



**Big Era Four**  
**Expanding Networks of Exchange and Encounter**  
**1200 BCE—500 CE**



**Landscape Teaching Unit 4.1**  
**From the Mediterranean to India:**  
**Patterns of Power and Trade 1200—600 BCE**

**Table of Contents**

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Why this unit?.....	2
Unit objectives.....	2
Time and materials.....	3
Author.....	3
The historical context.....	3
This unit in the Big Era time line.....	5
Lessons	
Lesson 1: Mapping the Period.....	6
Lesson 2: Metallurgy: Iron.....	9
Lesson 3: Urbanization.....	14
Lesson 4: Trade: the Phoenicians.....	18
Lesson 5: Empire-building: the Assyrians.....	24
Lesson 6: Religion: Judaism and Hinduism.....	35
This unit and the Three Essential Questions.....	44
This unit and the Seven Key Themes.....	44
This unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking.....	44
Resources.....	45
Correlations to National and State Standards and to Textbooks.....	47
Conceptual links to other teaching units.....	48

## Why this unit?

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In the period from 1200 to 600 BCE, change accelerated. In the Indo-Mediterranean region the introduction of iron technology enabled not only armies to wield an ever more deadly array of weapons. It also gave farmers plows that could tackle hard soils resistant to wooden implements. Iron technology was certainly a factor in population growth during this period. Trade networks also expanded as Phoenician and Greek traders crisscrossed the Mediterranean exporting and importing goods, people, technology, and ideas. The resulting trade network tied into other trade networks that reached deep into northern Europe, Africa, and Asia. It was in this period that the Phoenicians began to use a shorthand system of writing that would eventually become our alphabet. On the political landscape, big states fell and rose, while small states multiplied. Aside from Egypt, none of the powers dominant in the Mediterranean in 1200 BCE were still dominant 600 years later. At the same time, two of the world's major religions—Judaism and Hinduism—took root.

## Unit objectives

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*Upon completing this unit, students will be able to:*

1. Locate on a map the Iberian Peninsula, Anatolian Peninsula, Levant, Ganges, Tigris, Euphrates, Nile, Red Sea, Aegean Sea, Persian Gulf, Khyber Pass, Nineveh, Babylon, and Jerusalem.
2. Describe the impact that iron technology had on the Indo-Mediterranean region.
3. Identify the Phoenicians and describe the impact of their trade on the Indo-Mediterranean world.
4. Locate the Assyrian empire, and describe the ways in which Assyrians expanded and controlled their empire.
5. Explain the relationship between the Phoenician trade network and the Assyrian empire.
6. Define monotheism and its relationship to the Hebrews and the emergence of Judaism.
7. Define and explain the significance of the caste system in India as it emerged in the first millennium BCE.
8. List some similarities and differences in religious beliefs between Judaism and Hinduism.

## Time and materials

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If all six lessons are used, then approximately 3-4 hours of class time is needed. If the readings are done as homework, then the class time can be cut drastically. If only Lesson 1 is discussed, it can be covered in 30-45 minutes. Lessons 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 include lessons and Student Handouts that can be mixed and matched to fit instructional needs and time frame.

Materials: Maps, Student Handouts, paper, and pencils.

## Author

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## The historical context

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Between 1200 and 600 BCE, there were great changes in the Indo-Mediterranean world. Before then, the Aegean was dominated by the Mycenaean. By 1200 BCE, Mycenaean power evaporated and the eastern end of the Mediterranean was ravaged by waves of “sea peoples” who, over the following 200 years or so, brought about the downfall of the Hittite Empire, ravaged cities along the Levantine coast (the coast of the Levant), and invaded Egypt. In the wake of these depredations, small states blossomed in the Levant, and Assyria began to spread its tentacles until it swallowed up all of the little states, reaching even into Egypt. Meanwhile, in northern India, which was beyond the reach of the aggressive Assyrians, agrarian kingdoms developed, notably along the Ganges River.

Trade, disrupted between 1200 and 1000 BCE, thereafter resumed and expanded. The growing use of camels, horses, and mules for transport stimulated overland trade, while the Phoenician merchant seamen of the eastern Mediterranean extended their reach as far as Spain, even to Britain. Into this increasingly interconnected world, the Assyrians muscled their way, creating, by 750 BCE, one of the largest empires the world had known.

During this period, iron technology spread. On one hand, it enabled farmers to increase their yields, which could then support ever larger populations. Larger yields meant crop surpluses, which could feed people who had specialized occupations rather than farming and which speeded the building of new cities across **Indo-Mediterranea**. On the other hand, iron technology also transformed the weapons and tactics of war. Iron was cheap and plentiful, and therefore it put military power in reach of more kings, queens, and aristocrats.

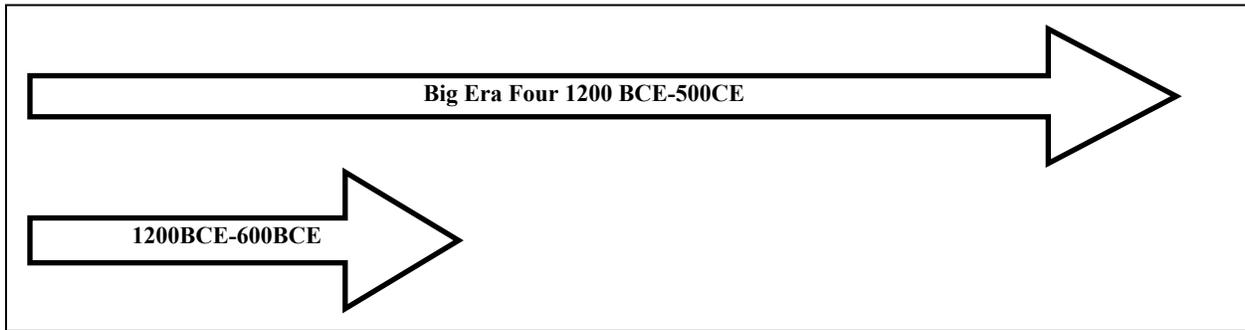
By 600 BCE, the world was considerably more complex than it had been 600 years earlier. Except for Egypt, none of the major players were the same. Assyria’s power had collapsed, and the political map of Indo-Mediterranea took on a new shape.



In this curriculum Indo-Mediterranea refers to a belt of land and sea stretching from the northern Indian subcontinent (thus “Indo”) westward across the Mediterranean Sea basin (thus “Mediterranea”) The region cuts across (and its whole central part lies within) the Great Arid Zone, the expanse of arid or semi-arid land that runs from southwest to northeast across Afroeurasia. Indo-Mediterranea is defined by several unifying geographical and environmental characteristics that help explain why it became a focus of farming and later of agrarian societies. The region encompasses a fairly narrow range of latitude. The lands within it all share about the same lengths of day, night, and seasons throughout the solar year. This means that they also generally share similar ranges of annual temperature, plant populations, and animal habitats. No lofty mountain ranges or other natural obstacles impede communication and travel across the region. Think of the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Red Sea, and Persian Gulf as “lakes” that are inside Indo-Mediterranea.

