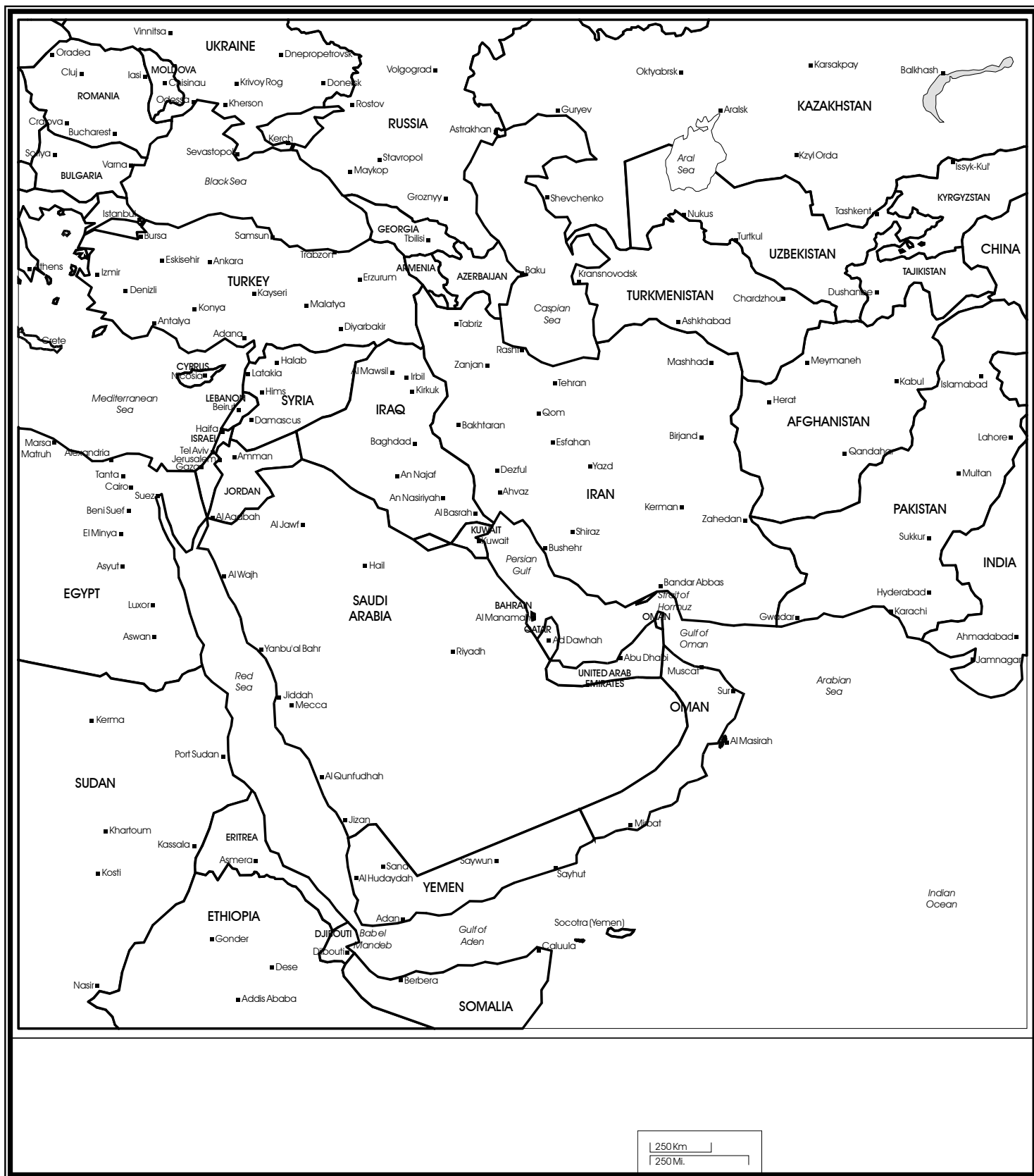
Map of Africa-Asia

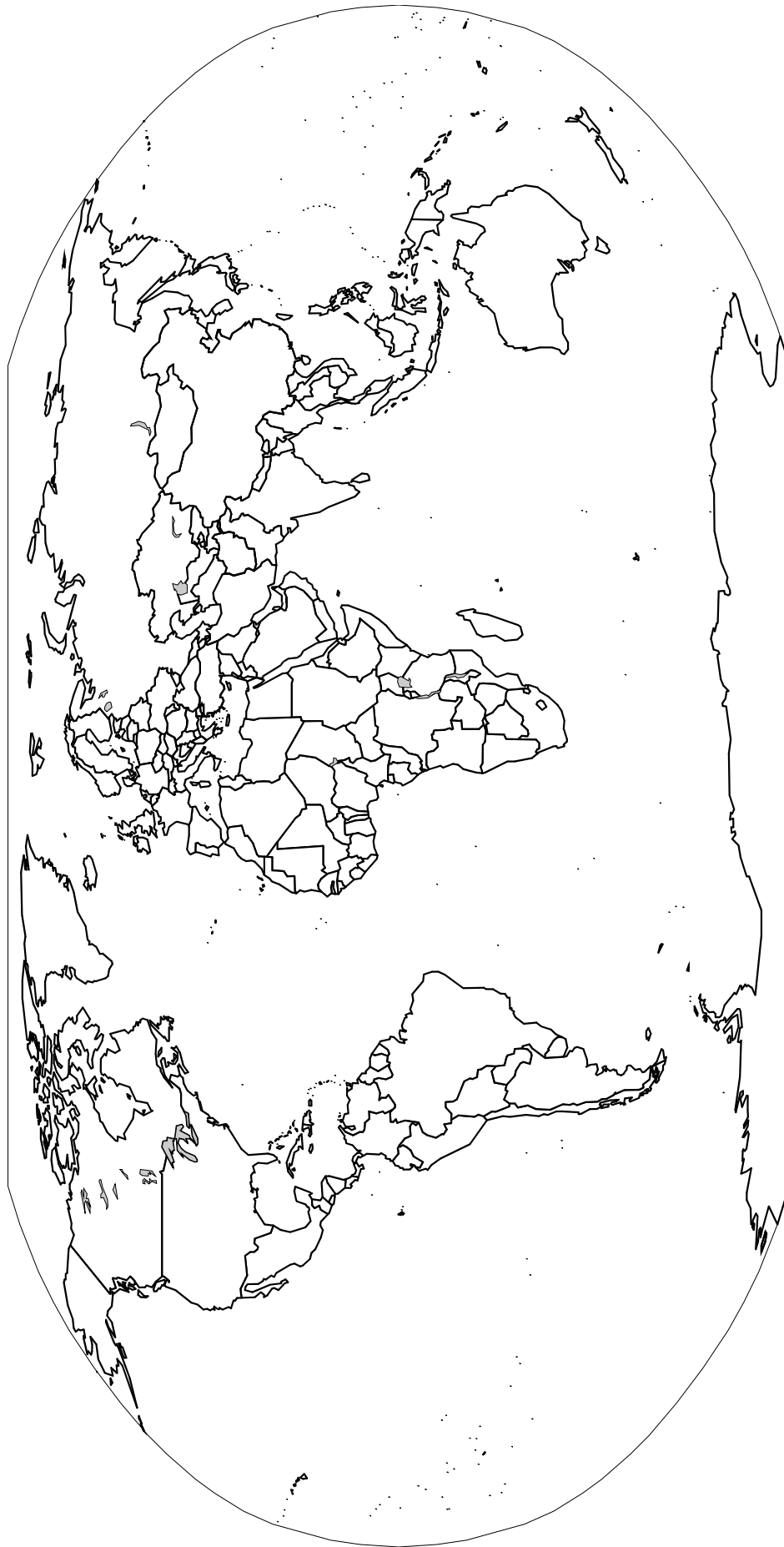
The religion of Islam is
the world's fastest-growing religion.

The Muslim countries are:

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar,
United Arab Emirates, Yemen
Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon
Iraq, Iran
Afghanistan, Pakistan
Azerbaijan, Kazakstan
Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Bangladesh, Indonesia

Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia
Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan
Burkina Faso, Mauritania
Senegal, Gambia, Guinea,
Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast
Ethiopia, Somalia





Compare and contrast these religions.

Born in the Far East

	Confucianism	Buddhism	Hinduism
1) Where founded?	China, 500 B.C.	India, 500 B.C.	India, 1500 B.C.
2) The Founder	Confucius (<i>Great Master</i>)	Gautama Siddhartha (<i>Buddha, the Enlightened One</i>)	Nomads who invaded India
3) Sacred Book	<i>The Five Classics</i>	<i>The Tripitaka</i>	<i>The Rig Veda</i>
4) What the sacred book is about.	Confucius' sayings.	Buddha's sermons. (<i>The dharma</i>)	gods + legendary heroes
5) Practices	In 100 B.C., the government of China established the Imperial University: Students studied Confucius' philosophy, then took a <i>civil service test</i> . Those who had mastered Confucianism became the government. This policy ensured that centuries of <i>tradition ruled China</i> .	