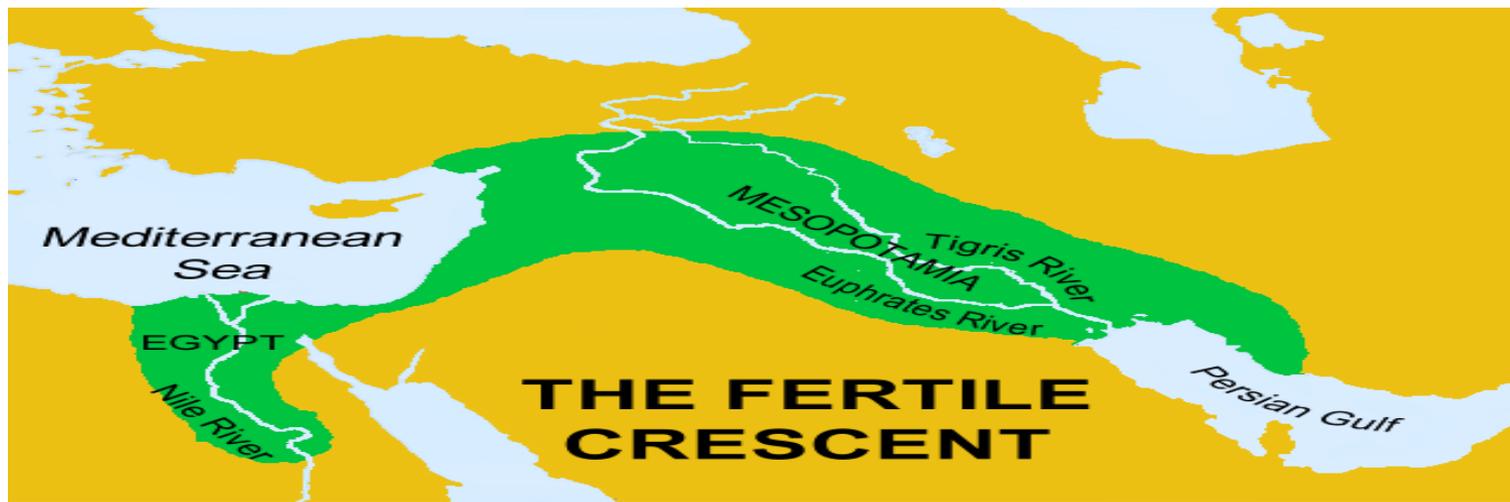


# MESOPOTAMIA

The Fertile Crescent

## The Land between two rivers



## SECTION 1: LAND BETWEEN TWO RIVERS

DO NOW: Copy vocabulary words into your notebook

Scribe – professional writer

Fertile Crescent – a region in Southwest Asia, site of the first civilization

City-State – a city that is also a separate independent state

Ziggurat – Religious pyramid, a Stairway from Heaven

Polytheism – the belief in many gods

Myth – traditional story, in some cultures, a legend that explains people's beliefs

# AIM

Explain how did geography  
make the rise of civilization  
in the fertile crescent  
possible

AIM: Explain how geography made the rise of civilizations in the Fertile Crescent

Mesopotamia Web quest – Geography

Task: Explore the online site at the British Museum about [Mesopotamia. Click on Geography and answer the questions below.](#)

- Mesopotamia is a Greek word meaning \_\_\_\_\_
- Which two rivers is Mesopotamia located between? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Which present countries make up Mesopotamia? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- What landforms make up Northern Mesopotamia? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the land fertile? Why/Why not \_\_\_\_\_
- Which resources did early settlers find in Mesopotamia? \_\_\_\_\_
- What landforms make up Southern Mesopotamia? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think cities developed along the river? \_\_\_\_\_

Click on Explore

Click on Story and read about Gilgamesh

Click on Challenge

Answer AIM:

# AIM

Explain the types of tools scribes used to record historical events

**AIM:** Explain the types of tools scribes used to record historical events

## **Mesopotamia Web Quest - Writing**

Task: Explore the sites of [Mesopotamia online at The British Museum](#). Click on *Writing* and [answer the questions below](#).

