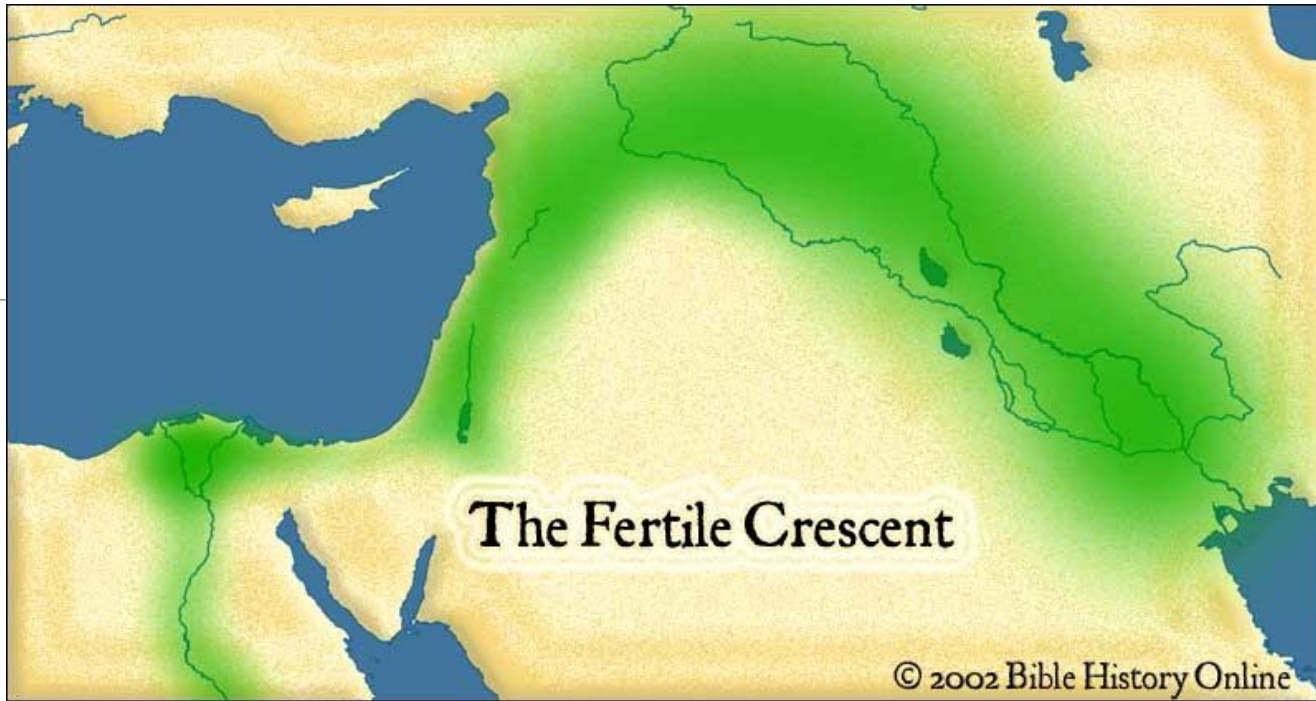


Mesopotamia





- Mesopotamia means “Land between two rivers”.
- Located in the “Fertile Crescent”.
- Known as the **Cradle of Civilization**. Why?

Where to Find Ancient Mesopotamia

- Mesopotamia lies in what we now know today as Iraq, northern Syria and southeast Turkey.





Euphrates
River

Tigris River

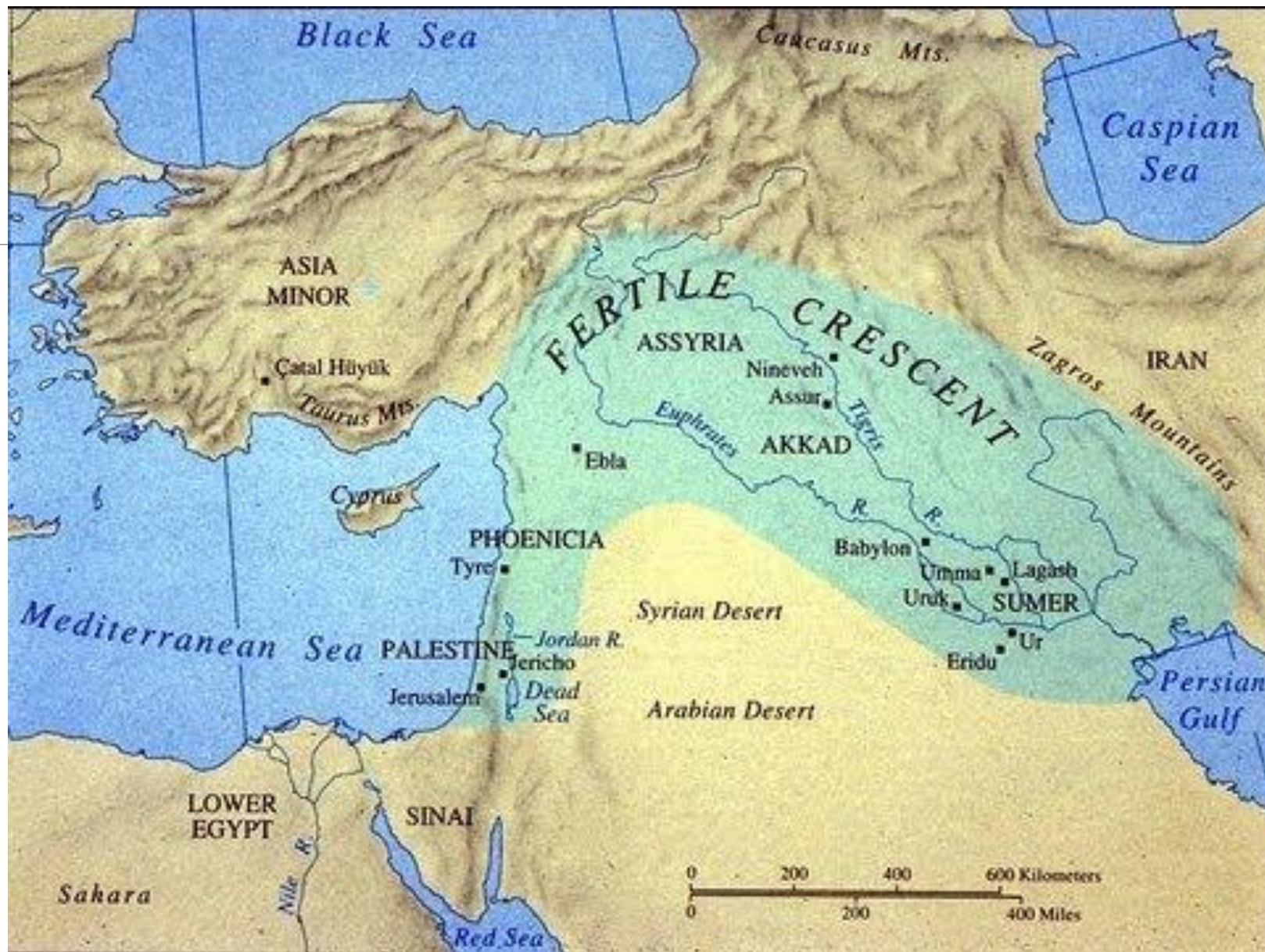
What made this area such a great place for civilization to flourish?

- Rich soil and abundant crops
- Annual flooding deposits silt that is good for crops
- Rivers also were a source of food and transportation.
- When people learned to control floodwaters irrigation of crops became possible.