<i>Noble Eightfold Path:</i> Know the truth. Resist Evil. Say nothing to hurt others. Get a job that not hurt others. Free your mind of evil. Control your feelings + thoughts. Practice meditation. A Buddhist may join a community of monks (<i>sangha</i>) for a short or long period of time.	Private rituals at home. Worship at the temple. Hymns from the Veda. Offerings to statues. Lighting of the sacred fire. At home, offerings of light, incense, and food are made 3 times a day.
6) Holy days	None	Buddha's birthday.	Festival of Lights
7) Location of religion today (continents + countries)	China Japan Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, ...) Korea	China Japan Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, ...) <i>Consult the map you colored.</i>	India Nepal
8) Do some followers of this religion live in the U.S.?	Yes	Yes	Yes
9) Beliefs	Confucianism is a philosophy (not a religion) that teaches morality and good government. An individual could develop <i>good moral character</i> by following rules of conduct. He revered tradition, urging people to follow established standards of behavior: <i>"Respect your betters</i> (those of superior rank in society).	Life is misery. Learn to accept suffering by ignoring material things. <i>Reincarnation</i> (see right): You can escape from the eternal cycle of reincarnation.	<i>Reincarnation:</i> If your past deeds (<i>karma</i>) were bad, your life will be hard in this lifetime. Be good, so your next lifetime is good.