## **This unit in the Big Era time line**

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## *Lesson 1*

### *Mapping the Period*

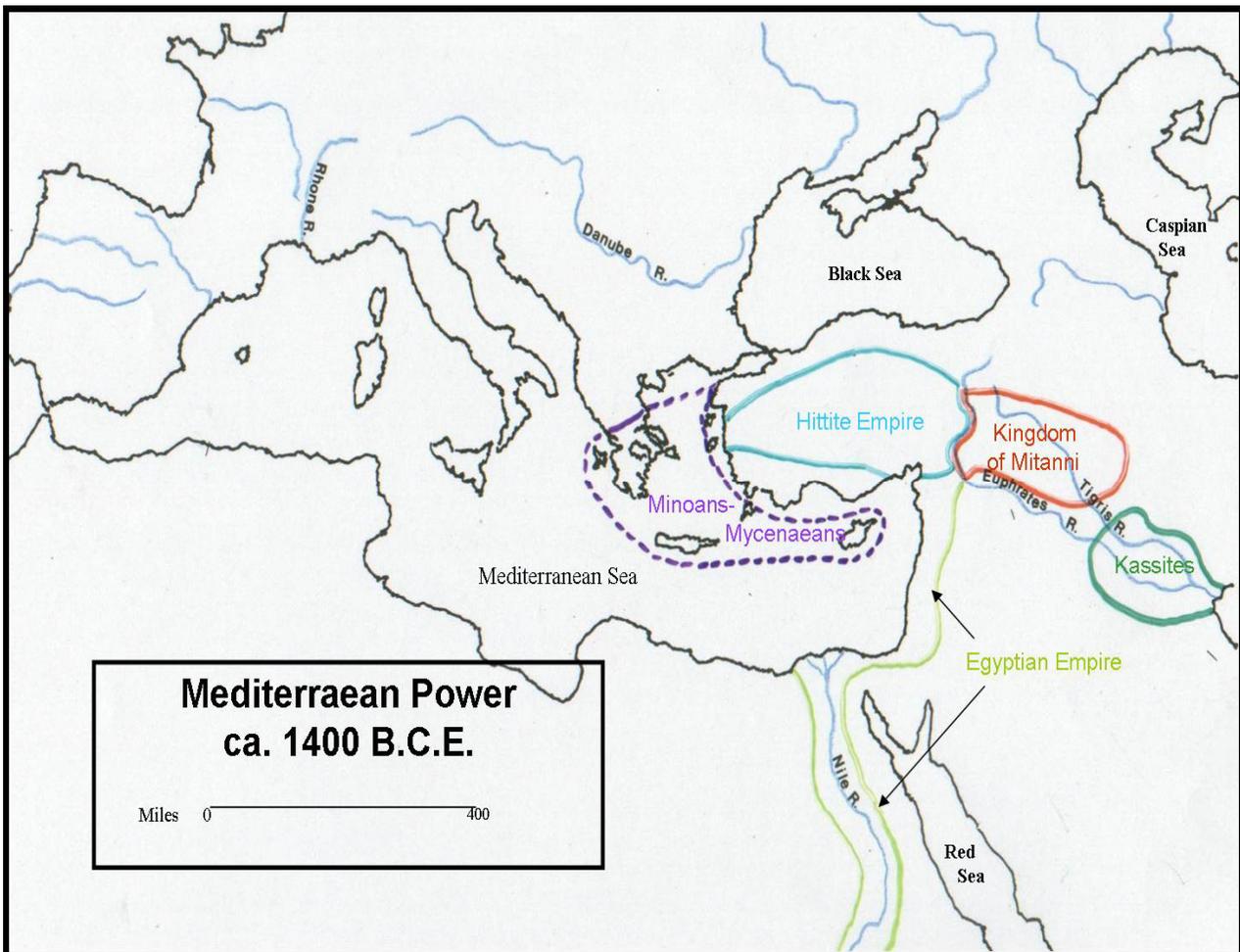
#### **Procedure**

- A. If this is the only lesson used to cover Indo-Mediterranea from 1200 to 600 BCE:
1. Organize students into groups. Give each group Student Handout 1.1 and 1.2.
  2. Have students compare the Student Handout 1.1 and 1.2 maps. Ask them to make a list of the major powers on Student Handout 1.1. Then make a list of the powers on Student Handout 1.2. Now ask them to brainstorm to come up with theories as to possible causes for the differences between the two lists. Tell them to write down their theories. Choosing a student as a scribe, let groups compare theories and list them on the blackboard.
  3. Distribute the *Historical Context* section above. Ask students to look at the list of theories on the blackboard and see which ones match the historical information in that essay.
  4. Using the other the maps in this unit (Student Handouts 4.1, 5.4, 5.5, and 6.2) as handouts or displayed as overheads, discuss the background information as it relates to the maps.
  5. Assessment: Ask students to write an essay explaining the changes in power in the Indo-Mediterranean region between 1200 and 600 BCE.
- B. To use this Lesson along with your text or with one or more of the other lessons in this unit:
1. Organize students into groups. Give each group Student Handouts 1.1 and 1.2.
  2. Have students compare the maps on Student Handout 1.1 and 1.2. Ask them to make a list of the major powers on Student Handout 1.1. Then make a list of the powers on Student Handout 1.2. Ask students to brainstorm to come up with theories that might explain the differences between the two lists. Tell students to write down their theories. Choosing a student as scribe, let groups compare theories and list them on the blackboard.
  3. Distribute the *Historical Context* section above. Have students look at the list of theories on the blackboard and see which ones match the historical facts.
  4. Assessment: Have students write a brief paragraph explaining a historian's view of this period: 1400-1200 BCE.
  5. Proceed to your textbook and/or to Lessons 2-5 or any combination thereof.

**Lesson 1**

***Student Handout 1.1***

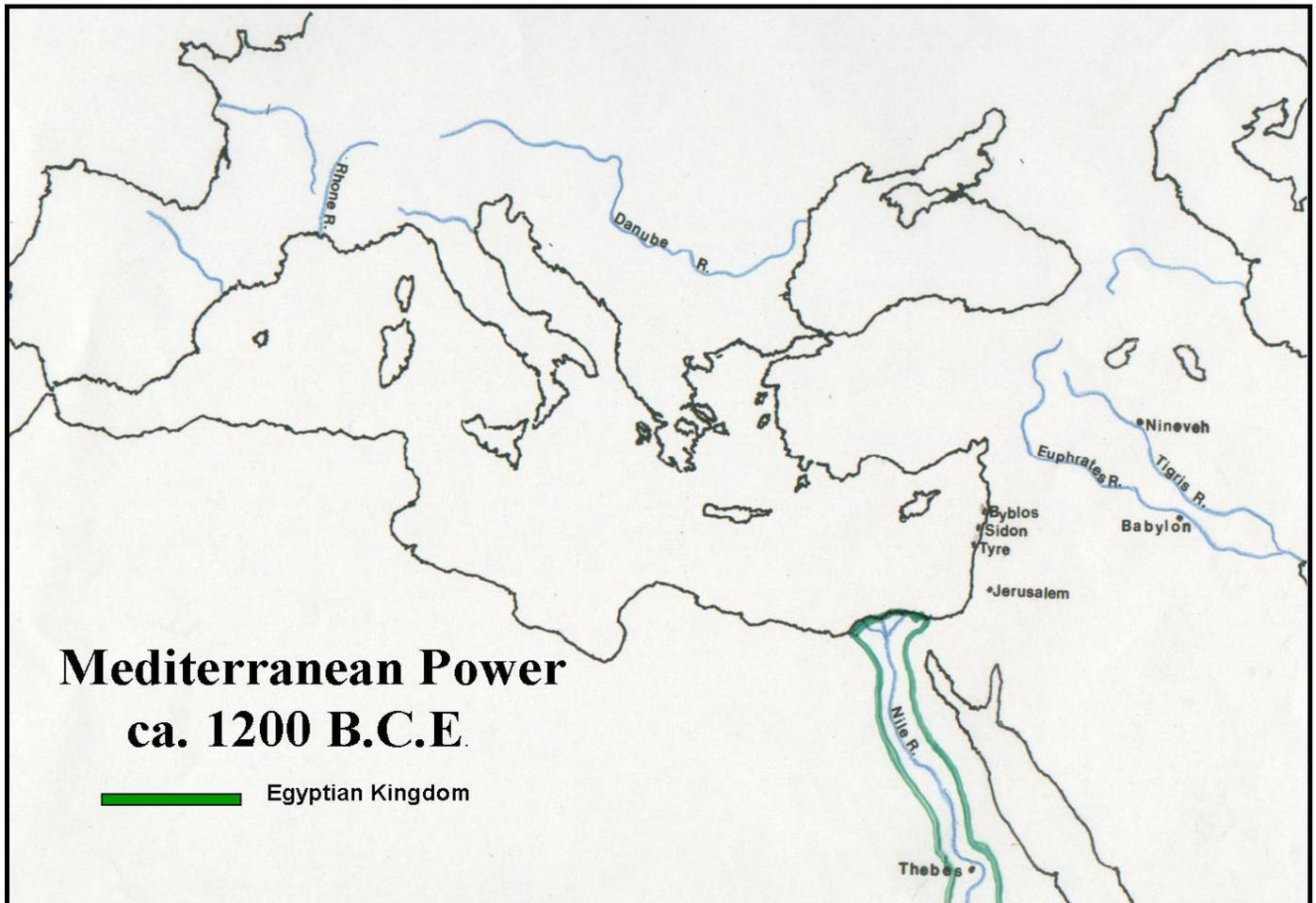
**Mediterranean Power, ca. 1400 BCE**



**Lesson 1**

*Student Handout 1.2*

**Mediterranean Power, ca. 1200 BCE**



## *Lesson 2*

### *Metallurgy: Iron*

#### **Procedure**

1. Organize students into pairs or groups. Have them brainstorm using the following cues:
  - a. What were the first metals that humans used and why?
  - b. What is bronze?
  - c. What technology was needed before bronze could be made?
  - d. What made iron more difficult to work than other metals?
  - e. What technology was needed to be able to work iron?
  
2. Distribute Student Handout 2.1. Then have students consider—as a class or in groups—some of the following questions:
  - A. Modern technology
    - a. Make a list of modern technologies with which you are familiar—the Internet, cell phones, and others. What are the costs of developing these new technologies?
    - b. What advantages do these technologies give the society that develops them? How long might the advantages last?
    - c. Do some kinds of technology give a society more of an advantage than others?
    - d. What kind of pressure does an innovation by one society put on neighboring societies?
    - e. How does the price of new technology compare to the price of older technologies?
    - f. What causes the price of new technology to come down?
    - g. How do inventors of new technologies today protect their innovations? What are the issues involved?
    - h. How do you think the Hittites protected their secret method of iron working?

#### **Assessment**

Have each student find a current article on technology that relates to the above discussion. Tell students to submit the article with a brief summary of its major points.

#### **Teacher's Background Note**

Iron technology spread unevenly. Even in the twentieth century, a few peoples still used stone tools. Modern technologies also spread unevenly and some technologies spread more quickly than others. Some modern technologies, especially expensive ones like the Internet, which requires a computer and an Internet service provider, take a relatively long time to become affordable to the average person in a developed country. It takes even longer to be obtainable by

a person in a developing country. Other technologies, like the cell phone, diffused very quickly. For example, the cell phone has proven to be an inexpensive solution to communication need for countries that do not have expensive land-line networks. In India, the cell phone has enabled farmers in remote regions to eliminate the middleperson when selling their crops. Now many farmers call the buyers directly, get the price, and make the deal themselves.

## Lesson 2

### *Student Handout 2.1—Student Reading*

#### **Metallurgy: Iron**

Scholars have divided the development of human technology into three periods

- The Stone Ages (Paleolithic and Neolithic, that is, Old Stone Age and New Stone Age), a period when humans used stone for tools and weapons.
- The Bronze Age, a time when humans used bronze to supplement or replace stone.
- The Iron Age, an era when humans used iron. If you look around, you will notice that we are still in the Iron Age, even though we still use bronze and stone for some purposes.

Humans used stone and bone for tools long after the existence of metal was known. Gold (usually alloyed with some silver), copper (usually alloyed with tin), and iron were found loose on the earth's surface. Gold and copper were soft enough to be malleable (easily shaped). However, their softness made them inefficient as tools or weapons.

By 1900 BCE, artisans had learned to heat ore (metal-bearing rock) to free soft metals like gold, silver, copper, and tin. This process, called smelting, required extremely hot fires. As most cooking fires did not get any hotter than 1300° F, many historians think that potters, working with glazes, first attained such extreme levels of heat. It takes about 1475°F to separate a lump of copper from ore but about 2000° F to get liquid copper that can be cast into useful shapes. To reach such temperatures, early metalworkers used a leather tube with a clay nozzle to blow at the base of the flame, increasing its intensity. These fires gobbled up a lot of wood. The smelting of 5 kilograms of copper took 700 kilograms of dry wood. Deforestation and metallurgy (the smelting and shaping of metals) went together.

By about 1500 BCE, artisans learned how to mix copper and tin to create bronze, a metal that was stronger than either of its components. The use of bronze made it possible to cast sturdy plows, building tools, and kitchen ware, as well as swords, and armor.

These stronger tools enabled people to accomplish new tasks, like making lumber by cutting and smoothing logs. Artisans then used lumber to make wooden furniture, ships, coffins, chariots, sickles, wagons, and locks. Stone masons also used bronze tools to quarry and shape rock. Bronze plows and scythes made it possible for farmers to produce agricultural surpluses. This surplus food could support more non-farmers, people who did not need land and lived in villages, towns, and cities where they carried on specialized occupations. Bronze helped make urbanization possible.

