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| **The Middle Ages  Effects of the Crusades** |

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| Although the crusades failed, they had a major impact on Western Europe.  **They helped to break down feudalism by increasing the authority of kings.**   * Some nobles died in battle without leaving an heir. Their lands passed to the king. * Some nobles sold their land in an effort to raise money to pay the special tax levied by the king to offset the cost of the crusades. * Some nobles gave their serfs a chance to buy their freedom in an effort to raise money they needed to buy armor and weapons * Some young men who could buy their way out of feudal obligation joined the crusades. Many died. That reduced the work force. If a farm failed, it passed to the king.     **From their exposure to superior Muslim technology, Europeans learned how to**   * Build better ships * Use a compass     **Western Europe began to express an interest in trade.**The crusaders brought back luxury goods. These items were vastly popular. To get more, Western Europe began to trade with her neighbors. Goods brought back included:   * Silk * Spices * Sugar * Art * Literature |