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# HARRAN CITY OF CIVILIZATIONS

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
ŞANLIURFA GOVERNOR  
PROVINCIAL CULTURE AND  
TOURISM DIRECTORATE



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The district, 48 km away from the Şanlıurfa city center is 704 km<sup>2</sup> big. There are researches that show, that the first university of the world was established in Harran. On Ebla tablets (3.000 BC) Harran is specified as the most important religious center. At the Sin temple in Harran a treaty between the Hittites and Mitanni was signed in the name of the Sin (Moon) and Şamaş (Sun) God. By reading the inscriptions, which were written from the mouth of the king of Babylon Nabonid, it has been found out that this temple was build inside of Harran. Harran harbored since the prehistoric era Halaf, Ubaid, Uruk, Hittite, Hurrian, Mitanni, the Assyrian, Babylonian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and during the Islamic era important civilizations such as Umayyad, Abbasids, Fatimids, the Zengid, Ayyubids and the Seljuks. Finally after the Egypt Expedition of Yavuz Sultan Selim (1517) it became part of the Ottoman Empire.



**Harran General View**

### ***Harran City Walls and Gates***

Different sources speak of about 4 km long and 5 m high walls that are made out of cut stones and have 6 or 7 gates. Now of all town gates only the Halep Gate is still standing. Saladin Ayyubis brother el-Melik el-Adil is mentioned on the hijra on the door pediment dated 588 (1192).



**Halep Gate**

### ***Harran Castle***

Islamic sources say that there was a Sabian temple where the castle is located. It is guessed, that Umayyad Caliphate II. Mervan, who spent 10 million drachma gold to build a palace (744-750), formed the basis of the castle. The irregular rectangular castle has dodecagon towers in each of the four corners.



**Harran Castle**

### ***Harran Mound***

Excavations in the mound are dated up to 7.000 BC to the Calif period. Figurines and figurine heads of the old Bronze Age, cylinder seals dating to the early Assyrian period 1950 BC, cuneiform clay tablets and sacrifice inscription from King Nabunid and the Syn temple from 6.000 BC have also been found. The excavation findings are displayed in the Şanlıurfa Museum.



**Harran Mound**

### ***Harran Grand Mosque and Harran School***

Umayyad ruler Mervan II. built the important monument for the Islamic era, the Grand Mosque and the Cennet Mosque (744-750 AD). A large part of the eastern front, niche, fountain and minaret of the mosque has been protected. During the Abbasid period, madrasa cells were added to the North of the mosque and the first university of the Muslim world was established. The Harran school, which started during the Abbasid period, educated many scientists, amongst those are the famous medicine and mathematics scholar Sâbit bin Kurrâ, famous astronomy scholar El-Battan, who was the first person to calculate the distance between the world and the moon correctly, Cabir bin Hayyan, who could be seen as the inventor of the atomic science and algebra and famous religious scholar Şeyhü'l İslam İbni Teymiyye.



**Harran Grand Mosque**

### ***Harran Kumbet Houses***

Harran became synonymous with kumbet houses and for the top cover they used bricks. The inside of the houses was at most 5 meters high. The conical caps were covered with 30-40 arrays of bricks. The weaves were irregularly covered with clay plaster and connected the top with the walls, the inside and outside of the house were also covered with this mortar.



**Harran Kumbet Houses**

### *Bazda Caves*

The Bazda caves are 19 km away from Harran. For thousands of years stones were removed from the two caves for the Harran, Şuayb town and Han el-Ba'rur structures, which created numerous squares and tunnels.



**Bazda Caves**

### *Han El-Ba'rur*

The Han El-Ba'rur, located in the Göктаş village 26 km southeast from Harran, is dated to the Ayyubid period. The inscription on the entry gate of the structure, which is located on the Harran-Bagdad route, says that the caravanserai was built by son of Isa son of Imad, Hacı Hüsameddin Ali Bey in the year 1219.



**Han El-Ba'rur**

### **Şuayb Ancient City**

The Şuayb ancient city comes 13 km after the Han el Ba'rur. To Harran however it is 39 km away. The Şuayb ancient city is a settlement dated back to the late Roman period (4th-5th century AD). It is believed that the Prophet Şuayb have lived here for a period. The houses here are built in the Roman style, have triangular pediments, a roof, a yard surrounded by walls and a cellar carved into the bedrock under the house. The houses are arranged in grid planned streets.



**Şuayb Ancient City**

### **Soğmatar Ancient City**

18 km after the Şuayb Ancient City, one arrives at the Soğmatar Ancient City. This city is 57 km away from Harran. Since the Soğmatar ancient city is connected to our Eyyübiye district, and because it lies on the Harran-Eyyubnebi tourism route it is handled here. The area is dated to the Roman period (2nd century AD) and it has been accepted that during the Abgar Kingdom the people of Harran saw the place as a cult center where they worshipped moon and planet gods.



**Samaş and Sin Embossing/ Soğmatar**

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