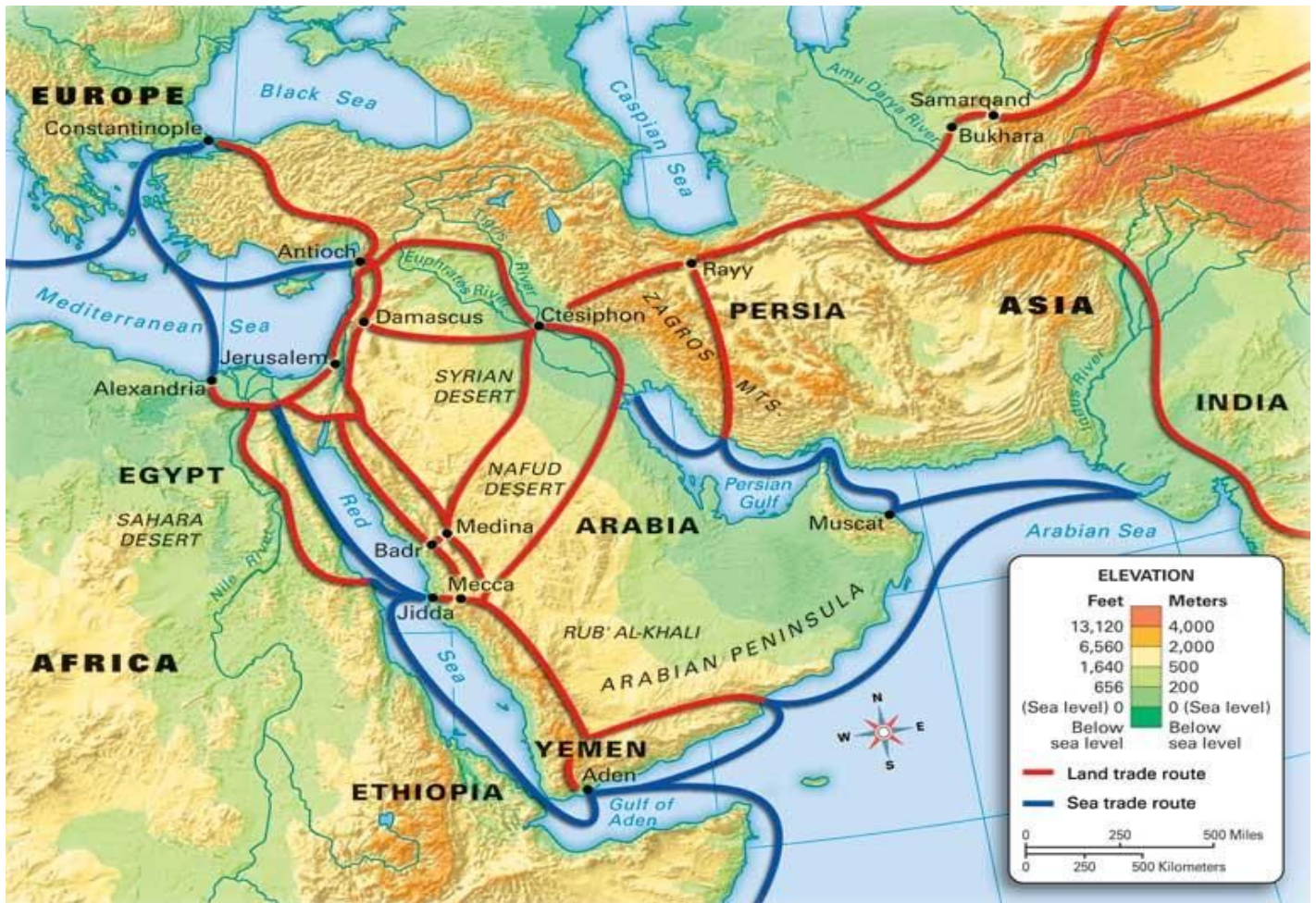


Why did Islam spread so quickly?

Before reading the documents, write down any ideas you have about why Islam might have spread quickly in the space below.

Document A:



1. Name three cities that are easy to reach from Mecca. Why was Mecca a trade center for the Arabian peninsula?
2. Why would Mecca's location make it possible for Islam to spread quickly?

Document B:

Source: Desmond Stewart and the Editors of Time-Life Books, *Great Ages of Man: Early Islam*, Time-Life Books, 1967.

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...shrine.

