QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER NINE

1. Describe how the Sasanid Empire helped “pave the way for the spread of Islam.” What part did economic and religious factors play in this process?

2. Describe some of the main elements of Muhammad’s life. What part did Mecca and Medina play in the establishment of Islam?

3. What was the Quran and what were the Five Pillars of Islam? Why were they appealing to many Arabs?

4. What were some of the main differences between Islam as compared to Zoroasterianism, Judaisim, and Christianity?

5. What part did the umma and the ka’ba play in the development of Islam?
6. What were Abu Bakr’s first tasks as the khalifa? What part did his policies play in the rapid expansion of Islam during this period?

7. What issues and events led to the split between the Shi'ites and Sunnis?

8. In what ways did the Abbasid Caliphate differ from the Umayyad?

9. What changes took place in the heartlands of Islam after the fall of the Abbasid Dynasty? Briefly describe some of the main features of the political and cultural development under the Samanids in Bukhara, the Fatimids in Egypt, and the Umayyads in Spain.
10. What changes did the Seljuk Turks make when they came into power? Explain why the author claims that: “The Turks alone cannot be blamed for the…misfortunes of Iran and Iraq?”

11. Why were the *Quran*, *hadith*, and *Shari’a* important in developing the legal and social structure of Islam? Why did the conversion to Islam promote urbanization and allow Islam to avoid the rise of heresy that earlier characterized the West?

12. Describe briefly some of the main features of the life of Islamic women and slaves? What part did the *madrasas* and the *Sufi* brotherhoods play in the “recentering” of Islamic life?

**WORDS TO KNOW**

Sasanid Empire  
Mecca  
Medina  
*Ka’ba*  
Muhammad  
Islam  
*Khalifa* (Caliph)  
*Umma*  
*Quran*  
Abu Bakr  
Shi’ite  

Sunni  
Umayyad  
Abbasid  
Mamluks  
Fatimids  
Al-Azhar  
Berbers  
Seljuk Turks  
Saladin  
*Shari’a*  
“Five Pillars”  

*Hadith*  
Damascus  
Baghdad  
“People of the Book”  
Cordoba  
Ulama  
*Madrasa*  
*Sufi* Brotherhood