Iron was harder to produce than bronze. It required a smelting temperature of 3000°F. Fires this hot took more skill and more wood. It appears that metal workers achieved such temperatures in furnaces as early as 1900 BCE. However, even at 3000°F, iron does not become liquid. It

separates from the ore that holds it but only in combination with impurities. Between 1400 and 1200 BCE, the Hittites learned, no doubt by accident, that iron required repeated heating for just the right amount of time and then beating (forging) in order to produce useful implements. How did the artisan know how long to heat and beat without a watch or clock? Perhaps he said a prayer or recited a “magic” formula that he learned from his teacher.

Owners of iron weapons and tools had an edge over their neighbors because iron was harder than any metal known. Iron ore also occurred naturally in many more places than did copper or tin. When iron gained a foothold, almost anyone, anywhere could find or trade for ore. Iron may have contributed to a later shift of great political power from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean (the Roman empire) as iron technology spread westward.

The Hittites of the Anatolian Peninsula appear to have been the first to discover the secret of working iron. They guarded it closely until their empire collapsed around 1200 BCE. Then the technology spread quickly around the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Phoenician traders from the Levant spread it to Spain and North Africa. Traders and settlers carried it from there into Europe and Britain.

Artisans may have invented iron technology independently in China, or perhaps the idea spread there from Indo-Mediterranea. One place where an independent invention almost certainly occurred was in the region of East Africa’s Great Lakes. Archaeological discoveries suggest that people there smelted iron as early as 900 BCE, and they did it without the stimulus of an earlier bronze technology. Also, East African masters were likely the first in the world to design furnaces hot enough to produce steel, at least in small amounts, without an additional process of hammering and heating. In the Western hemisphere, Mesoamerican and Andean artisans worked expertly in gold, silver, and later, bronze. But American societies had no iron until Europeans introduced it after 1492 CE.

In Indo-Mediterranean, iron improved both agricultural tools and weaponry. Well-made iron objects were tougher, held a sharper edge, and cost less to produce per unit than did bronze ones. Farming yields increased as stronger plows allowed the tilling of denser soils. Iron weapons outperformed bronze. Iron swords cut flesh more efficiently than did bronze ones, and iron shields protected foot soldiers, allowing them to throw off heavy body armor. Infantry soldiers became more of a challenge to elite fighters who went into battle in heavy, expensive horse-drawn chariots.

By 600 BCE, iron was becoming an important workaday metal throughout much of Indo-Mediterranea, even though it by no means replaced bronze. In spite of its advantages, however, iron technology has its downside. As it spread, it had an increasingly negative impact on the environment. Mining for ore scarred hillsides and polluted streams. The consumption of wood for fuel grew, causing severe deforestation in areas where smelting took place. The success of iron technology also stimulated demand for slaves to work in mines. It was the beginning of a difficult relationship between humans and their environment.

**Metallurgy in the Indo-Mediterranean Region (estimated dates)**

Pottery	Working of Soft Metals	Bronze	Iron
6500 BCE	5500 BCE	3000 BCE	1200 BCE

Source: David Christian, *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*, 258.

## *Lesson 3*

### *Urbanization*

#### Procedure

1. Organize students into groups. Distribute Student Handout 3.1 and 3.2. Instruct students to read Student Handout 3.1. Make sure that they understand the definitions of “urban” and “**urbanization**.”
2. Instruct students to look at Student Handout 3.2. Ask them to do some or all of the following:
  - A. Make a list of the kinds of information that this chart gives you.
  - B. Make a list of the kinds of information that this chart does *not* give you.
  - C. Make a graph charting the number of cities by year. How would you account for the ups and downs? What would make cities smaller or larger or disappear altogether?
  - D. Make a second graph, charting the total population. How do the ups and downs compare? Do the graphs look the same? How would you account for the differences?
  - E. In 650 BCE, Nineveh, the capital of the vast Assyrian Empire had a population of about 120,000. In 430 BCE, Nineveh did not even make the list of cities with more than 30,000 people. On the other hand, Babylon, which had about 60,000 people in 650 BCE, is estimated to have had about 200,000 in 430 BCE. What might have caused this radical change?

	650 BCE	430 BCE
Nineveh	120,000	30,000
Babylon	60,000	200,000

- F. In 1200 BCE, there were approximately 16 cities with populations of 20,000 or more (14 of them in the Indo-Mediterranean region, 2 in China). Today, China has 11 cities which have populations of 2 million, and 159 cities with 200,000-500,000 inhabitants. What are the largest cities in the Indo-Mediterranean region today? What are the largest cities in the world?

#### Assessment:

Ask students to write a definition of *urban* and *urbanization*. Instruct them to turn in the graphs that they have made in their answers for part c and d along with their notes and lists.

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.1—Student Reading*

#### Urbanization

One of the factors that changed the face of Indo-Mediterranea between 1200 and 600 BCE was **urbanization**—the establishment and growth of cities. As farmers produced surpluses (more than they needed for themselves), skilled artisans could earn their livings by specializing as priests, carpenters, bakers, weavers, and dyers. Not needing land to farm, these specialists tended to settle in villages, which, if they lay near trade routes or had good harbors soon grew into cities. Both manufacturing and trade flourished in cities. Life was more complex there than it was in the rural areas because in cities growing numbers of people of different origins rubbed shoulders and exchanged ideas. New ideas circulated and sparked more new ideas, that is, **innovations**. Innovations created more jobs, and more jobs brought prosperity, which resulted in population growth. Population growth, in turn, spawned more urbanization.

So, what is a city? How is it different from a village or a town? Most definitions of the term city are rather general. Sociologists usually consider population density (the number of people living in a place) to be a major factor. The number varies with the historical period. Twenty thousand people constituted a large city in 1000 BCE, but that number would make for a very small city in the United States today. The farther back into history one goes, the harder it is to verify population numbers. However, scholars have ways of estimating populations based on archeological data and contemporary documents. For instance, the circumference of a fortified wall might indicate the size of an urban population. Historical documents are also useful in estimating the population of an area. In Mesopotamia, clay tablets with cuneiform writing on them sometimes told about the demolishing of a city by giving the numbers of inhabitants killed. In addition, early historians, such as the Greek scholar Herodotus, traveled widely. His writings are a mine of information about the cities and regions of his time. He actually gives the lengths of the walls of Nineveh in furlongs so that today, over 2,000 years later, the size of the city can still be measured and verified. Location possibly helps as well. If an urban area was located on an important trade route, it is likely to have had a larger population than if it existed in a less busy area.

Although population figures for this period are only educated guesses, they provide a feeling for the scale and complexity of life in ancient times. Early cities, while not nearly as large as modern ones, were big enough to impress people of the times. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, written on clay tablets about 2700 BCE, the gods destroy the world with a flood. The gods do this because humans were multiplying to such an extent that they made an unbearable amount of noise. This irritated Enlil, the chief god on earth. What would Enlil think of the size of urban populations today and the noise they make with their honking cars!

Between 1200 and 1000 BCE, a decline occurred in the number of cities in the Indo-Mediterranean region. In half a century, nearly fifty towns and cities from the Aegean basin to the upper Tigris-Euphrates were ransacked and put to the torch. The causes of this destruction

are still debated, but it appears that a wave of marauders began to move eastward from the Black Sea and Aegean regions. Composed of many separate groups of roving warriors, some with women and children, these “sea peoples”, as the Egyptians called them, attacked by both land and sea. Some historians think that disease, drought, and famine fueled these movements. This period of unrest lasted about 200 years.

By 900 BCE, the attacks subsided and the various groups appeared to have settled down. For example, the Peleset settled along the southern coast of the Levant. They became known as the Philistines and their land as Palestine. As relative peace returned, prosperity followed and cities began to multiply in the entire region. Population began to grow as well. This in turn stimulated trade, which produced prosperity, not only in the eastern Mediterranean but all along the expanding trade routes.

Up until about 1400 BCE, the largest cities in the world were in the Indo-Mediterranean region. About then, however, cities began to sprout in China as well. By 1000 BCE, there were at least four cities there with more than 20,000 people.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.2—CHART***

**Urbanization in the Indo-Mediterranean Region  
(India to the Mediterranean Sea basin)**

Date (BCE)	Number of Largest Cities	Population Range of Largest Cities	Total Population of Largest Cities
2250	8	20-30,000	220,000
2000	9	20-65,000	323,000
1800	10	20-80,000	375,000
1600	13	20-100,000	448,000
1360	17	20-80,000	542,000
1200	14	20-50,000	464,000
1000	10	20-50,000	407,000
800	12	20-60,000	638,000
650	24	30-120,000	715,000
430	40	30-200,000	2,213,000

Chart data from Tertius Chandler, *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth: a Historical Census* (Edwin Mellen Press: Lewiston, NY. 1987).

## *Lesson 4*

### *Trade: the Phoenicians*

#### **Procedure**

1. Distribute Student Handout 4.2. Use a topographical map to discuss the difficulties of trade in this region.

2. Using this map and your textbook, ask students to locate:

Mediterranean Sea	Iberian Peninsula
Black Sea	Anatolian Peninsula
Aegean Sea	Levant (eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea)
Byblos (Jubayl)	Carthage (15 miles north of modern Tunis)
Tyre (Sur)	Pillars of Hercules (Strait of Gibraltar)
Sidon (Sayda)	
Cadiz (Gades)	

3. Distribute Student Handout 4.1. Have students read the essay and discuss the following questions.

- a. In what ways were the Phoenicians like today's multi-national business people?
- b. In what ways do modern business people spread Western culture as they do business abroad?
- c. In what ways do they transfer technology?

4. Using atlases or maps in your text book, ask students to undertake the following map activities:

- a. Using the map scale, measure the distance between Tyre and the Pillars of Hercules. Measure a comparable distance in the United States. If you begin in New York, how far would you have to go to cover the same distance? If you begin in your home town?
- b. In the middle of the fifth century BCE, the Phoenicians, according to the Greek historian Herodotus, made trips to Britain for tin and, under orders from an Egyptian Pharaoh, circumnavigated Africa. Herodotus says that the Phoenicians claimed that, in order for them to make the trip around Africa, they had to stop, plant grain, wait for it to ripen, harvest it, and sail on. On a map, trace the route the Phoenicians would have taken to circumnavigate Africa and the route they would have followed to reach Britain.

**Assessment:**

1. Have student locate at least five of the places in number 2 above on a map.
2. Have students write advertisements for workers in industries that might be crucial to businesses in this period. (Dyers, shipwrights, potters, and seamen.)
3. Have a group write a period newspaper with editorials, advertisements, and features.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.1—Student Reading*

#### **Trade: the Phoenicians**

Trade flourished in the eastern Mediterranean long before 1200 BCE. By 1600 BCE, trade networks united Inner Eurasia, Southwest Asia, Egypt, and the Aegean. This thriving system was disrupted around 1200 with the collapse of the dominant powers in the region. Waves of marauders swept across the region, destroying cities and causing mayhem for reasons that are still unclear.

