History: Chapter 11, Section 2

Islamic Empires

* After Muhammad’s death, the Muslim community had to decide who should be the Caliph – successor to the Messenger of God.
* The first four caliphs had a personal connection to Muhammad.
* The Muslims built an empire. They fought to spread Islam. Muslims believed anyone who dies in battle for Islam would go to paradise.
* Sufis – a Muslim group who spent their time praying and teaching Islam.
* Indonesia includes more Muslims than any other nation in the world.
* Timbuktu – West African center of Muslim learning
* The quarrel over who should be caliph split the Muslim world into two groups, the Sunnis and the Shiites. The two groups developed different religious groups over time.
* Sunnis – believed the Umayyad dynasty should rule
* Shiites – believed Muhammad’s son-in-law should rule after Muhammad’s death
* Baghdad, a city located near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, became the capital of the Arab Empire.
* The Seljuk, nomads and great warriors, conquered Baghdad and took over the rule of the government and army.
* They Seljuk ruler called himself sultan or “holder of power”, but allowed the caliph to remain as the religious leader.
* Later another people conquered the empire, the Mongols. They stormed into Baghdad and burned it to the ground ending the Arab Empire.
* Muslims built other Arab Empires in Asia, Africa and Europe.
* One of the largest and most powerful Arab Empires was the Ottoman.
* The leader of the Ottoman Empire was Suleiman I, a brilliant general and enthusiastic architect. He was called Suleiman the Magnificent.
* The Ottoman Empire made different laws for non-Muslims and they had to pay a special tax, but were free to practice their own religion.
* The Moguls created an Arab Empire in Asia with Delhi as their capital city.
* The greatest Mogul ruler was Akbar, who brought peace and order to the empire allowing all to practice their own religion.
* After Akbar, later rulers spent too much money trying to expand the empire and imposed heavy taxes on the people; they also tried to force them to convert to Islam.
* The Mogul Empire collapsed, and Great Britain took control of most of India.