

# Church History

## MEDIEVAL PERIOD—AGE OF SECLUSION

590-1216AD

### I. THE GROWTH OF MOHAMMEDANISM

#### A. The Prophet, Mohammed

1. c. 570-632
2. Born in the city of Mecca in Arabia
3. Influenced in youth by both Judaism and Christianity
4. Gained influence as a merchant after he married a rich widow
5. Began receiving revelations at the approximate age of 40
  - a. These revelations continued throughout his life
  - b. They were written down and were later gathered together as the Koran, the holy book of Islam
  - c. This began his career as a prophet
6. Driven out of Mecca in 622
  - a. Disliked because of his hatred of idolatry
  - b. Flight from Mecca called the Hegira (hi jee' rah)
  - c. this begins first year in Muslim chronology
  - d. found refuge in Medina
7. Returned and conquered Mecca in 630
8. By 632 (the year of his death), all the tribes of central Arabia were united by him

#### B. The Doctrine of Islam

1. The meaning of *Islam*
  - a. Means submission; it is the entering into a condition of peace and security with God through allegiance or surrender to him
  - b. The chief virtue of Islam is resignation to the omnipotent will of Allah
2. The fundamental vision of Islam
  - a. Islam is driven by its concept of '*umma*, or community
  - b. Islam believes that all people should become a single community and every action and every aspect of life should become an act of witness that there is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.
  - c. This means that all peoples must be brought under the rule of Islam by whatever means necessary

3. The three domains: as an extension of the teaching on community, Islam teaches that the entire world abides in one of three domains
  - a. Dar al-Islam
    - (1) Meaning “abode of Islam”
    - (2) Territory under Muslim control and where Islamic law prevails
  - b. Dar al-sulh
    - (1) Meaning “abode of the truce”
    - (2) Non-islamic territories having a treaty agreement with the adjoining Muslim state and to which they pay tribute
    - (3) Some liberal Muslims include those countries which have treaties with Islamic countries and where Muslims are free to practice their faith
  - c. Dar al-harb
    - (1) Meaning “abode of war”
    - (2) Territory outside Muslim jurisdiction
    - (3) The Koran (9:5) commands jihad against these countries since their inhabitants are at war against the Muslim concept of *‘umma* (their goal of a united community of all people under their control)
4. The Doctrine of God
  - a. God, or Allah, is omniscient and omnipotent
  - b. There is no trinity and no incarnation
  - c. All idolatry is rejected
5. The Doctrine of Revelation
  - a. Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed were all prophets of God
  - b. Each succeeding prophet possessed greater revelation, giving Mohamed the greatest revelation
  - c. Mohammed claimed to be the Comforter promised by Christ
  - d. The words of the Koran are the words of Allah
6. The Doctrine of Salvation
  - a. The duty of man is to obey God as commanded in the Koran
  - b. The reward of salvation is a heaven full of worldly delights
7. General Ethics
  - a. To treat each other with justice and mercy
  - b. To treat the poor and weak with charity
  - c. To practice ceremonial purity
  - d. To observe dietary laws
    - i. No pork (Quran 5.3)
    - ii. No wine (Quran 5:90)
8. The Five Pillars of Islam
  - a. The profession of faith (shahada)
    - i. Once in a lifetime—public and sincere
    - ii. “There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his Prophet”
  - b. Prayer—five congregational prayers a day (salat)

- c. A required religious tax (zakāt)
  - d. Fasting—during the month of Ramadan from daybreak to sunset (sawm)
  - e. The Hajj—the annual pilgrimage to Mecca for every Muslim once in a lifetime
9. Social Practice
- a. Polygamy and concubinage encouraged—Mohammed had 9 wives and 1 concubine at his death
  - b. Slavery approved
10. The Holy War (jihad)
- a. Each Muslim required to fight for faith
  - b. to die in a holy war was sure road to heaven

## C. The Expansion of Mohammedanism

- 1. Muslims captured Damascus in 635
- 2. Captured Jerusalem in 638
- 3. Conquered all Syria by 640
- 4. Took Egypt in 641
- 5. Conquered Persian Empire by 650

**NOTE:** Within 20 years of Mohammed's death the Muslims held an empire that stretched from Libya to India.

- 6. Almost defeated Constantinople in 674
- 7. Conquered North Africa in 707
- 8. Invaded Spain from North Africa in 711
- 9. Finally defeated by Charles Martel the Frank near Tours, France in 732

## D. Results of Muslim Expansion

- 1. Halted eastern movement of Christianity
- 2. Weakened and almost destroyed the Byzantine Government
- 3. Slowed the development of western civilization
- 4. Made Arabic an international and literary language
- 5. Developed a civilization (especially in philosophy and science) which greatly surpassed Medieval Europe.

## II. POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

### A. Invasions

- 1. Muslim invasions
  - a. Made a new wave of attacks in the 9<sup>th</sup> century
  - b. Invaded Sicily in 827 and eventually conquered the entire island.