By 1000 BCE, however, life became more stable and trade resumed. Among the most successful traders of this period were the Phoenicians. They became the chief merchandisers of the region. During the eighth century BCE, the Greek poet, Homer, describes the Phoenicians, or the Phaiákians, as the Greeks called them, as “those renowned seafaring men, sea-dogs... [who] came ashore with bags of gauds for trading” (The Odyssey, 15:504-506). In the Old Testament, Ezekiel describes Tyre, one of the Phoenician cities, as that city “that dwelt at the entry of the sea,” as being “the mart of the people for many lands” (Ezekiel Ch. 27: 3).

The name Phoenician came from the Greek language. It means “blood red,” which may have referred to the purple dye that the Phoenicians extracted from a tiny sea snail, a member of the Murex genus. It took 10,000 of the tiny mollusks to produce a single gram of the dye. (The dye works produced mountains of smelly sea shells, which must have been a severe local nuisance.) The dye was so expensive that only the very rich could afford it, which is why it became the color choice of kings.

The Phoenicians lived in prosperous, walled city states, including Byblos, Tyre, and Sidon. These cities, many located at the water’s edge in what is now Lebanon, were cut off from the interior to the east by mountains and deserts. Their livelihoods depended on their merchant seamen who sailed large, fast ships of local cedar equipped with both sails and banks of oars so that they were manageable in the wind. While most sailors hugged the coasts because of fear of losing sight of land, the Phoenicians learned to guide themselves by the North Star (called the Phoenician Star by the Greeks). They sailed mostly in the dry summer months when the seas were calm and the stars were visible for navigation. They generally sailed in vast fleets of cargo ships paired with fighting vessels to discourage pirates.

The Phoenicians established outposts along the North African coast about a day’s sail apart. In these ports, they could stockpile supplies, refit their ships, and find safe havens during storms. They also established colonies at places along the coasts where inland trade routes terminated. Here they traded with locals and in some places, such as Carthage, they developed permanent settlements. Towards the end of the seventh century BCE, some of these colonial cities grew into independent city-states.

From about the eleventh century BCE, Phoenician ships exported local produce. Wood, especially cedar and pine, was in great demand in both the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates valleys, neither of which had much wood. Cedar oil, another export, was prized in Egypt for embalming. Other products, like wine, nuts, figs, apricots, inlaid furniture, blown glass, pottery, textiles, and dyes were sold to aristocratic families that ruled clans and micro-kingdoms in North Africa and western Europe.

Phoenician imports included male and female slaves and elephant tusks from Nubia; bales of linen, papyrus, and rope from Egypt; ostrich eggs from Africa via North African trade routes; and amber from the Black Sea. These exotic goods were snapped up by a growing urban population in the Levant and in the expanding Assyrian Empire.

The demand for metals, especially silver, by Assyria and Egypt was a major incentive for trade in the far west. In a world without coins, precious metals were universal mediums of exchange. The Iberian Peninsula proved to contain a wealth of silver in mines located on the Rio Tinto, which flowed west of modern Seville, Spain. At first, the Phoenicians were able to get the silver from the unsophisticated Iberians in exchange for a few colored beads. Before long, however, the locals realized the true value of their silver and were insisting on a better deal. By 650 BCE, a new urban Iberian elite was demanding chariots, glass, ivory inlays, and other status items. As the Phoenician investment of time and people in Iberia's silver mining enterprises expanded, there was a transfer of technology. More and more Phoenician artisans relocated to Iberian outposts in order to supply the operations with needed goods and services. Before long, the Iberians themselves were acquiring skills that enabled them to produce iron tools as well as local versions of expensive trade goods like Phoenician pottery. This region, which was barely able to work bronze a few decades previously, suddenly found itself in the Iron Age.

Basically, the Phoenicians were early international business people. Their enterprises, supported by both the governments of their cities and their religion, had branches throughout the Mediterranean. Their main temples were dedicated to Baal-Melqart (King of the City), who was pictured as the ideal Tyrian king. He was also the god of rain, storm, and prosperity. These temples served as warehouses and banks attracting private deposits of silver and goods. These temples took on the nature of multinational corporations, with branch temples in several cities. Priests acted as notaries, standardized weights and measures, and oversaw banking and warehousing. Consequently, the Phoenician gods became traders, and Iberians, Cypriots, Arameans, and others accepted them alongside their own deities.

The Phoenician's only real competition were the Greeks. A growing population of Greeks, which inhabited city states dotting the rocky Peloponnesian Peninsula and the islands of the Aegean, was strapped for food and space. The Greeks therefore began to export people and to import food. While the Phoenicians were busy making inroads along the southern and western coasts of the Mediterranean, the Greeks were establishing colonies along its northern shoreline as well as along the edges of the Black Sea.

Along with the competition between Greek and Phoenician traders and colonists, there were also exchanges of both goods and ideas. It is thought that the Greeks learned to use the North Star from the Phoenicians and even copied their ship-building techniques. However, the most significant thing the Greeks picked up from the Phoenicians was the clever symbolic code that they used to label their cargos and keep records. Today this system is called the alphabet. It was probably developed a couple of hundred years before the Phoenician merchants began to use it. The Phoenician script had twenty-two characters, each of which stood for a consonant. Vowels were supplied by the reader and depended on the context. For instance, if one wrote “Lrg blk bx”, an English reader could decipher it as “large black box.” The Greeks adopted this shorthand and added symbols for vowels. Eventually, it became the basis for several later alphabets, including the “Roman” alphabet you see on this page.

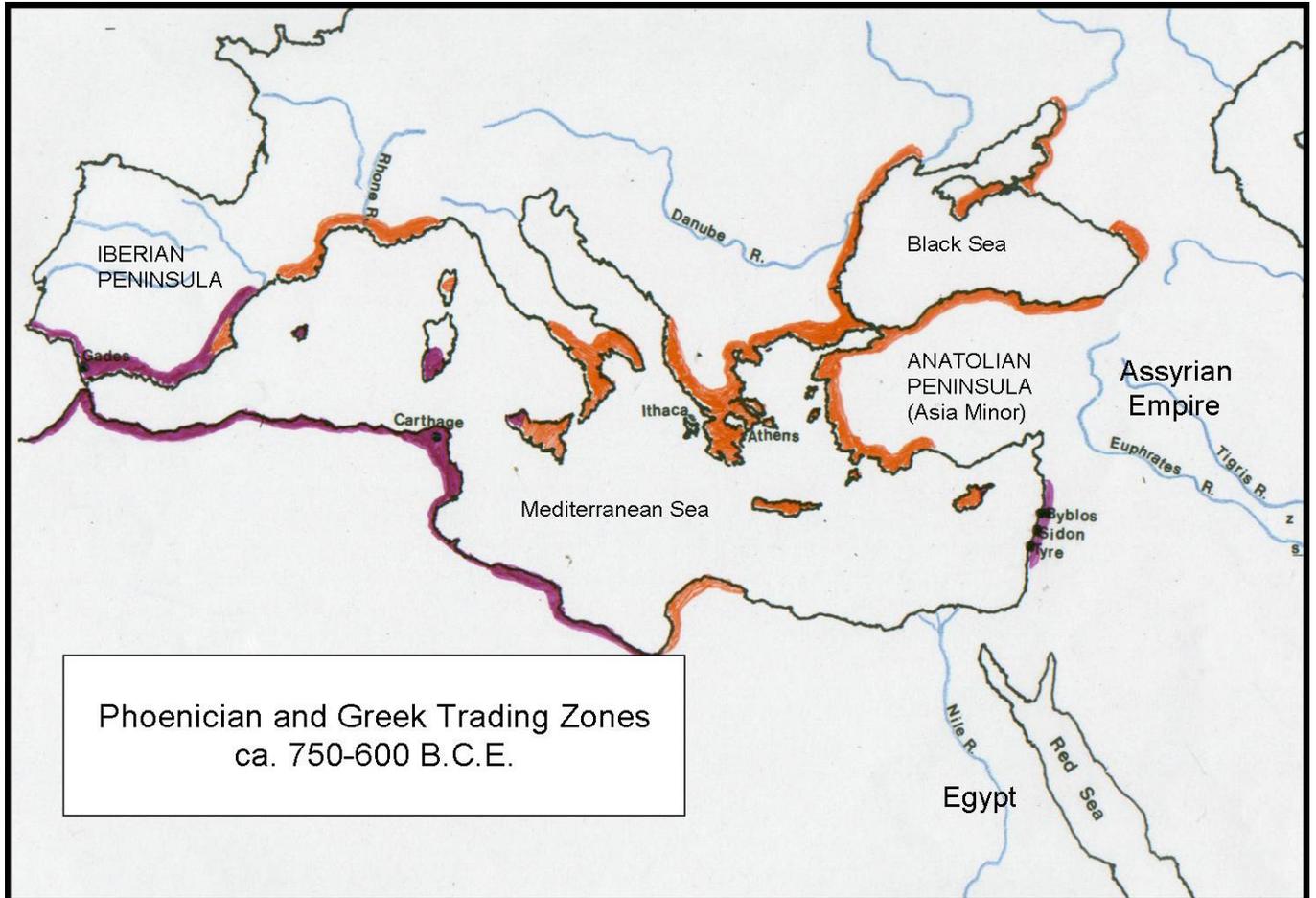
In addition to being traders, the Phoenicians were also expert builders and engineers. Their cities were defended by thick walls and usually only accessible by sea. Buildings could be six stories tall, and many had roof gardens. Water was supplied by wells and springs inside the cities so that they could easily withstand sieges. Tyre even piped in fresh water from an undersea spring by means of a leather hose. During the reign of the Hebrew King Solomon, his friend the Tyrian King Hiram sent wood and craftsmen to build Solomon a great temple to God.

The prosperity of Phoenician cities depended on their avoidance of war. Through the centuries, they did so and maintained their independence by paying tribute to their enemies. In the mid-seventh century, however, the Assyrians seized the Phoenician cities of the Levant and forced them to pay tribute. The Assyrian empire collapsed in 612, but other conquerors followed. In North Africa, Phoenician colonies like Carthage in modern Tunisia and Cadiz in modern Spain and became independent cities, pursuing their own interests and destinies.

