

Timeline

TIMELINE OF ANTI-CH

EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY

RISE OF ISLAM

35 Stephen stoned to death after being tried by Jewish court. (Acts 7:54-60)

248 The Decian Persecution – beginning of mass persecution of Christians initiated by Emperor Decius throughout the Roman Empire. All citizens had to prove that they had performed pagan sacrifices and faced punishment of imprisonment or execution if they refused.



Early Christian symbols carved on a stone

570 Birth of Muhammad, who by 631 rules most of the Arabian Peninsula.

600s

AD

500

10

64 Nero launches persecution of Christians after blaming them for the Great Fire of Rome.

341 Zoroastrian Shapur II orders the massacre of all Christians in Persia.

1370 Rise to power of Timur (Timurlane) in Central Asia. Christianity in the region is wiped out and millions of Christians killed.



Timur, ruler of Central Asia in the 14th century

313 Roman Emperors Constantine I and Licinius issue the Edict of Milan that legalises Christianity across the whole Empire.

391 Christianity becomes the state religion of Rome under Theodosius I

1453 Fall of Constantinople and subjugation of Christians as *dhimmi* in the Ottoman Empire.

303 23 February – The “Great Persecution” begins. Edicts call for church buildings to be destroyed, sacred writings burned, Christians to lose civil rights, clergy to be imprisoned and forced to sacrifice and (in 304) all to perform pagan sacrifices on pain of death.

1715 China: The Kangxi Emperor forbids missionaries from entering China.

1898

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

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SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY - NEW CHALLENGES

THE MODERN ERA - RISE OF STATE PERSECUTION

'1614 Japan: Emperor Tokugawa Ieyasu expels all Christian missionaries and orders the execution of converts.

'1828 Queen Ranavalona I (reigned 1828–1861) issued a royal edict prohibiting the practice of Christianity in Madagascar. Anyone found possessing a Bible was executed, often using particularly brutal and cruel methods. Some estimates say that up to 150,000 Madagascan Christians were murdered.



Queen Ranavalona I of Madagascar

Rapid Arab conquests: Damascus (634), Jerusalem (638), Carthage (697). These lead to the decline of Christianity in the Middle East and its complete extinction in North Africa, through soft and hard coercion.

1800 1500 2000

'1800s Indian subcontinent: Huge growth in Christianity causes angry backlash from Muslims and Hindus.

'1915 Armenian Genocide: Massacre of up to 1,500,000 Armenian and Assyrian Christians by Ottoman Turks. This was the single worst year in some decades of anti-Christian violence in the Ottoman Empire.

'1979 Iranian revolution: Establishes strict Islamic state under sharia, oppressing Christians through closure of churches and arrest, torture and sometimes murder of converts from Islam.

'1917 Russian Revolution: Oppressive anti-Christian policies in the 1920s and 30s, as the militantly atheist Soviet Union aims to wipe out any Christian presence within its borders. Tens of thousands of churches destroyed, millions of Christians imprisoned and killed, thousands of clergy executed. Restrictions on worship and aggressive church closures continue into the later 20th century, particularly under Khrushchev (1955-1964).



A forced labour camp in the Soviet Union

China: Start of the Boxer rebellion, a nationalistic uprising against the perceived influence of foreigners, leading to the murder of thousands of Chinese converts to Christianity and the targeting of missionaries.

'1983-2005 War in Southern Sudan: Attempts by Islamic Arab government in the North of Sudan to enforce sharia law on the South starts a war that leads to two million deaths in the mainly Christian and animist South of the country.