4 Dominate Groups of People

- The Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and Chaldeans all dominated the Mesopotamian area from 3500 BCE to 530 BCE.
- Each group contributed to the expansion of civilized life in the Mesopotamian area.



Empires

STRONG LEADERS WHO STRENGTHEN MESOPOTAMIA

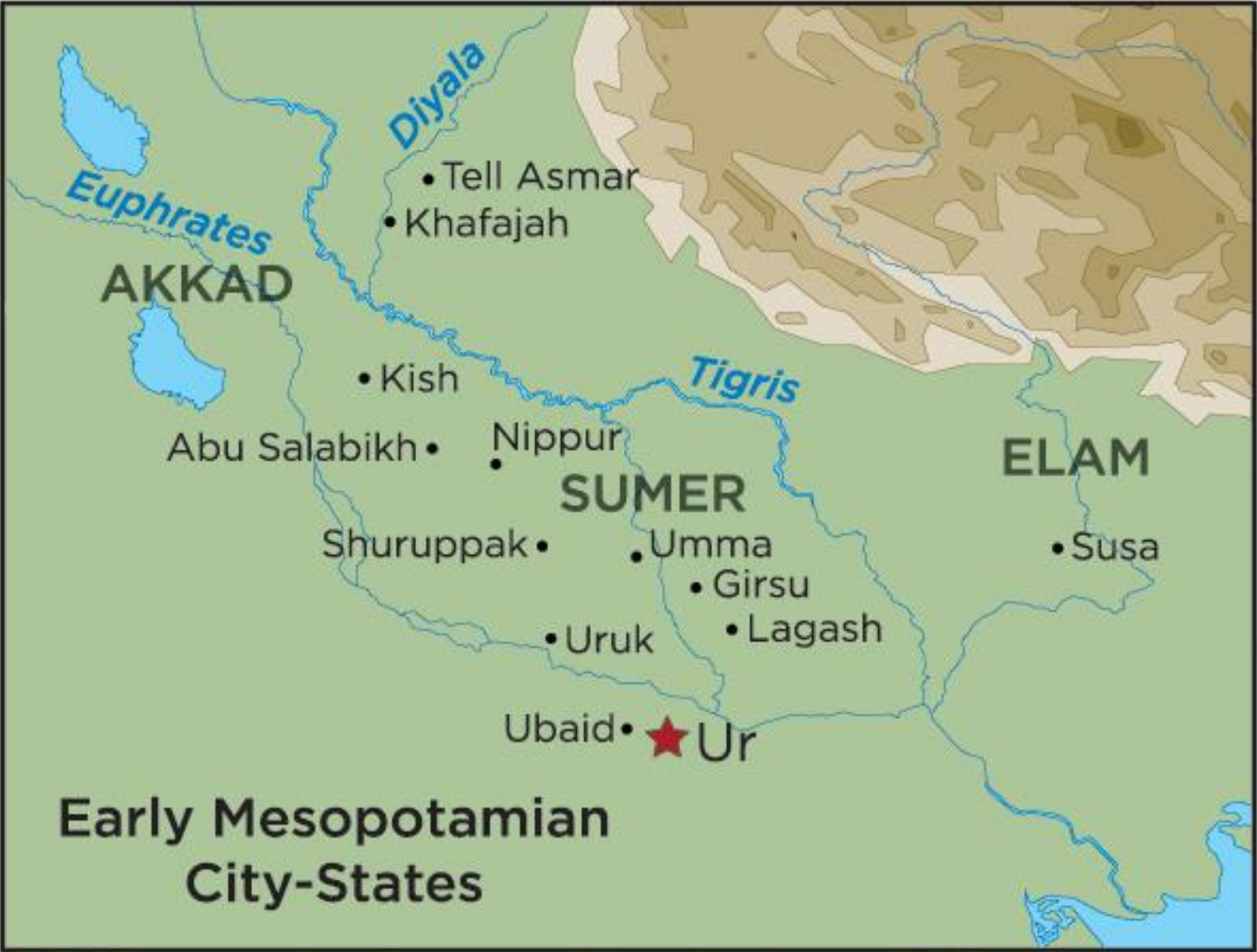
The Sumerians

- These peoples controlled the area between the Euphrates and Tigris from around 3500 BCE to 1900 BCE and were the creators of the first Mesopotamian civilization.
- **Religion**
- Believed that the gods and goddesses controlled all aspects of the universe.
- Polytheistic (worshipped more than one god)
- Humans were to obey and serve the gods.
- Humans were inferior to the gods.
- Humans were never sure what the gods might do to them or for them.

City-States – Early History of Sumer

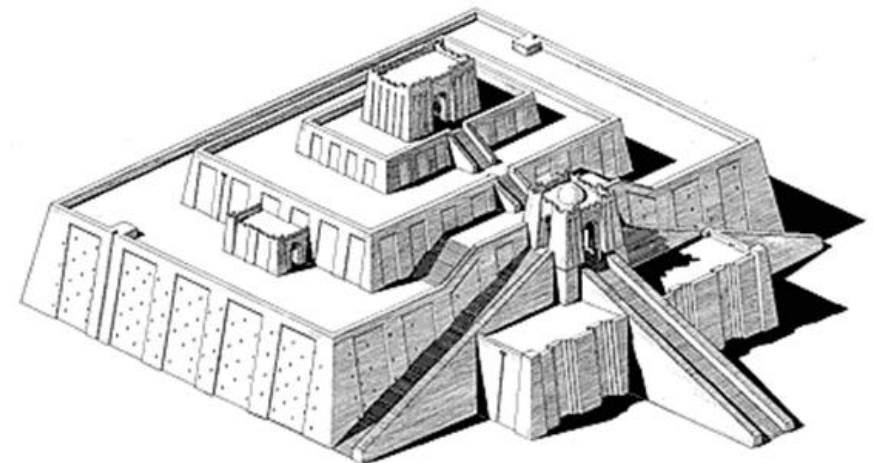
- An independent state consisting of a city and its surrounding territory. City-states had their own governmental and economic systems.
- These city-states were often ruled by its own king and maintained independent military and laws.



