Chapter 11, Section 3 Notes

Muslims Ways of Life

* Muslims were leading merchants until the 1400s. Trade helped the leading Muslims cities: Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus grow.
* Muslim cites became important centers of government, learning and the arts; they looked very similar.
* Mosque – Muslim house of worship which served as schools, courts, and centers of learning.
* A mosque’s most striking feature is its minarets – towers from which a crier, or announcer, calls believers to prayer five times a day.
* An important part of every Muslim city was the bazaar, or marketplace.
* Most Muslims lived in villages and farmed the land. Wealthy landowners took over the smaller farms causing farmers and enslaved people to work for the landowners.
* Muslim people fell into social groups based on power and wealth.
* Muslim men ran the government, society, and business
* Muslim women helped run the family. Many places had laws requiring women to cover their faces and wear long robes in public.
* Arabic was the common language of the Muslim empires. Scholars in Muslim lands saved much of the learning of the ancient world.
* Muslims made important advances in mathematics. They invented algebra and borrowed the symbols 0-9 which are known as “Arabic numerals”.
* Muslims made progress in science. They are considered the founders of chemistry. Muslim doctors were the first to discover that blood circulates to and from the heart.
* Muslims produced famous writings. One of the most well-known is *The Thousand and One Nights* aka *The Arabian Nights* which tells about Aladdin and his magic lamp.
* Muslims developed a form of art based on Islam, but are not allowed to show images of Muhammad fearing that people would worship him rather than Allah. Instead, designs entwined with flowers, leaves, stars and beautiful writings are created.
* Islamic rulers lived in large brick palaces which had courtyards at their center, porches, fountains and pools to cool the courtyards, and walls to provide protection.
* A famous Muslim building in Agra, India is the Taj Mahal, built of marble and precious stone by Shah Jahan as a tomb for his wife. It took twenty years to build the Taj Mahal.
* Today the Muslim empires are gone, but Islam is still a major world religion.