

Emergence and spread of religions

The emergence and spread of religions is shown through a series of 13 maps. The first map represents ancient times and the final map shows the world in 1948.

Map 1

A map of the world is shown, with all continents greyed-out except for North America, which is coloured in red. The four regions of Nunavut in northern Canada are in another colour.

Text label positioned over North America reads: "Turtle Island (pre-colonization North America)"

Caption reads: Indigenous beliefs and world views are diverse and thus do not have a single start date or begin with one historical figure. These world views have existed since time immemorial.

Map 2

Same as the previous map, but a marker has been added in India with a text label that reads: "Birth of Krishna."

Caption reads: 3200 BCE: Approximate birth of Krishna (Hindu deity)

Map 3

Only North America is coloured in on the map (like in Map 1). However, now a large portion of India is coloured in to represent the emergence and spread of Hinduism.

There is a marker in Iraq with a text label that reads: "Birth of Abraham."

Caption reads: 2001 BCE: Birth of Abraham (one of three patriarchs of Judaism)

Map 4

Similar to Map 3, but now the Hinduism is shown to have expanded over a great portion of the Indian subcontinent. Canaan (in modern-day Syria / Jordan / Israel) is marked on the map with a text label that reads: "Conquest of Canaan. Israelites enter Canaan."

Around this marker is coloured in to represent Judaism.

Caption reads: 1300–1200 BCE: Approximate date that Israelites settle in Canaan

Map 5

This map shows that Hinduism has expanded into South East Asia and the Pacific.

There is a marker on Jerusalem with a text label that reads: Jerusalem sacked. Jewish diaspora.

Caption reads: 597 BCE: Siege of Jerusalem and the beginning of the Jewish diaspora as Jews are exiled to Babylon

Map 6

This map shows that Hinduism is continuing to expand. There is also a marker in Nepal with the text label that reads: “Birth of Buddha.”

Caption reads: 563 BCE: Approximate birth of Buddha (founder of Buddhism)

Map 7

This map shows that Buddhism has expanded up into China and also into Sri Lanka at the tip of India. There is a marker in Israel with a text label that reads: “Life of Jesus.”

Caption reads: 4 BCE–30 CE: Approximate lifespan of Jesus Christ (Jewish teacher and Christian savior)

Map 8

This map shows the expansion of the Jewish diaspora through the Middle East, Europe and northern Africa. It also shows pockets of Christian settlements in the same areas. Finally, it shows the expansion of Buddhism further into China and down into South East Asia and the Pacific and over into Pakistan.

Caption reads: 70–200 CE: Expansion of Jewish diaspora and spread of Christianity

Map 9

This map shows Buddhism expanding further in northern and southern Asia. It also shows the spread of Christianity through the Middle East, Europe, and northern Africa. There is a marker in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, with a text label that reads: “Birth of Muhammad.”

Caption reads: 570 CE: Approximate birth of the Prophet Muhammad (founder of Islam)

Map 10

This map focuses on the spread of Islam through Saudi Arabia, east to modern-day Pakistan, north into Eastern Europe, and west into northern Africa and Spain and Portugal.

Caption reads: 632–750 CE: Early Muslim conquests

Map 11

This map shows the further expansion of Islam in all the same directions as in Map 10. There is a marker in Spain with a text label that reads: “Reconquista. Christianity versus Islam.” There is also a marker in Jerusalem with a text label that reads: “The Crusades. Christianity versus Islam.”

Two-part caption reads:

718 CE–1492 CE: Reconquista (wars between Christians and Muslims for control of the Iberian Peninsula)

Starting in 900 CE: Missionaries enforce conversion to Christianity into Scandinavia and Russia

Map 12

This map shows the great spread of Christianity across Russia, in India, an eastern part of China, into Africa, along the coasts of South America, and into a large portion of Eastern and Central North America. Islam is shown to have spread into modern-day Indonesia and surrounding areas.

Caption reads: 1450–1700 CE: Missionaries enforce conversion to Christianity to North America and Africa

Map 13

In this final map, the majority of the world is colour-coded to represent Christianity. Islam covers the top half of Africa and over and across into Russia. There is also a marker in Israel.

Caption reads: 1948: Founding of Israel and Jewish expansion