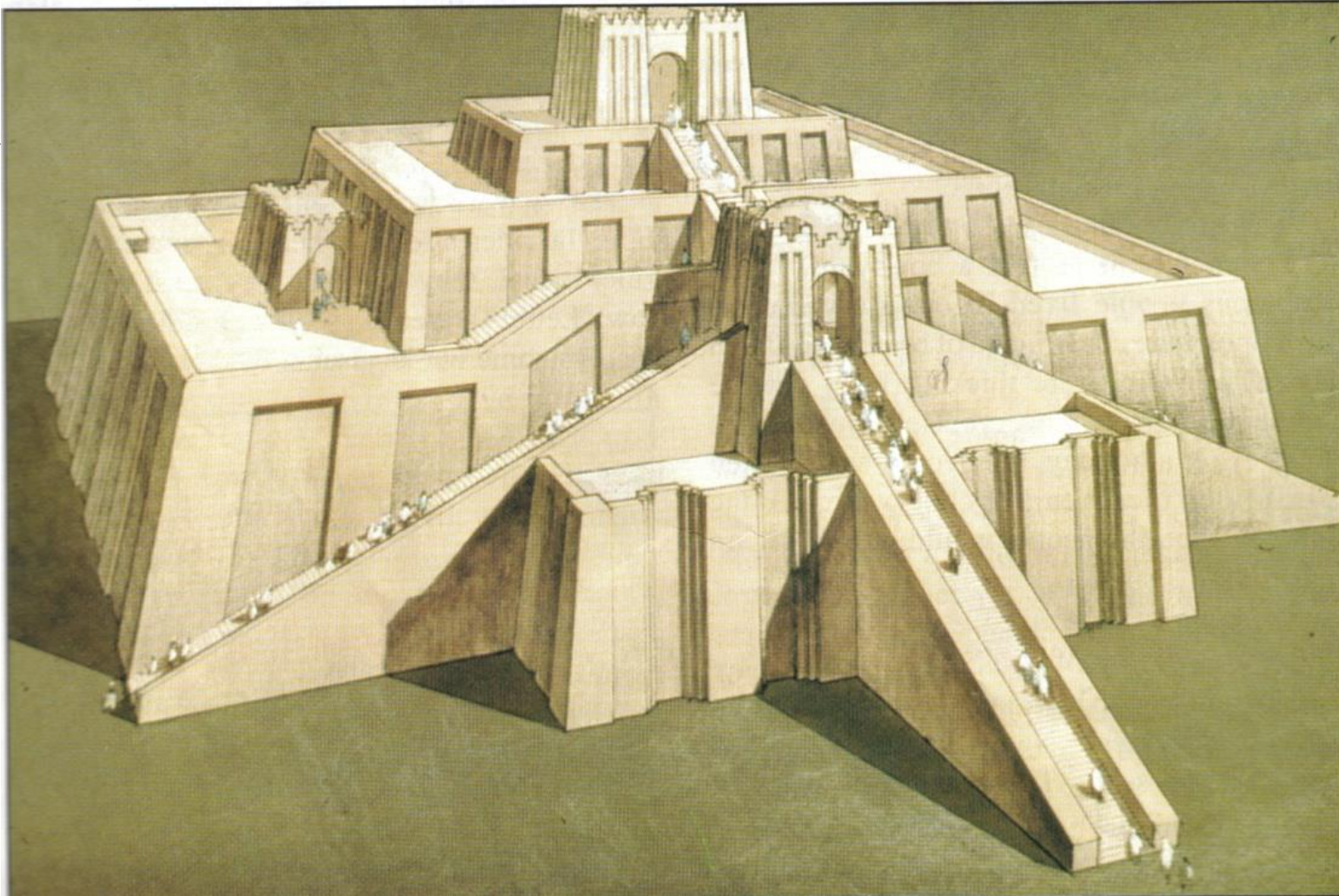


Ziggurats

- A temple dedicated to the gods, built on top of a massive stepped tower. Served as the city centre.
- Domain of the priest only, sacrifices were brought to the temples.
- Trade took place inside the walls (marketplace).



This is how the ziggurat of Ur probably looked.





Sumerian Cities

- Surrounded by walls
- Defense towers
- Dwellings built from sun dried bricks
- They invented the arch and the dome.
- Homes of peasants, city officials and priests all made from the same materials.
- Still used in Southwest Asia today.

Standard of Ur - Peace



Standard of Ur - War



Society

- Trade was very important to Sumer. While Sumerians traded many different goods they were well known for their metalwork.
- They traded with other Mediterranean regions to the west and with India to the east.

Three social groups were common in Sumer: nobles, commoners and slaves.

- Nobles – royal and priestly officials and their families.
- Slaves – belonged to palace and temple officials.
- Commoners – everyone else

-
- These independent city-states often rose and fell in small skirmishes with small groups of local men as military that were able to wield an axe or throw a spear.
 - The Sumerians were the peoples that developed the use of a wheel and sometimes employed this “technology” on donkey-pulled chariots as a military vehicle.



Accomplishments of the Sumerians

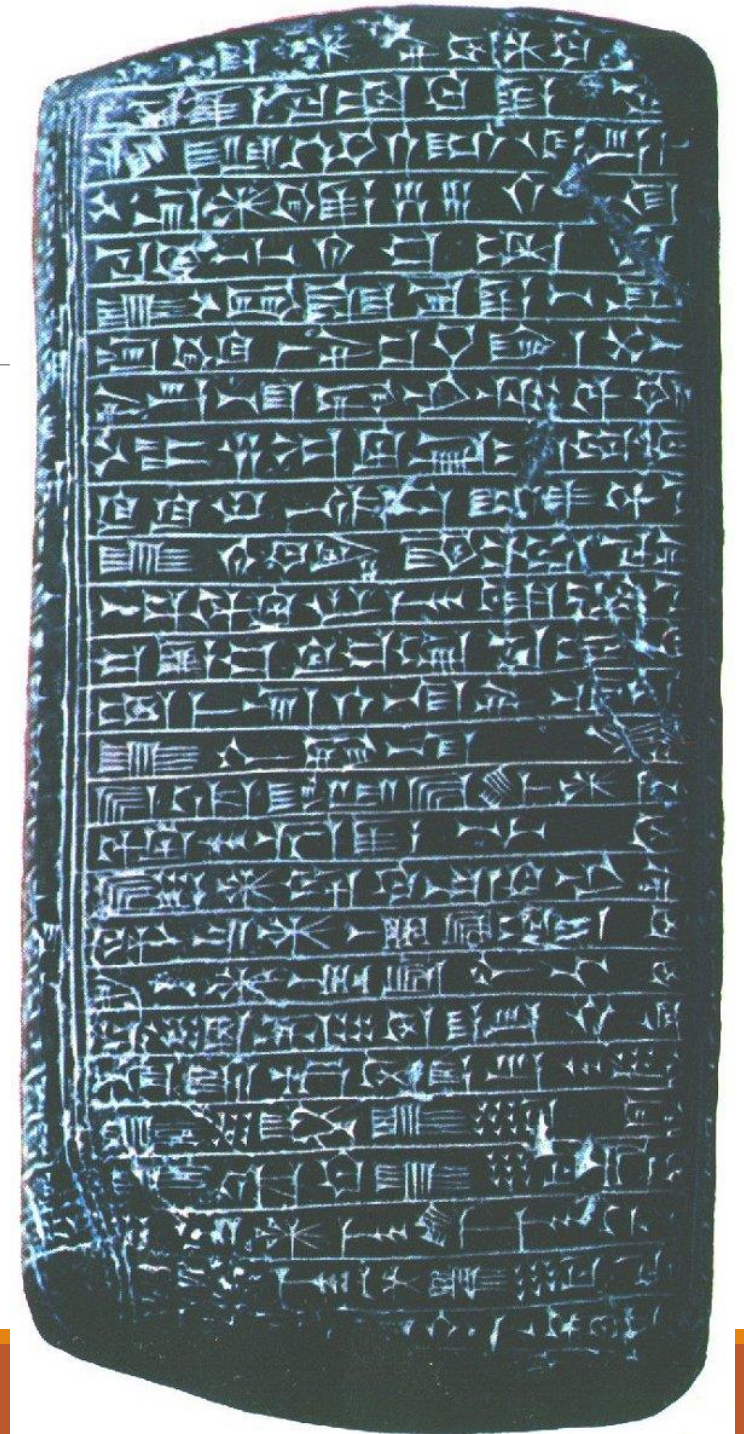
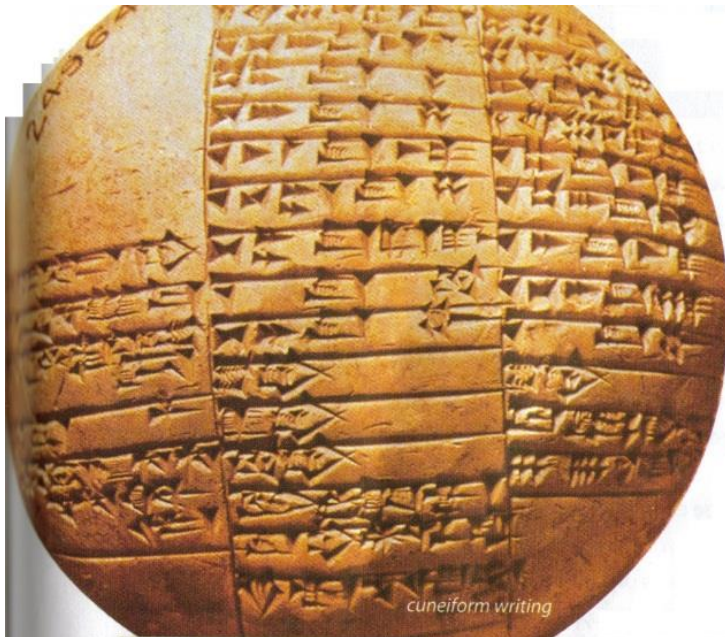
1 They developed the first written language, a system of writing called cuneiform. The alphabet consisted of about 500 characters, or wedge-shaped forms.