- c. Sacked Rome in 843
- d. Occupied Corsica, Sardinia, and a small coastal area of France
- e. Maintained bases in Italy until expelled by the Byzantines in 915
- 2. Magyar invasions
  - a. A nomadic Turkish people who arrived in the plains of Hungary in 895
  - b. Plundered Saxony, Germany in 906
  - c. During next 20 years, raided all of Germany
  - d. Reached Reims in France in 937
  - e. Defeated by Otto I, King of Germany, in 955
  - f. Settled down to form the Hungarian nation
- 3. Viking invasions
  - a. Involved three Scandinavian nations: Norway, Denmark and Sweden
  - b. The Swedes did not attack Western Europe, but entered modern Russian territories from the north
  - c. The Norsemen and Danes attacked England, Ireland, Germany, France and Spain besides many other places.
  - d. First struck England in 787
  - e. Attacked the coastal regions and river valleys of England and France every summer for almost half the 9<sup>th</sup> century
  - f. In 857, a Danish fleet established winter quarters in England
  - g. Began establishing bases in England and France
  - h. Founded Danelaw in England in 885 and Normandy in France in 911
  - i. About this time the invasions ceased
- 4. Results
  - a. Early Western European civilization was halted
  - b. Great numbers of people were killed
  - c. In England and France, most monasteries were destroyed and most towns had been sacked and burned several times
  - d. Centralized control of European Christians by Roman Catholicism was set back two or three centuries

## B. Feudalism

- 1. Two basic needs
  - a. Food
    - i. Demanded land which became the basis for all wealth in the Middle Ages
    - ii. Demanded labor which was provided by serfs (people who could not be sold as slaves but could not move as freemen)
  - b. Protection
    - i. Needed because of foreign invaders and unfriendly neighbors
    - ii. Demanded soldiers who were later known as knights

2. Basic structure
    - a. A lord would give a knight (who became his vassal) an estate of land (called a fief) with a number of serfs to work the land.
    - b. The knight would promise to protect and fight for his lord in return for the land.
    - c. The ceremony in which the lord invests land to a vassal and the vassal promises services to the lord was called the investiture
    - d. Investiture was also the way in which bishops received their offices from the king. The Roman Catholic Church held vast estates during this time.
    - e. The vassal or knight was also the lord to his serfs.
    - f. The structure of lord—vassal—serf sometimes had more subdivisions. Greater lords would often subdivide their territory to lesser lords.
  3. Development of feudalism
    - a. Feudalism developed very slowly and was found in many different forms.
    - b. Developed first in France.
    - c. Then spread to England, Germany, Italy, etc.
- C. Holy Roman Empire
1. Charlemagne
    - a. United the Franks into a kingdom which included France, Germany, part of Italy and part of Spain.
    - b. Crowned as Holy Roman Emperor on December 25, 800, by Pope Leo III
    - c. After his death, the Frankish Kingdom split up among his descendants finally forming the West Frankish Kingdom (later France) and the East Frankish Kingdom (later Germany).
  2. Otto I
    - a. Ruler of the East Frankish Kingdom and founder of the Holy Roman Empire which continued in one form or another until the time of Napoleon.
    - b. Ruled from 936-973
    - c. Defeated the Magyars in 955
    - d. made the Roman Catholic Church the major support of the monarchy in Germany
    - e. The goal behind the Holy Roman Empire was to restore the power of the Ancient Roman Empire under the control of the Roman Catholic Church
- D. Development of England
1. True founder of English monarchy was Alfred the Great (871-899) who made peace with the Danes in 885

2. Alfred's son and grandson conquered the English territories
3. In 1016, the Danes sent a great fleet to conquer England
4. By special agreement, Canute of Denmark became king of all England from 1016 to 1035
5. After Canute's death, the English regained control through Edward the Confessor (1042-1066)
6. The Norman conquest of England was made by William the Conqueror from Normandy, France in 1066 at the battle of Hastings. This brought much French influence to the development of Medieval England

### III. THE EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

#### A. The Iconoclastic Controversy

1. A movement in the East opposing image worship during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries.
2. Definitions
  - a. Icon—an image, figure or representation used for worship
  - b. Iconoclast—anyone opposed to the religious use of images; means icon + to break
3. Causes for the rise of image worship
  - a. Came directly from paganism
  - b. Encouraged by monasticism
4. The Christians of the 7<sup>th</sup> century were regarded as idolaters by Jews and Muslims.
5. Several 8<sup>th</sup> century bishops in the East opposed image worship
6. Emperor Leo III (718-741)
  - a. A Byzantine emperor who opposed image worship
  - b. He prohibited bowing before images and elevated them so that people could not kiss them
  - c. The monks led bloody riots in opposition to Leo.
  - d. Pope Gregory II wrote a letter denouncing Leo's actions about 730
  - e. Leo threatened to destroy the image of St. Peter in Rome and imprison the pope.
  - f. A Roman Synod (a council of the church) in 731 passed a decree of excommunication against anyone who would remove, destroy or injure images of Mary, Christ, or the saints.
7. Leo's son, Constantine V carried on an exterminating war against images (743-775)
8. The Byzantine Empress Irene brought about the restoration of image worship in 787
9. Later emperors opposed images again, but they were finally restored by Theodora, another empress, in 843.
10. The Eastern Church now restricts images to pictures and mosaics which must conform to traditional models.

