Egyptians, Nubians, Assyrians

Chapter 4
Nomadic Rulers Invade Egypt

- After the Middle Kingdom of Egypt declined, Egypt was attacked by invaders.
  - Caused by a succession of weak pharaohs and struggles amongst rival nobles.
  - These Asiatic invaders were called HYKSOS.
  - They ruled Egypt from 1640 BC to 1570 BC.

- The Israelites migration to Egypt.
  - The Bible tells of this story in the Old Testament.
  - Abraham crossed the Euphrates River into Canaan and settled there.
  - The Hyksos encouraged the Israelites to settle there because they were racially similar.
Egyptians Regain Control

- Around 1600 BC a series of warlike rulers began to restore Egypt’s power.
  - Queen Ahhotep took over when her husband was killed in war.
  - Pharaoh Kamose won a great victory over the Hyksos.
  - The Hyksos were driven completely out of Egypt across the Sinai Peninsula.
  - Bible says Israelites remained and were enslaved.
  - Would not leave until the time of the Great Exodus between 1500 and 1200 BC.
The New Kingdom of Egypt

- Pharaohs wanted to strengthen Egypt by building an empire.
- Queen Hatshepsut was a unique ruler
  - Her stepson was too young to rule so she ruled in his place.
  - Encouraged trade instead of war - sent ships to present-day Somalia (called Punt then) to trade for spices, animals, incense, and other goods.
- Thutmose III (Hatshepsut’s stepson) was much more warlike.
  - It is believed that he murdered Hatshepsut to gain power.
  - He led victorious invasions of Canaan and Syria, also Nubia to the south.
  - Egypt was now a mighty empire. More power than they ever had or ever would have in the future. Many new ideas were shared and cultures spread.
The Egyptians and the Hittites

- The Egyptians conquest of Syria caused conflict with the Hittites who moved into Asia Minor (Anatolia) around 1900 BC.
  - Fought several small battles.
  - They clashed at Kadesh around 1285 BC in a major battle.
  - Ramses II and a Hittite King later made a treaty to promise “peace and brotherhood between us forever.”
  - This alliance between the two lasted for the remainder of the century.
An Age of Builders

- The Pharaohs of the New Kingdom would not be outdone by their predecessors who build the towering pyramids.
  - Built great buildings and statues
  - The Valley of the Kings
  - Temple at Karnak
  - Abu-Simbel
- Ramses ordered all of these above locations be decorated with statues of himself.
The Valley of the Kings is where the Pharaohs were buried for nearly 500 years.
Karnak Temple to honor Amon-Re at Karnak.
Abu Simbel

Another Temple at Abu Simbel
The Great Sphinx

The Sphinx was NOT built during the New Kingdom. It is, however, really cool to look at so I added it to my slide show!!!
The Egyptian Empire Declines

- Both the Egyptians and the Hittites were attacked by the “Sea People”
  - Neither referred to these people by name so we don’t know who they were - possibly the Philistines. Caused great destruction.
- The Empire broke apart into regional units
- The Libyans were able to cross the desert and conquer Egypt.
  - They ruled as Pharaohs from 950 BC to 730 BC.
  - Did not impose their own culture.
  - They adopted the Egyptian’s culture, as did the Nubians later on.
The Kushites Conquer the Nile Region

- For Centuries the Egyptians controlled the Nubian region of Kush.
  - As the Egyptians declined, the Kushites emerged as a dominant power in the area.
  - The Nubians established their own dynasty in Egypt.
    - Kushite princes went to Egypt - learned language, worshipped Egyptian gods, adopted customs and clothing.
- Kush regained independence with Egypt’s decline
  - Felt they were better to guard the Egyptian throne and values
  - Ousted the Libyans and took control
Golden Age of Meroe

- The Kushites were eventually defeated by the Assyrians in Egypt and moved south to Meroe.
  - Meroe thrived for hundreds of years. Used natural resources for wealth
  - Rich iron ore deposits - center for manufacture of iron weapons
- People came from all over N. Africa, India, and Arabia came to trade in Meroe
- Fall of Meroe
  - Kingdom of Aksum contributed to the fall of Meroe
  - Aksum defeated Meroe in AD 350
The Assyrians

- Created a large empire
  - Highly organized military and state-of-the-art weapons
  - Came from the northern part of Mesopotamia
  - Glorified military strength
  - Soldiers wore stiff leather or metal armor

- Conquests
  - North and East of the Tigris all the way to Central Egypt
  - King Sennacherib claimed he destroyed 89 cities and burned Babylon to the ground
  - Showed no mercy to those they attacked - killed or enslaved their victims
The Assyrian Empire Expands

- Assyria defeated Syria, Israel, Judah, and Babylon. Also controlled parts of Anatolia and Egypt.
- Assyrian Kings controlled conquered lands like provinces
- Nineveh - capital city
  - Walled city along the Tigris River
  - Largest city of its day - archaeologists found ruins of sculptures.
  - Also held one of the world’s largest libraries - more than 20,000 clay tablets
    - Included the *Epic of Gilgamesh*
The Fall of the Assyrian Empire

- The Assyrian Empire was massive - they had spread themselves too thin
  - Their cruelty to others had earned them many enemies
  - Last powerful King was Ashurbanipal - after his death Nineveh fell

- Decline and Fall
  - In 612 BC an army of Medes and Chaldeans burned Nineveh
  - Many of the clay tablets survived the fire
  - Most in the region rejoiced at the fall of Nineveh

- Rebirth of Babylon - the Chaldeans
  - King Nebuchadnezzar restored Babylon - became center of trade
    - Terraces, gardens, walls, etc...studied astronomy
Fall of Nebuchadnezzar’s Empire

- Nebuchadnezzar’s empire fell shortly after his death
- The Persians adopted many Assyrian military, political, and artistic inventions
- Persians would use the organization of the Assyrians to stabilize and control the region.