2 They studied science and mathematics. Their skills in mathematics were so developed that they created a system for subdividing a day and a year as well as dividing a circle into 360 parts.

3 They were skillful in using the wheel and made vehicles for farming, moving goods for trade, and fighting enemies.

Cuneiform

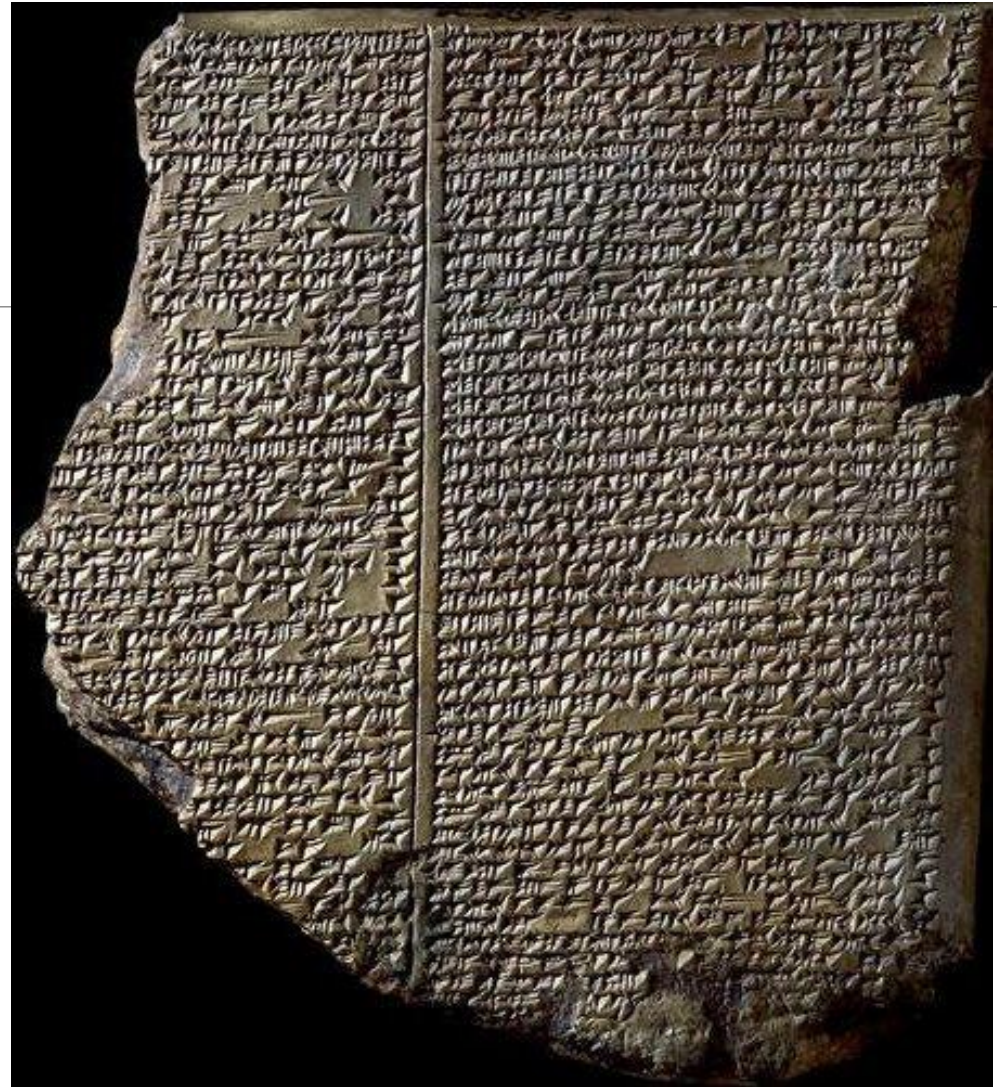
- one of the earliest forms of written language.



Literature

Gilgamesh - A narrative epic about a universal flood.

Gilgamesh ruled as King of Uruk around 2600 BCE.



The Plough



Summary of Sumer

- Cuneiform – 1st form of written language
- Plough – harnessing oxen to the plough
- Wheel – for improved transportation
- Pulley system for wells
- Ziggurats – temples
- The beginning of the Bronze Age
- Wheels are added to chariots for war tactics
- Lunar Calendar
- Math – counted in units of 60 (ie Minutes in an hour)
- A seed drill is added to the plough
- Epic of Gilgamesh – important literary work (oldest known piece of literature)
- Potter's Wheel aids the advent of pottery

Sargon The Great

- United the city-states into one empire after he led a revolt to become king of Kish, his official city-state.
- He ruled for 35 years and establishes the Akkadian Empire. His grandson, Naramsin, re-establishes the empire in 2291 BCE.
- Invaded Egypt and Ethiopia

