**Extent of the Song**

- The Song arose in the wake of the chaos that accompanied the fall of the T’ang. Emperor Taizu was able to unify much of China through conquest, and in 960, established the Song Dynasty.
- The Song Empire was decidedly smaller than the T’ang Empire, and in particular, did not control the extensive northwest territory along the silk roads. The Song turned to maritime instead of overland trade.
- Over time, the Song slowly lost control of the northern provinces of China. They remained firmly in control of the south, however, until conquered by Mongols in 1279.

**Song Culture & Society**

- Buddhism had fallen out of favor near the end of the T’ang Dynasty, and Confucianism was again on the rise. A new form of Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, surfaced at this time. Neo-Confucianism attempted to incorporate some of the more spiritual aspects of Buddhism and Taoism.
- With the return of Confucianism to prominence, the civil service examination system rose to new heights under the Song, and as a result, a class of Scholar-Gentry rose to prominence.
- With the development of printing, and the lowered cost of printed materials, social mobility became even more fluid as more and more people of various classes were able to pass the civil service exam.

**Footbinding**

- The status of women during the Song Dynasty began to decline due in part, to the practice of footbinding.
- China had always been a patriarchal society, but during the Song, it became fashionable for upper class women to bind their feet in order to keep them small.
- A girl’s feet would be bound around the age of 5 or 6. In this process, the arch was broken, and the toes were curled under the foot, yielding a tiny foot of only a few inches.
- An upper class woman could not expect to find a husband unless her feet were bound. Big feet were for the lower classes.
- The impact of footbinding was that women became even more helpless and more house bound. Women could barely walk on such feet, and as a result, could go nowhere, and were relegated to the house.

**Decline**

- Ultimately, the Song were not very powerful militarily. This was probably because Confucianism held soldiers in low regard. As a result, the Song were susceptible to attacks from foreigners.
- In 1125, a foreign group, the Jin, conquered the northern part of the Song Empire. The Song Dynasty continued to thrive in the south with a new capital at Hangzhou.
- The Jin were eventually conquered by the Mongols, and for a time, the Song had an uneasy relationship with their Mongol neighbors (knowing the Mongols wanted to conquer them).
- Ultimately, the Mongols did attack and conquer the Song in 1279.
1. How did the Song establish their Dynasty?

2. What was the size of the Song? How did that change over time?

3. What new form of Confucianism surfaced in the Song? How was it different?

4. What class rose to great heights during the Song? Why?

5. Why did social mobility become easier in the Song Dynasty?

6. Why did women’s status decline under the Song?

7. Describe the process of footbinding.

8. What was the impact?

9. Why were the Song not powerful militarily?

10. What was the result of this lack of military power?

11. Describe the three step decline of the Song.
   a. 
   b. 
   c.
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How was it different?
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