**Lesson 4**

***Student Handout 4.1***

**Phoenician and Greek Trading Zones  
ca. 750-600 BCE**



## *Lesson 5*

### *Empire-building: the Assyrians*

#### **Procedure**

1. Distribute Student Handout 5.1 and ask students to read the essay, either in class or as homework. Discuss the reading as a class. Put Student Handouts 5.3 and 5.4 on the overhead to facilitate students' comprehension.
2. Arrange students in groups. Give each group Student Handout 5.2. Ask them to examine the lists of tribute and taxes paid by Assyrian subjects as well as the examples of plunder (looting). Assign each group a section of the list: Tribute, Taxes, or Spoils of War. Have students examine each item and make notes on the following queries:
  - a. What does each item tell you about its source?
  - b. What does it tell you about the nature of Assyria—its society, power, and geography?
  - c. How might an Assyrian king have used this item?
4. Have a reporter from each group report on their findings.
5. Compare answers in case there are identical items.

**Assessment:** Have students write a diary entry made by:

- a. a governor reporting to the king on tribute being paid (or not paid) by a local ruler.
- b. a tax collector reporting to the king on taxes being collected (or not collected) in his district.
- c. a general reporting to the king on plunder he has taken after a successful battle.

## Lesson 5

### *Student Handout 5.1—Student Reading*

#### **Empire-building: the Assyrians**

A major factor in the development of the Indo-Mediterranean region between 1200 and 600 BCE, was the growth of the gigantic Assyrian empire. Its military and political policies, its religion and language, and its vast trading network dominated the period.

In ancient times, an **empire** may be described as a relatively large political unit in which a governing elite (headed by a monarch, or emperor) of distinctive origin, language, or ethnicity rules over peoples of other languages and ethnicities. Assyria began as a small kingdom located on the Tigris River. By 650 BCE, it had taken much of Southwest Asia by force.

Assyria began many centuries earlier as a commercial center in northern Iraq, near modern Mosul. Its homeland was no larger than the state of Connecticut, that is, about 5,500 square miles. Assyrian culture was based on the pre-existing culture of Mesopotamia. Assyrians used cuneiform writing, adapted the law code of Hammurabi, and worshiped the gods of Babylon, adding their own principal god, Ashur. Located in a land-locked region with barely enough wheat fields to support the population, Assyria was hemmed in by rival kingdoms or mountains. From about 1950 BCE, Assyrian merchants established colonies along trade routes and in regions as far away as the Anatolian peninsula.

By the fifteenth century BCE, the Assyrians had fallen under the power of other kingdoms and had lost their independence. When they regained it in the fourteenth century BCE, they were still land-locked and resource poor because they had insufficient amounts of food, metal, and timber. Unlike the early Assyrian kings, however, the new breed of kings used more aggressive tactics to gain resources and markets. They created a military state that, between 1120 and 606 BCE, made them the largest and most powerful empire in the world.

At its greatest extent, the Assyrian empire included Egypt, a chunk of the Anatolian Peninsula, the eastern edge of the Mediterranean (the Levant), and the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. (See Student Handout 4.1.) Through its trade relations, its influence extended to Britain, Iberia, West Africa, and the Persian Gulf.

The Assyrian empire achieved its enormous size through force. Its innovative military tactics—cavalry, battering rams, and guerrilla warfare—made it unbeatable. To insure order, the Assyrian kings kept troops in conquered territories. Often these troops were foreign **mercenaries** (hired soldiers). To move these troops quickly from one hot spot to another, the Assyrians built roads and developed a postal system that allowed the king to learn instantly of any unrest. This communication system also allowed the king's spies to keep him informed about the loyalties of his governors in the conquered lands. A governor's duty was to maintain the roads, feed the troops and traveling officials, and protect the merchants.

The Assyrians controlled subject populations harshly with taxes and force. When conquered peoples protested, the Assyrians kept them in line by “exiling” troublesome leaders to another part of the empire. When such tactics failed, the emperors made examples of stubborn cities by destroying them and slaughtering their populations. One Assyrian king bragged that he had sacked 9 cities and 820 villages, burned Babylon, and ordered most of its inhabitants killed. Another boasted of burning to death 3,000 captives. Still another let it be known that he had dealt with rebel chiefs by flaying (skinning) some of them, walling up others, and impaling still others.

As Assyria’s territory grew, so did its economy. Although its homeland had limited natural resources, its location gave it an economic advantage. It controlled the mountain passes through which traders brought horses from the Eurasian steppes. Along the camel routes from Arabia came spices and semi-precious stones. Most importantly, the expanding Phoenician trade network gave the Assyrians easy access to the Mediterranean marketplace. The Phoenicians provided the vast amounts of silver, mostly from mines on the Iberian Peninsula, needed to pay for the Assyrian military. Phoenician trade was so crucial to Assyria that the emperors allowed Phoenician cities like Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos to maintain their independence in exchange for giving Assyria both access to their trade and a substantial annual tribute.

The Assyrians financed much of their expansion by demanding tribute and taxes from conquered states. Plunder from conquered lands also added to their wealth. Under Assyria’s harsh rule and devastating economic policies, peoples of the empire were restless. Suppressing rebellions began to put an unbearable strain on Assyrian resources. Therefore, it is not surprising that, when the Chaldeans and Babylonians rose up against them in 612, Assyrian rule collapsed. Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, was burned to the ground. Assyrian power was eliminated.

The growth of the Assyrian empire played an important role in the development of Indo-Mediterranea between 1200 and 600 BCE. Assyria developed new ways to control large areas. Some of their tactics were cruel but others, like a well-organized administration, a postal system, and a road network, later became standard tools of governing. The Assyrians also contributed greatly to the expansion of trade. They allowed private merchants to trade for profit. These entrepreneurs, no doubt using the protected road system, became part of the far flung trading network that included the Greeks and Phoenicians in the west, the Arab camel merchants to the south, and the sea traders of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Moreover, their policies of moving conquered people around to diffuse rebellion resulted in a greater cultural mixing than had ever occurred in any previous empire.

**Lesson 5*****Student Handout 5.2—Assyrian Financial Resources***

**Note:** Coinage was not developed until the sixth century BCE. Therefore economic exchange depended on barter, with tribute and taxes being paid in goods. The weight of a “talent,” a common measure of weight, varied by place and period. Generally, a talent of gold was twice the value of a talent of silver. For the purpose of this exercise, consider a talent of silver to weigh 100 lbs (45 kg). A “mine” was one-sixtieth of a talent.

**Tribute from Unnamed City (Unquantified)**

Rhinoceros	Male captives (soldiers, youths, boys)
Antelope	Female captives
She elephant	Camel with one hump
She moneys	Camel with two humps
Black apes	Brass cauldrons
Trays of small tusks	Ivory tusks
Royal daughter	Bows (weapons)
Rings	Small logs
Horses	Sheep
Goats	Oxen

**From King Sangara of the City of Carchemesh  
(Paid after being subjugated by the Assyrians)**

**Tribute paid as a sign of subjugation**

2 talents of gold	70 talents of silver
30 talents of bronze	100 talents of iron
20 talents of red-purple wool	500 logs of boxwood
5,000 sheep	500 oxen
100 daughters of Sangara's magnates	Sangara's daughter and her dowry

**Annual Tribute**

1 mina of gold	1 talent of silver
2 talents of red-purple wool	

## Taxes

### Tax on a Palace

20 mina of silver	20 plates of silver
2 talents of silver	1 circlet of gold
1 garment of elephant hide	10 large undergarments
3 <i>lamarqarte</i> vessels	20 strings of fish
10 undergarments	50 <i>chitons</i> (shirt)
10 <i>chitons</i> (shirts)	4 under garments of cotton
15 tent coverings of the land of Hasai	

### Tax on a Prince

5 under-garments	5 linen garments
5 minas of silver	1 <i>lamaqarte</i> vessels
1 string of fish	100 fishes

### Tax on a Lady of the Palace

5 mina of silver	5 under-garments
5 <i>chitons</i> (shirt)	1 <i>lamaqarte</i> vessel
1 string of fish	100 fish

### Tax on a Charioteer

1 mina silver	1 under garment
---------------	-----------------

## Spoils of War (Plunder)

### From Unidentified City #1

3 talents of gold	100 talents of silver
300 talents of bronze	300 talents of iron
1,000 bronze cauldrons	100 cedar logs
1,000 multicolored linen garments	

### From Unidentified City #2

2 donkey loads of cedar resin	100 cedar logs
2 talents of purple wool	500 logs of boxwood

### From Unidentified City #3 (Unquantified)

The King	King's daughters
King's sons	Slaves
Palace women	Doors of Gold
Chariots	Horses harnessed to the yoke
Troops	Captives
Sheep	Oxen
Donkeys	Palace Property
Purple wool	Trident staff
Gods	

### From Judea

30 talents of gold	Precious stones
800 talents of silver	Antimony
Large cuts of red stone	Couches inlaid with ivory
Elephant hides	<i>Nimedu</i> -chairs inlaid with ivory
Ebony wood	Boxwood
Hezekiah's daughters and concubines	
"all kinds of valuable treasures"	