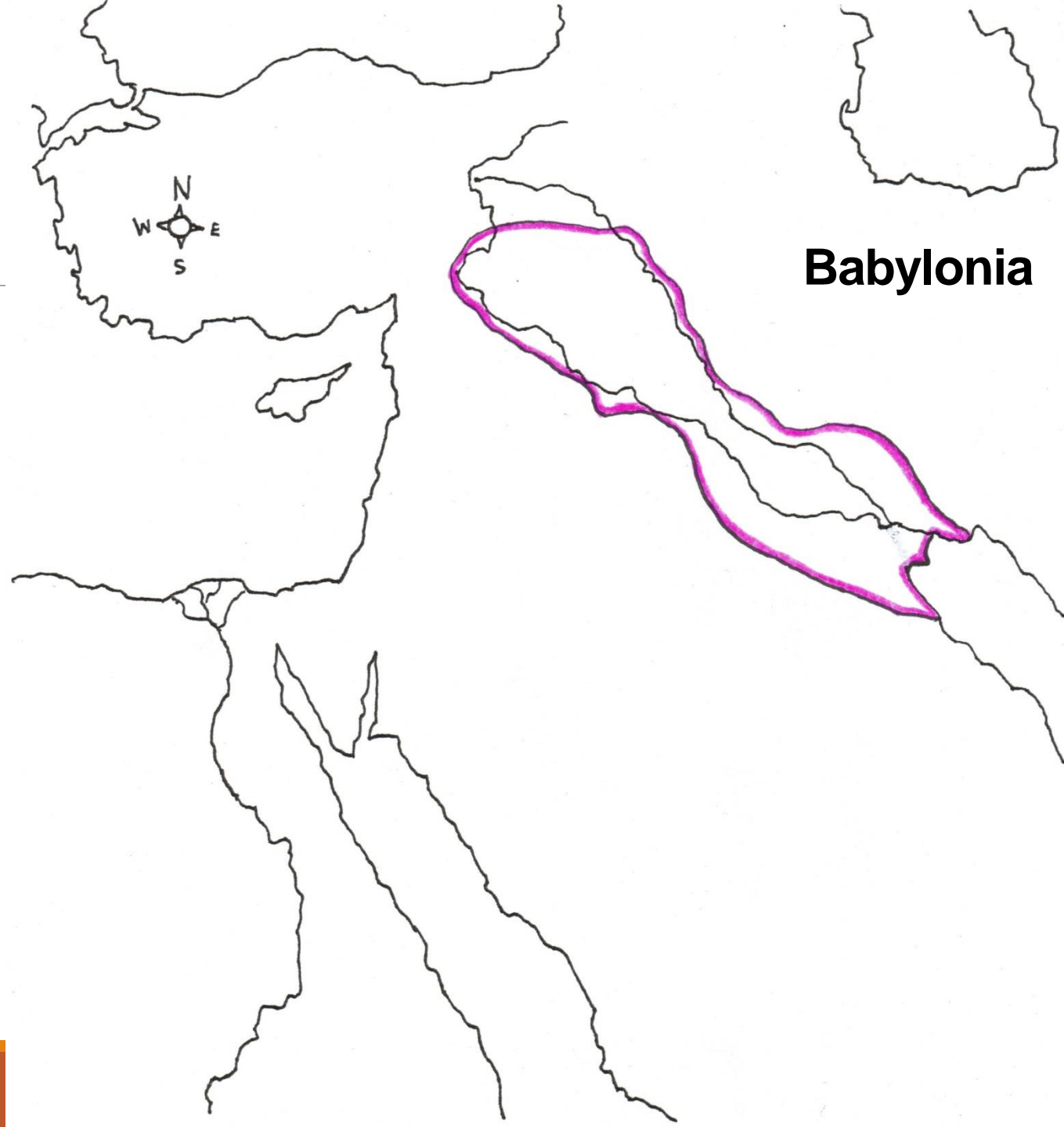


Sargon was the first ruler of the Akkadian Empire. He conquered all of Mesopotamia and beyond.

Babylonian Empire

Babylonian Empire

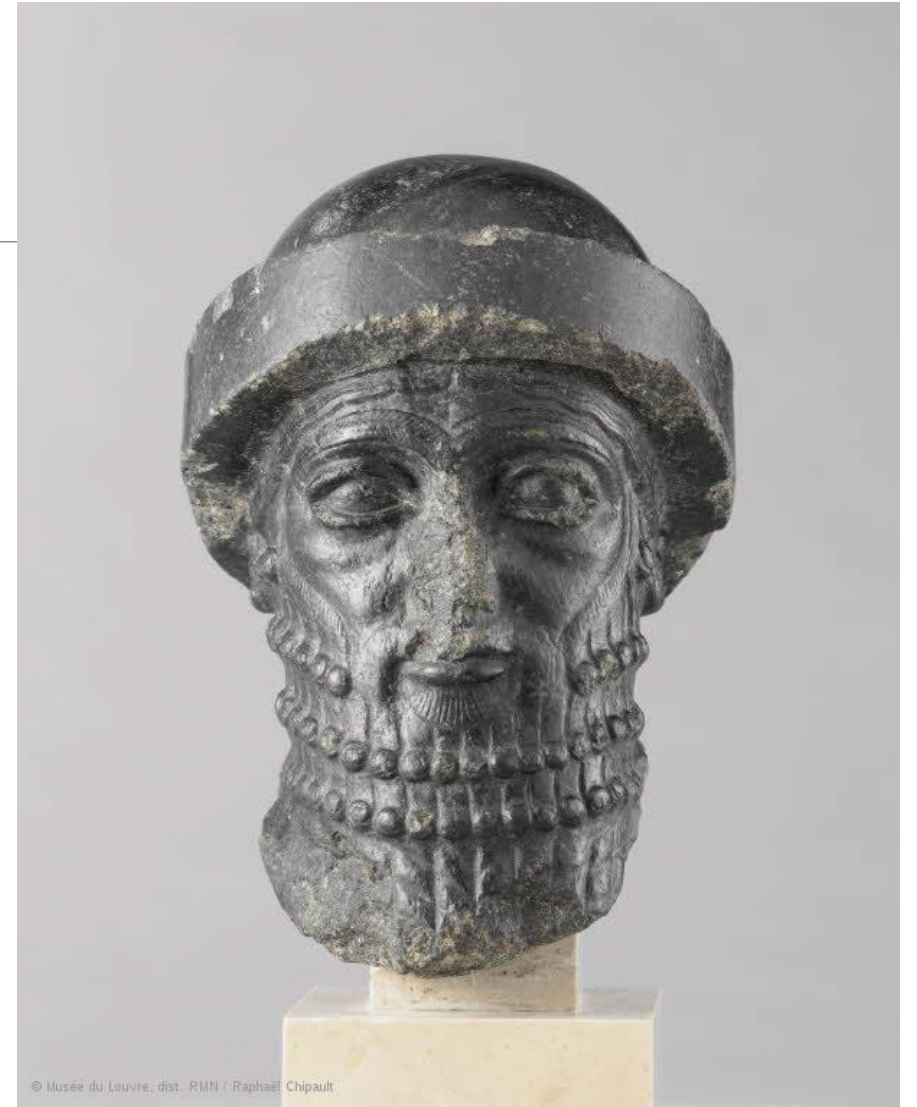
- The Amorites from the West took over Sumer and created their Empire which lasted from 1900 BCE to 1300 BCE. Babylon was now the centre of power.
- They kept much of what Sumer and King Sargon had achieved.
- They expanded the Empire to the north, east and west but the constant invasions by Indo-European tribes led to the Babylonia fall.



Babylonia

New King and Kingdom

- **Hammurabi** was the sixth king of the First Babylonian Dynasty, reigning from 1792 BCE to 1750 BCE.
- Hammurabi controlled both Sumer and Akkad for a short time but had a large influence on the region for many years after his death.



The Code of Hammurabi

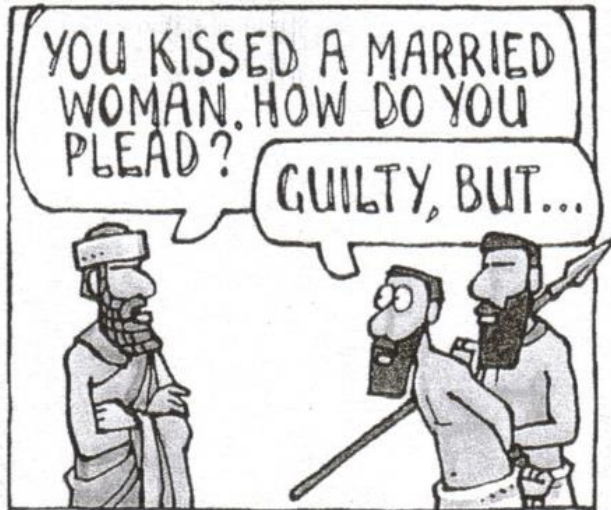
- Organized under laws on trade, family, labour (work), real estate and personal property.
- The basic principle behind the code was an “eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”.
- Very harsh laws
- 282 laws



1700 BC: Hammurabi's Code

Hammurabi of Babylon went back to the cruel old ways. Hammurabi liked to match his punishments to the crimes...