1. What is the main idea of this excerpt?
2. When the author describes Mecca as "prosperous and important", what does that mean (in your own words)?
3. Based on context, what does the word "pilgrimage" mean?

Document C:

Source: 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. (33:35)

Whoever killed a human being...shall be deemed as having killed all mankind and...whoever saved a human life shall be deemed as having saved all mankind... (5:32)

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 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)

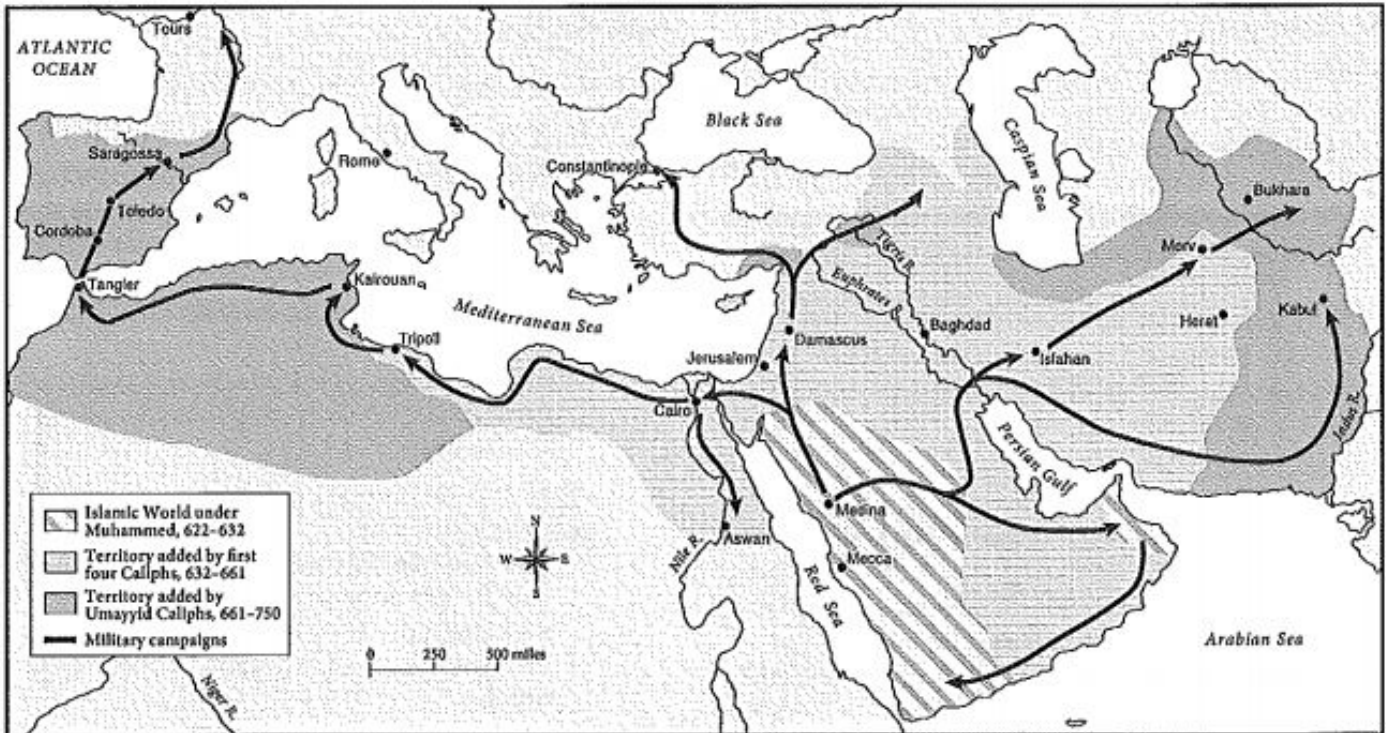
1. According to the excerpt, what are the qualities of someone who is favored by God? Use your own words.
2. Based on context, what does the word "recompense" mean?
3. What does the excerpt suggest about the value of human life?

4. What does the excerpt suggest about Islam's view of private property?

5. Based on context, what does the word "usurp" mean?

Document D:

The Spread of Islam



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

- a. Mecca
- b. Jerusalem
- c. Cairo
- d. Baghdad
- e. Saragossa

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

Document E:

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

Note: 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 refunded to the inhabitants of [Syria] 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 [Syria] 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]/

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 that important to note?
4. How does this document help explain why Islam spread quickly?

Now after reading the documents, why did Islam spread so quickly?