**Sources of tribute and tax information:**

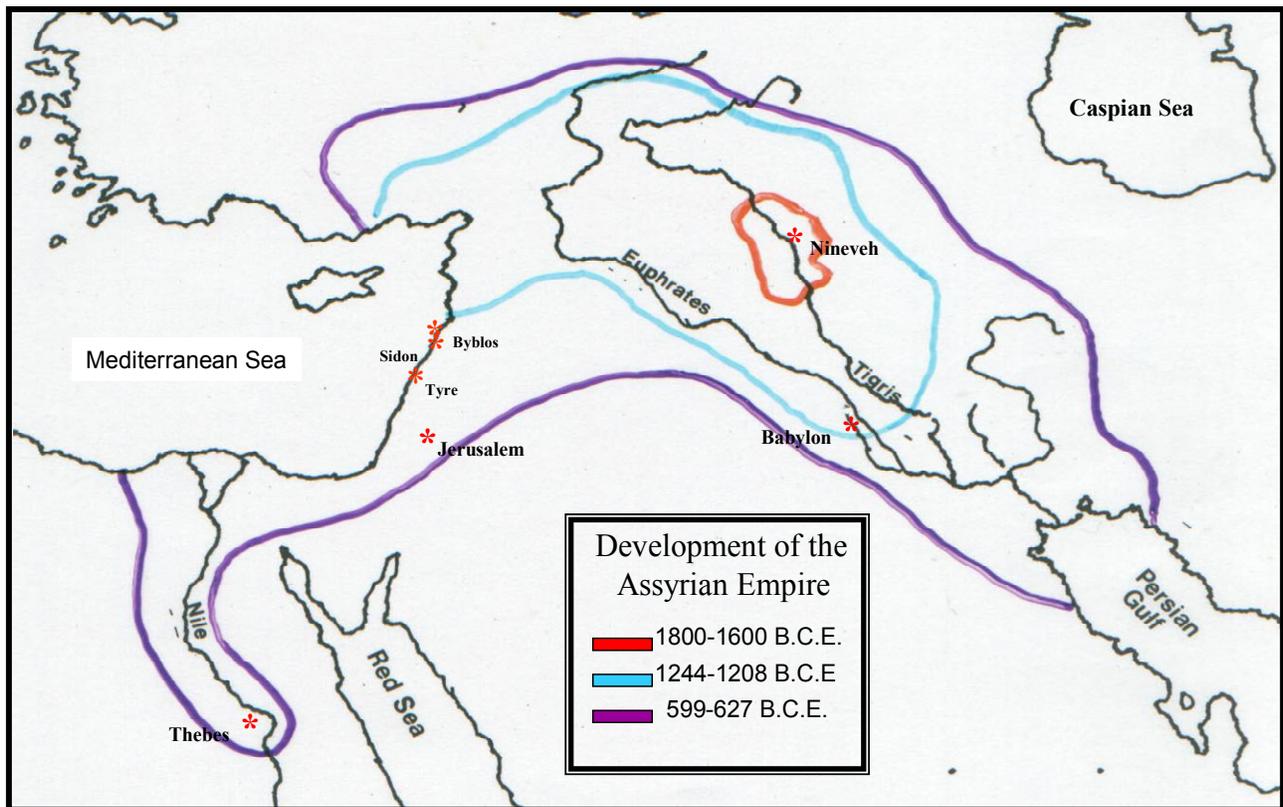
Yamada, Shigeo. *The Construction of the Assyrian empire: A Historical Study of the Inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (859-824 BC) Relating to His Campaigns to the West* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 243.

Pfeiffer, Robert H. *State Letters of Assyria: A Transliteration and Translation of 355 Official Assyrian Letters Dating from the Sargonid Period (722-625 BC)*. (Newhaven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1935), 82-83.

**Lesson 5**

***Student Handout 5.3***

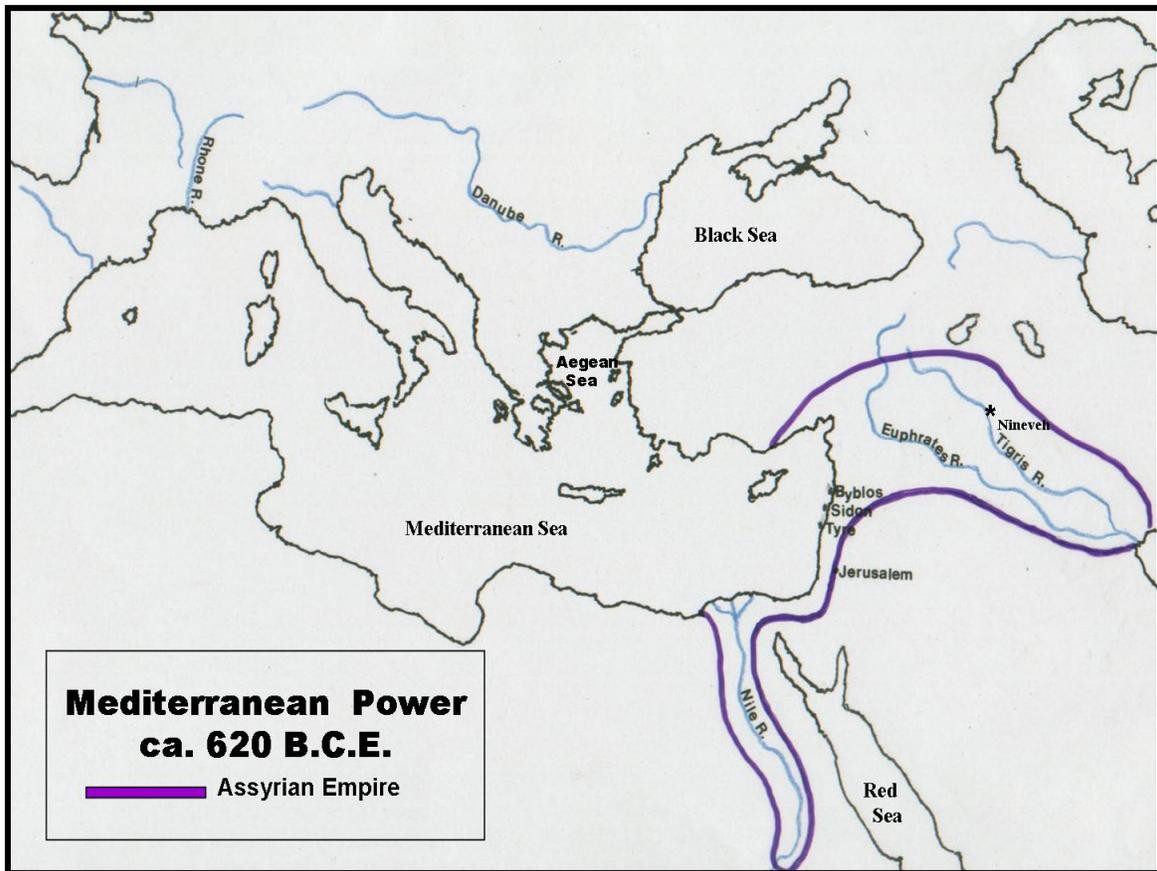
**Development of the Assyrian Empire**



**Lesson 5**

***Student Handout 5.4***

**Mediterranean Power, ca. 620 BCE**



## ***Lesson 6***

### ***Religion: Judaism and Hinduism***

#### **Procedure**

1. Give students information on Judaism and Hinduism. Use your text or Student Handout 6.1. Be sure that students can locate on a map ancient Israel, ancient Babylon, Armenia, the Khyber Pass, the Indus River, and the Ganges River.
2. Distribute Student Handout 6.2. Ask students to read the three flood stories: Babylonian, Hindu, and Hebrew.
3. Put students in groups and instruct them to make a chart, categorizing the similarities in the three stories. Categories might include “reason for flood,” “description of boat,” “God/gods involved,” and so on.
4. Have a scribe from each group go to the board and make additions to a master chart.
5. Using the master chart, have a class discussion on the similarities and differences and what they might indicate about the ideas represented and about the relationships among them.

#### **Assessment:**

Have students use the information on their charts to write syllogisms.

## Lesson 6

### *Student Handout 6.1*

#### Judaism and Hinduism

Between 1200 and 600 BCE, two religions took root in the Indo-Mediterranean region: Judaism, the religion of the Hebrews, emerged in the Levant (eastern edge of the Mediterranean). Hinduism began in Northern India. They were to become two of the most influential religions in the world.

#### Judaism

The origins of the Hebrews, or Jews, and their religion, Judaism, remain a challenge to scholars. By far the most important evidence is found in the *Torah*, known in Christian tradition as the first five books of the *Old Testament*. This is a collection of books that narrates the beginnings and early history of the Jews. It is a more detailed, vivid account than we have for any other ancient people. This is the story of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and other larger-than-life personalities who struggled to fulfill a special covenant with God to witness his presence in the world. They were to obey all the commandments he laid down and to lead moral and ethical lives. Not all of these heroes managed to meet those standards of virtue all the time. In fact, it is the stories of backsliding and redemption that give the Hebrew Bible its special dramatic force and moral power.

The Hebrews settled in the fertile hill country of Canaan, the southern part of the Levant. Sometime between the eleventh and ninth centuries BCE, the Hebrews organized the kingdom of Israel, establishing a capital in the little city of Jerusalem. They terraced the hillsides, planted fruit-bearing trees, and built up a modest agricultural economy. According to the Bible and a smattering of other evidence, the Israeli state arose under the leadership Saul, David, and Solomon, three successive kings who lived in the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE. After Solomon's reign, the unified kingdom split into two, Israel in the north, and Judah (from which we get the names Judaism and Jew) in the south.

Like virtually all states of Southwest Asia, Israel had its patron god, called Yahweh, or Jehovah. In time, the doctrine emerged that Yahweh was the *exclusive* god of the Jews. They believed that he had chosen them as his instrument to establish his sacred law on earth and to fulfill his holy plan for humankind. Jewish women and men were to obey the commands, rituals, and dietary rules that God set forth. No longer were humans just pawns of fickle gods. The moral conduct of individuals determined their fate. One's relationship to God was in one's own hands.

In the eighth century BCE, the Assyrians conquered both Israel and Judah and deported part of the Jewish leadership to the Tigris valley. The Hebrews never regained full independence in ancient times, although their religion survived. No one living at the time could have predicted that from this small band of Hebrew farmers would come the founding tradition of **monotheism**, the belief in one universal God. No one could have predicted that Judaism would be the root religion for two other major monotheistic religions, Christianity and Islam.

## Hinduism

About 1500 BC E, Indo-Aryan speaking pastoral peoples migrated from Inner Eurasia across the Khyber Pass and other passes into India, though we have little idea of their numbers. In any case, they established military dominance over the native, Dravidian-speaking populations.

Eventually, they settled on the plains of the Indus and Ganges River basins and developed an agrarian civilization with a distinctive social structure. Much intermarriage with Dravidians probably occurred. By the mid-seventh century BCE, this civilization became the basis of the Magadha Kingdom.

## The Beginnings of the Caste System

As in the rest of the world, complex society in India involved social division. At the top, a small elite concentrated in its hands most of the power, authority, wealth, and privilege. Everyone else, which was the vast majority, worked hard, got little and, most of the time, did what they were told. In India this system of social division became, over many centuries, especially elaborate and rigid. It is called, in English the caste system.

The caste system did not fully emerge until later in Indian history, but fundamentally it involved a hierarchal system of four levels or castes (*varna* in Hindi) which can best be understood when seen as a pyramid.



The *Brahmins*, the top caste, were the priestly families whose main job was to perform sacrificial rituals in order to satisfy the Indo-Aryan gods. The *Kshatriyas* were the governing families. They collaborated with and supported the religious authority of the priests and shared the wealth of the land with them. In return, the priests asked the gods to favor society and instructed the people to obey the *Kshatriyas*. The *Vaishyas* were the farmers, herders, merchants, and artisans who produced most of the wealth. The *Shudras*, the lowest level class, tended to be socially despised by other groups, and they did manual labor.