- ♦ chopping off hands for a lad who hit his dad
- ♦ burning alive for stealing from a burning house
 - ♦ lopping off an ear for theft
- ♦ drowning for charging a customer too much in a pub.



Accomplishments of the Babylonians

1 They established a code of laws known as Hammurabi's code.

2 They believed in **astrology**, which holds that the movements of the stars and planets have a direct effect on human life. Their recognition of the different planets and stars led to the scientific study of **astronomy**, the study of the universe.

Summary:

- Trade is expanded to Arabia, India and Persia.
- The Shekel, Mina and Talent are introduced as currency – one of the first forms of money used in history.
- King Hammurabi organizes the laws into a specific code, one of the world's first written codes of law.



Hammurabi Activity

SHEG DOCUMENTS

Hammurabi Activity

Create a set of laws for:

1. What should be done to the carpenter who builds a house that falls and kills the owner?
2. What should happen to a boy who slaps his father?
3. What should be done about a wife who ignores her duties and belittles her husband?
4. What should happen if a nobleman dies during surgery?
5. What should be done to the man who can not pay his debts?
6. What should the punishment be for robbery?

Questions to Consider

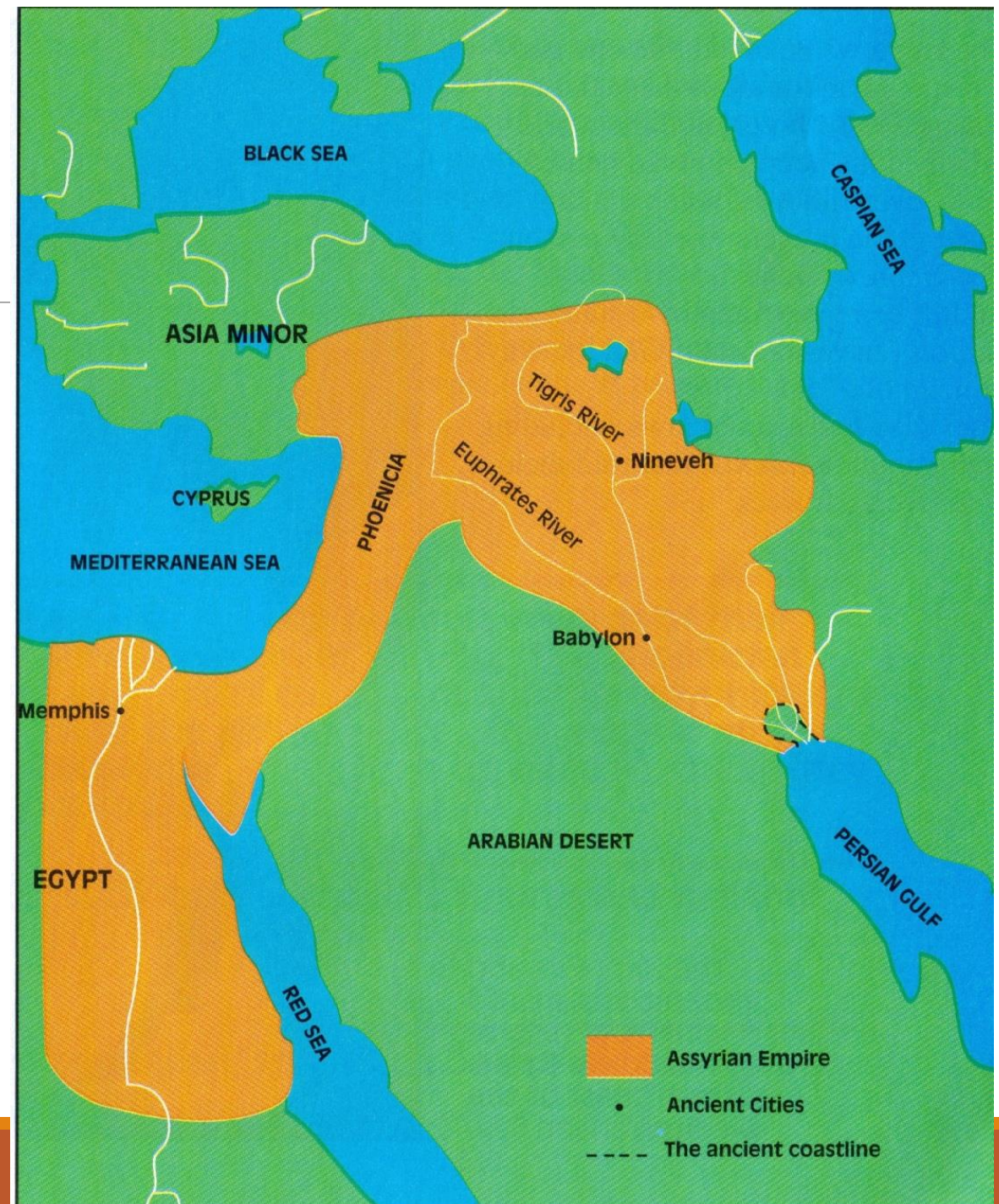
1. Why does a society need laws?
2. What are the advantages of a written code of laws?
3. On what do we base our laws?