Compare and contrast these religions.

Born in the Middle East

	Judaism	Christianity	Islam
1) Where founded? country + Year	Israel, 1300 B.C.*	Israel, 1 A.D.	Saudi Arabia, 622 A.D.
2) The Founder	Abraham	Jesus	Mohammed
3) Sacred Book	<i>The Torah</i> (The Old Testament)	<i>The Bible</i> (The <i>Old</i> and <i>New Testaments</i>)	<i>The Koran</i>
4) What the sacred book is about	The 5 Books of Moses (The Jews' <i>Exodus</i> out of Egypt, the <i>Ten Commandments</i>)	The <i>Old Testament</i> tells the story of the Jews (<i>Torah</i>). The <i>New Testament</i> tells the story of Jesus, who was born a Jew and spoke to people of all faiths.	Muhammad, <i>the Prophet</i> , revealed the messages God gave to him through the Angel Gabriel.
5) Practices mosque	Public worship on Saturdays (sunset Friday to sunset on Saturday) at a synagogue. A man wears a skull cap and prayer shawl.	Public worship on Sundays at a church. Spread the gospel (New Testament) to others.	Public worship on Fridays, <i>The Five Pillars of Islam:</i> Profess faith in Allah. Pray 5 times a day. Pilgrimage to Mecca. Give charity to the poor. Fast during Ramadan.
6) Holy days	Passover, Rosh Hashana Yom Kippur, Hanukkah	Easter Christmas Pentecost	Holy month of Ramadan
7) Location of religion today (continents + countries)	Israel United States	North & South America Southern Africa Europe Australia	The Middle East Northern Africa Indonesia
8) Do some followers of this religion live in the U.S.?	Yes	Yes	Yes
9) Beliefs	Each person is free to choose to do good or evil. One should lead a good life and follow God's word (in the <i>Torah</i>).	Jesus died to save the world. If you accept Jesus as your savior, you will have eternal life. One should lead a good life and follow God's word (in the <i>Bible</i>).	God is merciful. Satan leads you astray. God is Allah and Muhammad <i>the Prophet</i> is his messenger. One should lead a good life and recite verses from God's word (in the <i>Koran</i>).
10) Does this religion believe in an afterlife?	Yes -- there is heaven and hell.	Yes -- there is heaven and hell.	Yes -- there is <i>paradise</i> and hell.

Famous Quotations

- Confucius hated the chaos that had spread across China (children disrespecting their parents, peasants slaughtering their landlords, princes overthrowing the Emperor). He wanted an orderly society, where "Superior Men" (men of wisdom) were the rulers. People must learn to **respect** their "betters," Confucius explained. The youngest son must respect his eldest brother, the wife must respect her husband, the peasant must respect the landlord.
- Moses led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt. On Mt. Sinai, he received the *Ten Commandments*. The Jews promised to **follow** God's strict laws. Moses kept the laws in the Ark of the Covenant. Moses waited for the Messiah (savior) who was predicted in the Old Testament.
- Jesus explained God's unconditional love and stressed that people should **love** their neighbors. Every person who accepted Jesus as the Messiah (savior) would have eternal life. The Trinity meant that God is three forms in one: God (the Father) is in heaven. Jesus (the Son) came to earth as a human being. The Holy Spirit exists among people until Jesus returns.
- Muhammad explained that there is only one God (Allah) who sent many prophets (Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad). All of the prophets are equal in the sight of God. Muslims should **submit** their lives to God (by reciting prayers five times a day, fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, and by making a pilgrimage to Mecca). People could show their faith in God by doing good works (giving alms to the poor, especially widows and orphans).

1. "A youth, when at home, should be filial (a devoted son), and, abroad, respectful to his elders."

The Answers

2. "Honor thy father and thy mother."

1. Confucius

3. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

2. Moses*

4. "Recite: He is God, One God, the Everlasting Refuge, who has not begotten, and has not been begotten, and equal to Him is not anyone."

3. Jesus

5. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

4. Muhammad

6. "If, in serving his parents, he can exert his utmost strength; if, in serving his prince, he can devote his life . . . although men say that he has not learned, I will certainly say that he has."

5. Jesus

7. "Whosoever surrenders his face to God and performs good deeds, he verily has grasped the surest handle."

6. Confucius

8. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

7. Muhammad

9. "Wealth and children are the adornment of this present life: but good works, which are lasting, are better in the sight of thy Lord."

8. Moses*

10. "Have no friends not equal to yourself."

9. Muhammad

11. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house."

10. Confucius

12. "Our Father which art in heaven . . ."

11. Moses*

13. "Thou shalt not steal."

12. Jesus

14. "And do not say, regarding anything, 'I am going to do that tomorrow,' but only, if God will."

13. Moses*

15. "The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions."

14. Muhammad

16. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

15. Confucius

17. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him."

16. Moses*

17. Jesus

*Moses in the sense that he descended from Mt. Sinai with the *Ten Commandments*.