Gradually, this social order came to be enforced by elaborate custom. Rules existed about who could have which jobs, who could or could not eat with whom, who could or could not intermarry, who was ritually “polluted” and who was not. In later centuries, the four main castes

were divided into hundreds of sub-castes (*jaisit*), each with its own complex obligations and taboos. As time went on, the castes and sub-castes became rigid. For example, if one was born a member of the clothes washing sub-caste, then that person's children and children's children would be clothes washers as well.

In addition to the four major castes, there was a fifth group of people, the outcasts. As the name implies, they existed outside the caste system. As such, they were assigned to jobs that were considered unclean, or "polluting." These jobs included cremating the dead, disposing of trash, and disposing of the corpses of dead animals. Outcasts were considered "untouchable" by members of the four castes. In some areas of the country, just making contact with the shadow of an outcast was considered polluting and required ritual cleansing.

**Note:**

The government of India legally abolished the caste system in 1949. While the law has been effective in urban centers, caste restrictions, especially with regard to outcasts—today known as *Dalit*, persist in many rural communities.

**Hindu Gods**

Early Hindu theology is known to us mainly from the *Upanishads*, a collection of sacred texts composed in Sanskrit, the Indo-European language of Brahmin devotion. These texts, which emerged between about 800 and 500 BCE, present the idea of Brahman, the infinite essence of the universe and the principle of all being. Brahman is the soul of the universe which contains the soul of every individual. Other principal gods are aspects or manifestations of Brahman the Creator. Those deities include Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer, both of whom are worshiped in more than one form. Hindus worship hundreds of other gods as well. Hinduism has neither a centralized religious organization nor a specific set of doctrines. As it has spread, Hinduism has taken varying forms in various parts of South Asia and incorporated local gods and ideas.

**Reincarnation**

By the sixth century BCE, the concept of **reincarnation** had appeared in Hinduism. Reincarnation is the belief that, when a person dies, his or her soul is born again in a new body. After being purified in a number of existences, the soul is finally released from this earth and becomes one with the soul of Brahman.

A Hindu's life, therefore, is an attempt to achieve oneness with Brahman. This is done by obedience to the moral law (*dharma*), which involves self-knowledge, productive labor, and strict dedication to the rituals and duties of family, occupation, and caste. In short, one has to be the best *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, *Sutra*, or outcaste that one can be in order to progress to a higher caste. Progress is governed by *karma*, the force of one's past life. If one has lived properly in a past life, then one may find oneself reborn in a higher caste. Eventually, if a person continues to live well, she or he will be reborn as a *Brahmin*. When one has lived life perfectly as a *Brahmin*, one's soul will be freed. If, on the other hand, one does not live a righteous life, that

person risks being reincarnated into a lower caste or, even worse, as an animal. One's social rank in life, then, reflects one's past lives.

The principal of reincarnation provided religious support to the rigid caste system. It justified the privileges of the upper caste at one extreme and ill-treatment of outcasts at the other. According to belief, Brahmin's had clearly earned their high status by living good lives in previous incarnations while outcasts, obviously, had lived badly and could justifiably be despised. At the same time, reincarnation gave members of the lower castes and the outcasts hope that they too might move farther up the social ladder in their next life. It also tended to keep the lowest castes in line. If people revolted against their status, then they were insuring that their soul would not "move up" in the next life. If the caste system seems rigid, unfair, and cruel to us in the twenty-first century, it did have arguable social uses. It provided a framework for society in which all individuals knew "where they stood" in relation to other members of society. Also, castes and sub-castes had privileges of regulating their own internal affairs without interference from other castes. In times of rapid economic or social change, the caste system provided an anchor of stability. However, its principles, like slavery, are incompatible today with ideals of equality and human rights.

## Lesson 6

### *Student Handout 6.1—Flood Stories*

#### **Babylonian Flood Story**

The gods of Babylon were concerned about population growth because there were too many people and they made too much noise. Enil, the chief god living on earth, could not sleep. Therefore, the gods decided to solve the problem by eliminating humans. They tried both plague and drought, but, in each case, Ea, the god of wisdom and fresh water, advised humans to bribe the appropriate god (Namtar, the god of plague and Adad the god of rain) to call off the attack. Although the plague and the drought reduced the population temporarily, it wasn't long before there were, once again, way too many noisy people. This time, the gods decided to send a flood.

Once again, their plans were undermined by Ea who warned Atrahasis, the wisest man who had ever lived. Ea told Atrahasis to abandon his house and possessions and build a boat whose length should equal its width. He also instructed him to take aboard the boat the “seed of all living things.”

Atrahasis agreed to build the boat but asked what he should tell his neighbors when they saw what he was doing. Ea suggested that he tell them that Enil disliked him, so he is no longer permitted to live on Enil's dry land, but must, from now on, live with Ea on the sea.

The entire community pitched in to help build the boat, an enormous cube “ten dozen cubits” [a cubit is about eighteen inches] square. Later, in retelling the story to Gilgamesh, Atrahasis gives the exact quantities of tar, pitch, and oil that the construction required. He also mentions that during construction the workman stole 7200 measures of oil.

Once the boat was finished, Atrahasis took aboard his family and possessions along with every kind of animal. He also took skilled artisans who would be able to keep alive knowledge of the arts and crafts.

After making offerings to the gods, Atrahasis ordered the gangplanks to be pulled up and the doors caulked. Then came the storm, which raged for six days and seven nights. The earth was inundated and even the gods were terrified. On the seventh day, the rain ceased and the sea was calm. Atrahasis looked out and saw that the boat was stranded on Mount Nimush. After six days, Atrahasis released a dove, which, finding no dry place to land, returned to the boat. The next day, a swallow was sent out and returned. On the third day, a raven left and did not return.

Enil was furious when he realized that Atrahasis has survived the flood. He was ready to kill him then and there, but Ea pointed out that it really was not Atrahasis' fault that he survived. In the end, Enil agreed. He granted Atrahasis and his wife eternal life but sent them to live far away, “at the source of the rivers.”

**Sources**

Benjamin R. Foster, trans., *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, Tablet XI, 84-91; Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and Its Significance for our Understanding of Genesis 1-9," *Biblical Archeologist*, Dec. 1977, 147-55.

**Hindu Flood Story**

There once was a powerful sage named Manu. He was far stronger than his father or grand-father as well as more powerful and richer. Standing on one leg with uplifted hand, he did penance in the jujube forest of Visālā. There, with his head down and his eye steady, he practiced this severe penance for 10,000 years.

One day, while he was practicing this penance in wet clothes with matted hair, a fish approached the banks of the Chirini River and said to him: Worshipful sir, I am a defenseless little fish and afraid of being eaten by larger fish. Do you think, O great devotee, that it would be worth your while to protect me? Do you think I am fit to save?

On hearing these words from the fish, Manu was overwhelmed with pity. He took the fish from the water with his hands. He put the fish, whose body glistened like the rays of the moon, into a clay water-jar. He kept the fish and cared for it tenderly as though it were a child.

Eventually, the fish outgrew the water jar. One day, the fish addressed Manu again. Sir, could you find a larger home for me? So, Manu, the conqueror of hostile cities, moved the fish to a large tank. There the fish grew for many another year; but, once more, the fish and outgrew its container.

Once more, the fish spoke to Manu, "O pious father, take me to the Ganges River, the favorite spouse of the Ocean, so that I can live there." Manu did as he was asked and put the fish into the river. However, the time came when the fish had grown too large for even the Ganges and he asked Manu to take him to the sea.

In spite of the enormous size of the fish, Manu was able to carry it easily. When the fish was in the water, it said to Manu, "The time for purging the world is near. All of creation is doomed. I will tell you, who has protected me so well, how I will save you from the fearful flood that is coming. Build a large, strong boat and furnish it with a long rope. Get into the boat and take with you the seven Sages and certain seeds of yore and preserve them separately and carefully. Wait for me and I shall appear to you like a horned fish.

The fish swam away and Manu did as he was instructed. When the flood came, he set sail with the rope, the seven Sages, and the seeds. Water covered everything. Only the ship, Manu and the seven Sages could be seen. The horned fish emerged from the waters like a rock and Manu made a noose in his rope and lowered it over the fish's head. The fish then towed the boat, across the roaring sea, toward the highest peak of the Himavat and told Manu to tie it to the mountain. Then the fish said, "I am Brahman, Lord of all creatures. I have saved you from the flood, Manu. You

will now recreate all beings of the earth. By practicing severe penances you will acquire this power.”

So saying, the fish disappeared instantly and Manu set about the work of creating all beings.

### Source

Roy, Protap Chandra, trans, *The Mahabharata* (Calcutta: Bharata Press, 1884), 3: 552-556.

### Hebrew Flood Story

#### Genesis 6

<sup>9</sup> This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. <sup>10</sup> Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. <sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. <sup>13</sup> So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. <sup>14</sup> So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. <sup>17</sup> I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>19</sup> You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>21</sup> You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.” <sup>22</sup> Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

#### Genesis 7

<sup>1</sup> The LORD then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. <sup>4</sup> Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.” <sup>7</sup> And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>10</sup> And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth. <sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup> And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>18</sup> The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. <sup>23</sup> Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.

#### Genesis 8

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. <sup>2</sup> Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. <sup>4</sup> and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>6</sup> After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark <sup>7</sup> and sent out a raven,

and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. <sup>9</sup> But the dove could find no place to set its feet because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. <sup>10</sup> He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. <sup>11</sup> When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. <sup>12</sup> He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him. <sup>14</sup> By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. <sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> “Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. <sup>17</sup> Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number upon it.” <sup>18</sup> So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives. <sup>19</sup> All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds—everything that moves on the earth—came out of the ark, one kind after another. <sup>20</sup> Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.