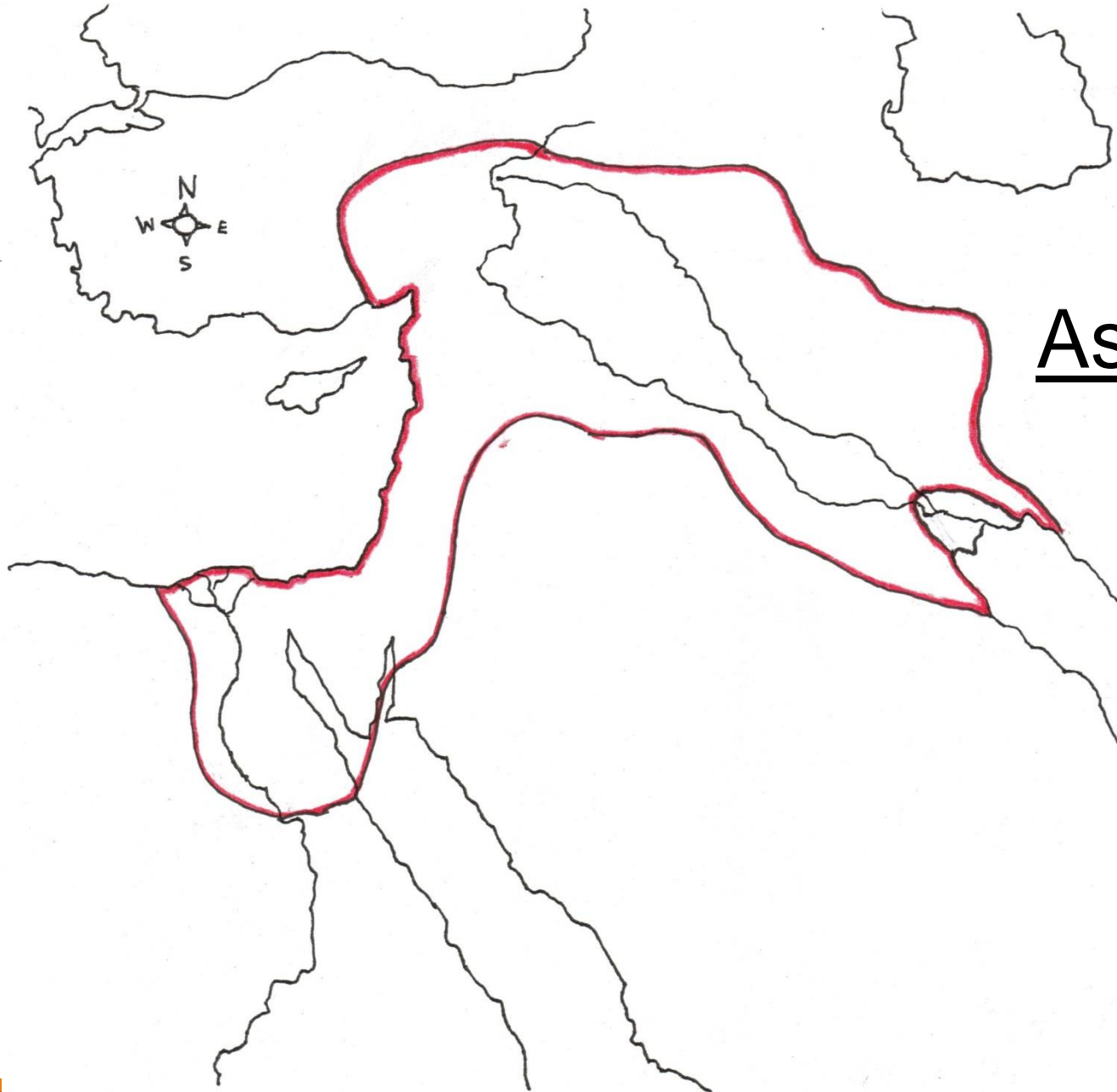


Assyrians



Assyrian Empire





Assyrian Empire

Assyrian Siege of Jerusalem

SHEG DOCUMENTS

[The Rise of Assyria](#) - video

[Ancient Warriors \(Video\)](#)

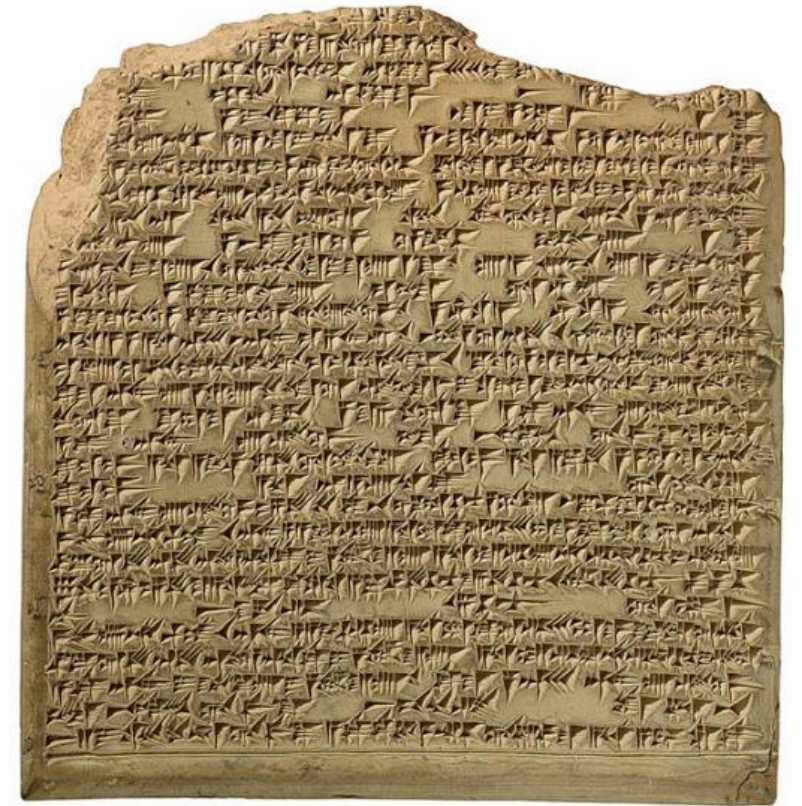
The Assyrians – Class Mini Assignment

1. How did the Assyrians come to power?
2. Make a list their weapons and war tactics.
3. Why did the Assyrians attack Judah?
4. How did they maintain power over their kingdom?
5. Why did the Assyrian Empire fall?

The Assyrians 1300 BCE – 609 BCE

- They conquered the Babylonian Empire and much of Mesopotamia as they valued a skilled army.
- They were war-like people who were known to be ruthless and cruel.
- Tiglath-pileser II (745 BCE) built a road system – used by the army and merchants, as well as a postal service to assist with communication around the empire.

- They also improved on the irrigation system reclaiming unusable land as well as a sewer system.
- Created one of the first libraries – consisted of more than 22,000 pieces of work.
- Learned to make iron from the Hittites.

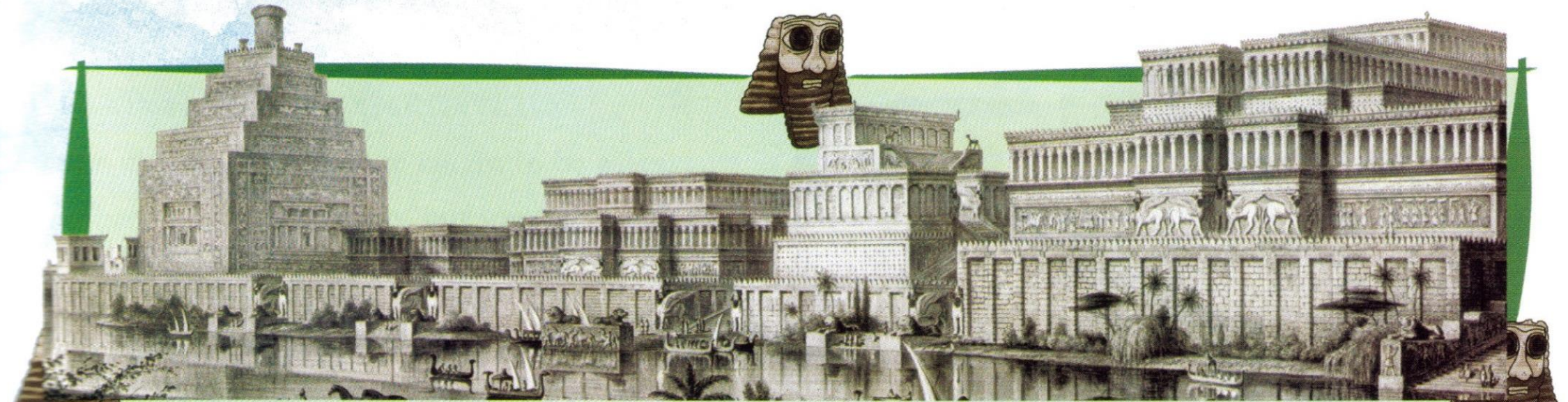


Assyrian Irrigation

The need for water

Farmers developed ways to water crops before they were drowned by spring floods. They used **irrigation** systems to carry water away from the rivers to ditches and canals where water was dammed, and used to water fields during the growing season. Irrigation allowed for more crops to be grown and sold, adding to the wealth of the southern region.





Cities of Assyria

Nineveh, a city in the north, was the Assyrian capital. The wall that surrounded the city had fifteen main gates, each guarded by stone bull statues. Early records say that Nineveh was a beautiful city, with parks, a **botanical** garden, and a zoo.