11. The Roman Catholic Church allows complete freedom in both religious paintings and sculptures.

### B. The Schism of 1054

1. A culmination of a long process in the separation of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.
2. Began with the establishment of Constantinople as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and a rival of the city of Rome.
3. Western theology was basically shaped by Augustine while Eastern theology was developed by the so-called "Greek Fathers."
4. Disagreement between East and West was based on several issues. The differences in the East include:
  - a. Rejecting Roman supremacy
  - b. Rejecting papal authority
  - c. Practicing triple immersion
  - d. Rejecting unleavened bread in Eucharist
  - e. Allowing baptized infants to partake of the Lord's Supper
  - f. Requiring the marriage of parish priests
  - g. Restricting icons to paintings or mosaics
  - h. Rejecting Immaculate Conception of Mary
  - i. Rejecting purgatory
  - j. Observing Easter according to more ancient practice: They regard the Roman method of using the phases of the moon as paganistic.
5. In 1054, Pope Leo IX and the patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated each other. This is considered by historians to be the final break between the Eastern and Western churches.

## IV. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC POPES

### A. Gregory I the Great

1. Reigned 590-604 AD
2. Became Pope when the whole world seemed to be coming to an end
3. Reorganized the estates of the church in order to feed the people
4. Directed the defense of the city of Rome against the Lombards
5. Established control over the churches of Italy, Spain, Gaul, and England
6. Sent Augustine, the monk, to England as a missionary
7. Sometimes advocated a war of aggression against heathens in order to Christianize them

### B. Zacharias

1. 741-752 AD
2. Advised the East to restore the worship of icons

3. Authorized the Frankish Church to anoint Pepin the Short as king of the Franks
- C. Stephen II
1. 752-757 AD
  2. In 755, became the first temporal sovereign of the Papal States which existed until 1870
  3. Persuaded Pepin the Short of the Franks to attack the Lombards who were threatening Italy
  4. Secured papal independence from Constantinople
- D. Leo III
1. 795-816 AD
  2. Beaten and imprisoned by those who opposed him as pope in 799, but he escaped and received aid from Charlemagne
  3. Crowned Charlemagne as emperor of the Revived Roman Empire in 800
- E. Nicholas I the Great
1. 858-867 AD
  2. Most forceful of the early medieval pontiffs
  3. Claimed that the temporal power of the emperor was to be given by papal delegation
  4. Tried to control the Byzantine church by appointing its patriarch
  5. First pope to wear a crown
- F. The 200 years between Nicholas I and Gregory VII is called by historians “The Midnight of the Dark Ages” because of the corruption and immorality of the Roman Catholic Church during this time.
1. The Murderous Decade (896-904)
    - a. Pope Formosus was probably poisoned (896)
    - b. Stephen VI was imprisoned and strangled (897)
    - c. Leo V was murdered by Christopher, his chaplain (903)
    - d. Christopher was murdered after 8 months as pope (904)
  2. The Pornocracy
    - a. Title given to the years 904-964
    - b. Also called “The Rule of the Harlots”
    - c. Sergius III (904-911) was controlled by his mistress, Marozia, a licentious noblewoman
    - d. His successor, John X, was appointed by his mistress, Theodora
    - e. Marozia regained power, had John strangled, and appointed several succeeding popes



- f. John XII (955-964) was accused of turning the papal palace into a house of prostitution. He crowned Otto I as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

### G. Gregory VII

1. Also known as Hildebrand
2. Controlled the five papal administrations preceding his own (1049-1073)
3. Reigned as pope from 1073-1085
4. A church reformer, he opposed simony (the buying of church offices) and immorality in the church
5. Forbade laymen the right to appoint clergy and demanded clerical celibacy
6. Excommunicated Henry the IV, Emperor of Germany. Henry traveled over the Alps to Caonossa where he presented himself barefoot to the pope as a humble penitent in order to be released from excommunication.
7. Threatened Philip I of France and William the Conqueror in England with excommunication
8. Called himself "Overlord of Kings and Princes"
9. Led the papacy into its so-called Golden Age (1049-1294)
10. Died in exile, driven from Rome by Henry IV of Germany

### H. Adrian IV

1. 1154-1159
2. Only English pope
3. Gave Ireland to the King of England

### I. Innocent III

1. 1198-1216
2. Most powerful of the popes
3. Claimed to be "Vicar of Christ", "Vicar of God", and "Supreme Sovereign over the Church and the World"
4. Said that all things on earth and in heaven and in hell are subject to the Vicar of Christ
5. Controlled the kings of Germany, France, England, and practically every monarch in Europe
6. Brought the Byzantine Empire under his control
7. Battled with King John of England and opposed the Magna Carta which John was forced to sign
8. Ordered two crusades to the Holy Land
9. Sent a crusade against heretics to France to destroy the Albigenses
10. De creed transubstantiation
11. Declared papal infallibility
12. Forbade the reading of the Bible in the vernacular

13. Instituted the Office of the Inquisition under the Dominicans and called it the Holy Office