#### Genesis 9

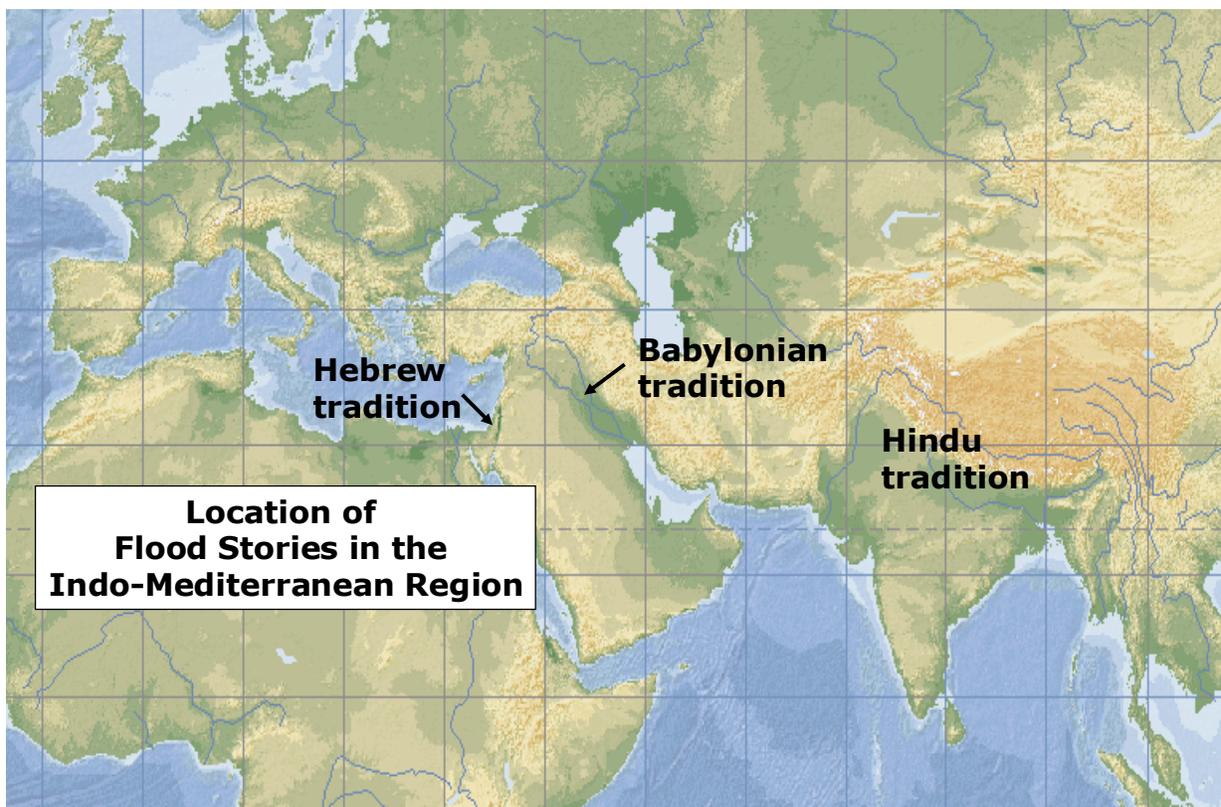
<sup>1</sup> Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.

*The Bible* (New International Version)

**Lesson 6**

***Student Handout 6.2***

**Flood Stories in the Indo-Mediterranean Region**



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## This unit and the Three Essential Questions

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 <p>HUMANS &amp; the ENVIRONMENT</p>	<p>Why did the spread of iron-working technology in the first millennium BCE likely contribute to increasing deforestation in various parts of Afroeurasia? Do mining industries today contribute to deforestation? If so, how might mining companies, governments, and environmental groups address the problem?</p>
 <p>HUMANS &amp; other HUMANS</p>	<p>As of 1998, approximately 767,424,000 people identified with Hinduism. About 15,050,000 identified with Judaism (<i>Atlas of the World's Religions</i>). What long-term historical factors might account for the great differences in the numbers of people adhering to these two world faiths, which both emerged in the first millennium BCE?</p>
 <p>HUMANS &amp; IDEAS</p>	<p>Examine the basic principles of alphabetic and logographic, character-based writing systems. How do these principles differ? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Why do you think neither alphabetic systems (e.g., the “Roman” alphabet we use) nor logographic systems (e.g., the Chinese system) have become entirely dominant in today’s world?</p>

## This unit and the Seven Key Themes

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This unit emphasizes:

Key Theme 2: Economic Networks and Exchange

Key Theme 3: Uses and Abuses of Power

Key Theme 6: Spiritual Life and Moral Codes

## This Unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking

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Historical Thinking Standard 1: Chronological Thinking

The student is able to (F) reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration in which historical developments have unfolded, and apply them to explain historical continuity and change.

Historical Thinking Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

The student is able to (G) draw upon data in historical maps in order to obtain or clarify information on the geographic setting in which the historical event occurred, its relative and

absolute location, the distances and directions involved, the natural and man-made features of the place, and critical relationships in the spatial distributions of those features and historical event occurring there.

#### Historical Thinking Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation

The student is able to (D) draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues as well as large-scale or long-term developments that transcend regional and temporal boundaries.

#### Historical Thinking Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities

The student is able to (A) formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

## Resources

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### *Instructional resources for teachers*

Chandler, Tertius. *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth: An Historical Census*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987.

Christian, David. *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Curtin, Philip D. *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

Drews, Robert. *The End of the Bronze Age: Changes in Warfare and the Catastrophe Ca. 1200 B. C.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993.

Foster, Benjamin R., ed. and trans. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001.

Gaster, Tehodor H. *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament: A Comparative Study with Chapters from Sir James G. Frazer's Folklore in the Old Testament*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Kuhrt, Amélie. *The Ancient Near East*. 2 vols. London: Routledge, 1995.

Moore, Karl and David Lewis. *Birth of the Multinational: 2000 Years of Ancient Business*

*History—from Ashur to Augustus*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 1999.

Muller, F. Max. Ed. *The Sacred Books of the East*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1882.

Roy, Protap Chandra, trans. *The Mahabharata*. Vol. 3. Calcutta: Bharata Press, 1884. 18 vols.

Stein, Burton. *A History of India*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Yamada, Shiego. *The Construction of the Assyrian Empire: A Historical Study of the Inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (859-824 BC) Relating to His Campaigns to the West*. Boston: Brill, 2000.

Herodotus. *The History of the Persian Wars*. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/greek-babylon.html>. Text of writings by Herodotus on Babylonia, Assyria, and Chaldea, c. 430 BCE.

Timelines and maps: [http://www.hyperhistory.com/online\\_n2/History\\_n2/a.html](http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html)

Historical estimates of world population: <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/worldhis.html>

### ***Instructional Sources for Students***

Accounts of the Campaign of Sennacherib, 701 BCE. Internet Ancient History Sourcebook (Fordham University). <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/701sennach.html>. A succinct description by Assyrian ruler Sennacherib of the way in which he conquered Sidon and of the havoc he wreaked and the tribute he exacted.

British Museum website for Sumer, Babylon and Assyria.

<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html>. Good information and wonderful pictures.

<http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/gaddis/HST210/Sept18/Default.htm>. Assyrian reliefs of battles.

University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

<http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/Phoenicians.html> Photo of the mollusk (Murex) from which the Phoenicians made the purple dye. Other good information and pictures.

<http://www.northpark.edu/history/Classes/Sources/Tiglathpileser.html>. Inscription by Tiglathpileser I who ruled the Assyrian empire from 1115-1077 BC (Primary Source). In this inscription he describes his conquests.

<http://myron.sjsu.edu/romeweb/GLOSSARY/timeln/t09.htm>. Metallurgy. For the student who is interested in the development of metallurgy.

<http://myron.sjsu.edu/romeweb/glossary/timeln/t10.htm>. The emergence of iron smelting (900 BCE to Roman empire).

<http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab11.htm>. The Flood. Students may want to read about the flood for themselves in the Epic of Gilgamesh.

<http://www.ruchiskitchen.com/ruchiskitchen/kids/stories/avtaars/matsya.htm>. A retelling of the flood story from the Indian Vedas

## **Correlations to National and State Standards and to Textbooks**

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### ***National Standards for World History***

Era Three: Classical Traditions, Major Religions, and Giant Empires, 1000 BCE – 300 CE, Standard 1: Innovation and change from 1000-600 BCE: horses, ships, iron, and monotheistic faith.

### ***California: History-Social Science Content Standards***

Grade Six, 6.6.3: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the Ancient Hebrews. 6.6.5: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of India.

### ***New York: Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum***

Unit One: Ancient World – Civilizations and Religion (4000 BC – 500 AD). C.7.a. Phoenician trade routes. E.1.b. Hinduism. E.1.e. Judaism.

### ***Virginia Standards of Learning***

World History and Geography to 1500 AD. Era 2: Classical civilizations and the rise of religious traditions, 1000 B.C. – 500 A.D. WHI.3. The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient river valley civilizations, including Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus River Valley, and China, and the civilization of the Hebrews, Phoenicians, and Kush. WHI.4. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the civilizations of Persia, India, and China in terms of chronology, geography, social structures, government, economy, religion, and contributions to later civilizations.

### ***Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies***

113.33 World History Studies. (c) Knowledge and Skills. 19) Culture. The student understands the history and relevance of major religious and philosophical traditions. The student is expected to (A) compare the historical origins, central ideas, and the spread of major religious and

philosophical traditions including Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism.

### ***Textbooks***

*A Message of Ancient Days* (Houghton Mifflin). Chapter 6: Mesopotamia, Lesson 4: New Empires. Chapter 8: Ancient India, Lesson 2: Arrival of the Aryans. Chapter 10: The Ancient Israelites. Lesson 1: Early Biblical History. Lesson 2: Kings, Prophets, and Priests.

*World History: Connections to Today*. Chapter 2: First Civilizations: Africa and Asia (3200 B.C. – 500 B. C.) Section 4: Invaders, Traders, and Empire Builders; Section 5: The Roots of Judaism.. Chapter 3: Early Civilizations in India and China (2500 B.C. – 256 B. C.). Section 2: Kingdoms of the Ganges.

*World History: Patterns of Interaction* (McDougal Littell). Chapter 3: People and Ideas on the Move, 2 Roots of Hinduism and Buddhism, 3: Seafaring Traders Extend Boundaries, 4: The Origins of Judaism. Chapter 4: First Age of Empires, 2 Assyria Dominates the Fertile Crescent.

*World History: The Human Experience* (Glencoe McGraw-Hill). Chapter 3: Kingdoms and Empires in the Middle East. Chapter 8: India's Great Civilization. Lesson 1: Origins of Hindu India.

### **Conceptual links to other teaching units**

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We have seen in this teaching unit that the whole region from the Mediterranean basin to India (Indo-Mediterranea) constituted in several respects an interacting whole in the first millennium BCE. Before about 200 BCE Indo-Mediterranea and East Asia had contacts with one another, especially by the silk roads across Inner Eurasia. Some evidence suggests for example, that iron technology, the two-wheeled chariot as a weapon of war, and certain food crops spread from the Indo-Mediterranean region overland to China. On the other hand, developments in China between 1000 and 300 BCE had many distinctive features, notably a great expansion of farming and city-building. Landscape Teaching Unit 4.2 focuses on East Asia during those seven centuries, when the Zhou dynasty rose to power.