-
- Ashurbanipal (668 BCE – 626 BCE) was the greatest Assyrian ruler. He was just as cruel as his predecessors but devoted much effort to build palaces and temples as well as pursue math and science.
 - His palace in Nineveh was decorated with ivory and gold from Egypt, silver from Syria, lapis lazuli from Persia and cedar wood from the Phoenician regions on the Mediterranean.

Ashurbanipal killing a lion



The Art of Intimidation





▲ *Some cities of Mesopotamia survived and became great cities of later civilizations. Hatra was built as an Assyrian city and by 100 B.C., had become a great fortified city.*

Accomplishments of the Assyrians

- 1** They built a system of roads.
- 2** They instituted a form of government for the provinces in which a governor was appointed to oversee the king's territory.
- 3** They established the first library.

Assyria was such a dominant force in Mesopotamia that many other societies looked to overthrow them through cooperation.

In 616 BCE the Chaldeans from Babylonia and the Medes from Persia joined forces and destroyed Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire.

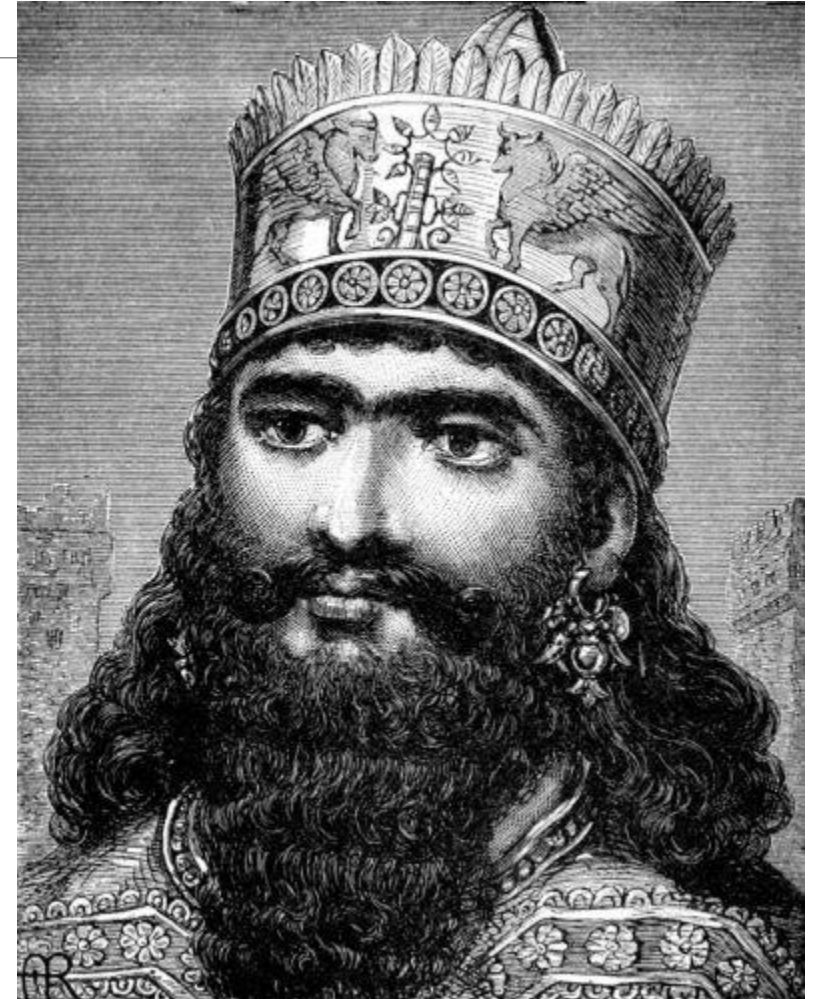
Chaldean Empire

609 BCE – 539 BCE

Chaldean Empire

(609 – 530 BCE)

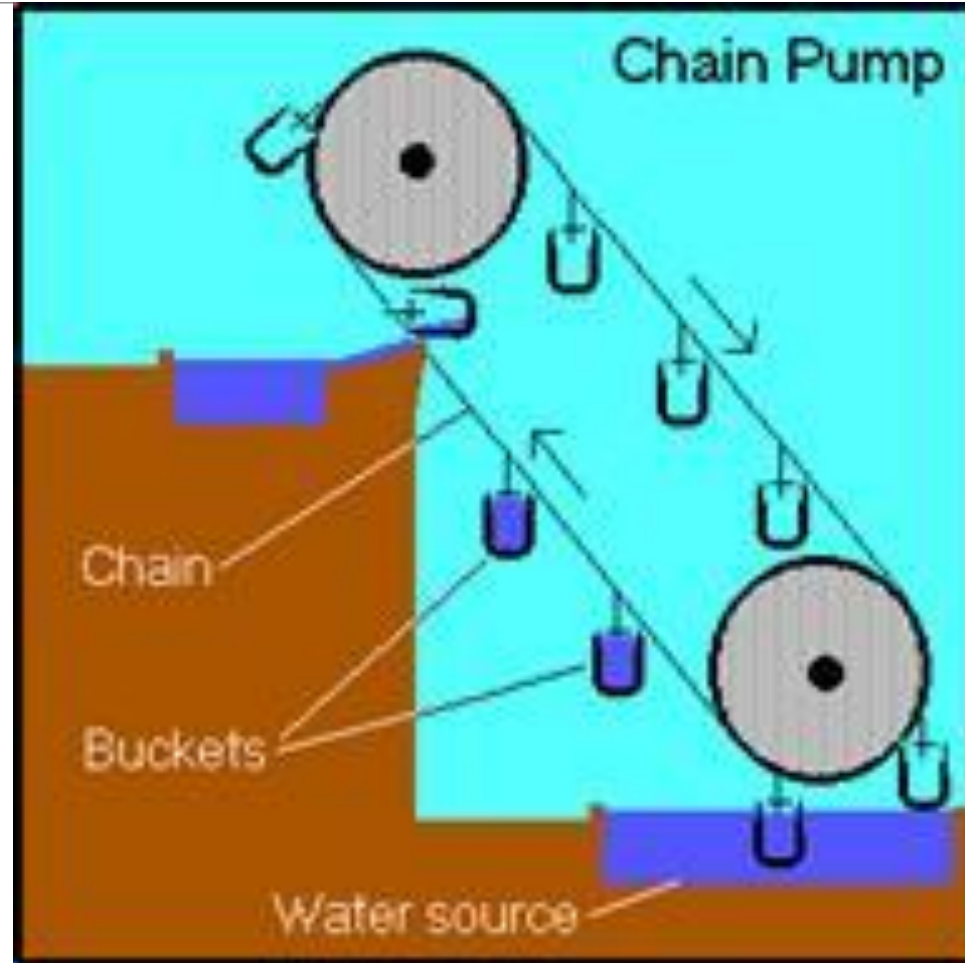
- Greatest achievement was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.
- Babylon was the most beautiful city in the world.
- Led by Warrior King Nebuchadnezzar (604-562 BCE) the Chaldeans conquered Judah and destroyed Jerusalem.



Hanging Gardens of Babylon



These simple but effective pumps helped the Hanging Garden thrive.



The Rivers of Babylon

While the Chaldeans contributed much to the advancement of the Mesopotamian societies they too fell to invading hoards.

By 549 BCE, the Chaldeans were challenged by another great power, the combined forces of the Medes and the new Persian King Cyrus.

The Persian army laid siege to the Babylon for a couple years and ultimately, according to legend, the Persian army dug trenches to divert the Euphrates River and marched up the riverbed into the city and proceeded to kill Belshazzar.

The city was spared but the Persians were the new rulers...and they didn't stop at Babylon.