



History: Purple Class

Why was the Islamic Civilization around AD900 known as 'The Golden Age'?

Key Vocabulary:

Allah:	The Arabic term for God.
Adhan:	The call to prayer which is said in Arabic at the start of the prayer time interval.
Five pillars of Islam:	5 central practices of Muslims to help establish a spiritual relationship with God. They are: shahada or profession of faith; salat or five daily prayers; zakat, or mandatory donation; sawm or fasting in Ramadan; and hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime if one is able.
Imam:	The leader of congregational prayer, or a religious leader.
Ka'bah:	Building in Mecca that is believed to be the first house of worship to God, which Muslims believe was built by the Prophet Abraham and his son Prophet Ishmael. Muslims face the Ka'bah when they pray. The building is cubical in shape and usually covered with a black cloth for protection.
Qur'an:	The Holy Book of Islam, which is believed to be the words of God that were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. The word Qur'an literally means "the recitation."
Surah:	A chapter of the Qur'an. There are 114 surahs in the Qur'an.

Baghdad Timeline:

750 CE	Abbasid dynasty become rulers of Muslim Empire
751 CE	Arabs learn to make paper from Chinese prisoners of war
762 CE	Caliph Al-Mansur founds city of Baghdad
764-768 CE	Construction of city of Baghdad
786-809 CE	Fifth Abbasid Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, establishes the House of Wisdom and the Baghdad hospital
830 CE	Al-Khwarizmi writes his book on algebra
950 CE	Death of the philosopher Al-Farabi, who spent most of his life in Baghdad
1021 CE	Ibn Al-Haytham publishes his Book of Optics
1037 CE	Death of Avicenna, philosopher and physician who made important discoveries regarding the transmission of disease
1055 CE	Baghdad captured by Seljuk Turks
1065 CE	Foundation of Al-Nizamiyya university in Baghdad
1096 CE	Crusades begin
1258 CE	Mongols sack Baghdad

Key Figures (people):



The early Islamic doctor **Al-Zahrawi** is known as 'the father of surgery'.



Ibn Al-Haytham made the world's first camera or pinhole camera.



Al-Khwarizmi worked at the House of Wisdom. He is famous for his contributions to the development of algebra.



The early Islamic doctor **Muhammad Ibn Zakariya Razi** made a significant contribution to the history of medicine.

An artist's impression of Baghdad during the Golden Age:





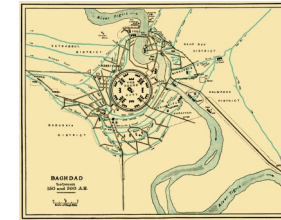
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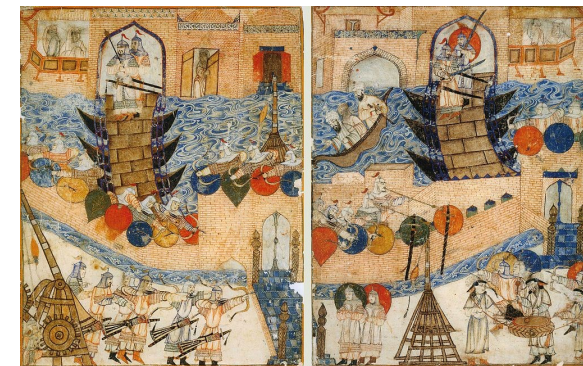
Top 10 facts:

- In 762 CE the Abbasid Caliphate, under the Caliph al-Mansur, moved the capital of the Muslim world to the newly founded city of Baghdad.
- The city, known as 'the Round City', was built as two large semicircles with a mosque at the centre and housed the caliph's palace, libraries, government and military buildings. It also contained parks, gardens, squares and wide avenues.
- Residential areas for all but the most important people, markets and businesses were built outside the city walls.
- Until its destruction by the Mongols in 1258, Baghdad was a world centre of culture and learning. This period is sometimes known as the Golden Age of Islam.
- It is estimated that during the period c900-1200 the population of Baghdad reached between 1,200,000 and 2,000,000 people.
- The House of Wisdom housed a library and attracted scholars from around the world who translated texts from the classical world into Arabic. Much ancient knowledge was preserved and the development of Islamic theology, philosophy, science and medicine was stimulated.
- Islamic scholars and inventors adopted the Hindi symbol for zero and style of numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) which we still use today. This enabled them to explore and develop new areas of mathematics such as algebra, algorithms and the tessellation of shapes.
- Besides the Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims who lived in the city, Baghdad was home to many different religious and ethnic communities. These included Christians, Jews, Gnostics and Zoroastrians who regulated their own communal affairs and lived in different areas of the city. Many elements of Persian and Egyptian culture were also adopted.
- Baghdad was situated on the banks of the Tigris. The city's docks accommodated hundreds of different boats including trading vessels, pleasure crafts and warships. Merchants and sailors brought precious goods, news and knowledge from around the world into the city.
- Islamic (Sharia) law and Arabic grammar were standardised during this time. The use of a common Arabic language helped to unify the people of the Empire and meant that knowledge could be spread more widely.

The Importance of Location:



The Middle East was a natural crossroads for travellers and traders from Europe, Asia and Africa. Baghdad, located at the point where the Tigris flows closest to the Euphrates, was ideally placed for global trade. It swiftly became an important centre for the collection and dispersal of knowledge and ideas from around the known world. The spread of agricultural knowledge and techniques and the introduction of new crops and food stuffs may have, in turn, encouraged population growth



The conquest of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258 CE