- What were the earliest forms of writing based on? \_\_\_\_\_
- Pictograms were used to communicate basic information about \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Over time writing signs developed into \_\_\_\_\_ called \_\_\_\_\_
- What did scribes record? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did scribes write on? \_\_\_\_\_
- Click on the blue words that say: NEAR EAST. Circle the countries that the Near east make up



**Directions:** Click on explore

•What is the importance of a scribe? \_\_\_\_\_

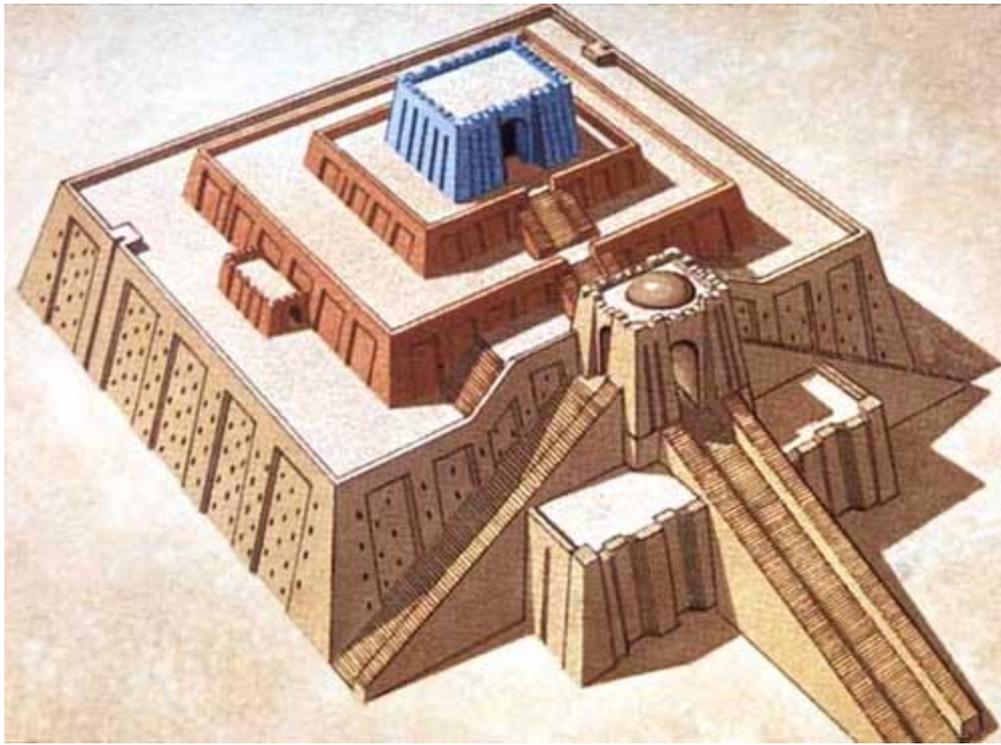
**Directions:** Click on the blue words that say: [Explore the world of a scribe](#). List seven objects used in writing and give one to two sentences about the tools. I did the first one for you.

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Cylinder Seals | Cylinder seals were made out of stone or metal. Scenes of gods, animals and men were carved into the seal so when it was rolled on the clay, it would leave an <a href="#">impression</a> . |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |

- Read the Story
  - Do the Challenge
- Answer AIM:**

# AIM

Explain how Gods and Goddesses played a role in the Mesopotamian society



Mesopotamian Ziggurat at Ur

## Stairway to Heaven

Ziggurat's were pyramids made of terraces, one on top of another, linked by ramps and stairs.

-On the top was a shrine  
Belief: Gods descended to Earth using the stairs



## Mesopotamia Web quest - Gods/Goddesses, Demons and Monsters

AIM: How did Gods and Goddesses play a role in society?

Task: Using the website at the British Museum, answer the following questions

•What were some items that the Gods were responsible for creating:

\_\_\_\_\_

•Describe the difference between a demon and a monster. \_\_\_\_\_

### \*Click on Explore

1- Find 1 God and 1 Goddess

2 - Explain what they were the God or Goddess of

3 - 1 supporting sentence about them

| God                  | God of:           | 1 Supporting Sentence  |
|----------------------|-------------------|--|
| <u>Adad (Ishkur)</u> | The god of storms | He carries a lightning fork, <u>symbolizing</u> his power over the storm forces of nature. |
|                      |                   |  |
|                      |                   |  |
|                      |                   |  |

\* Read Story

\*Do Challenge

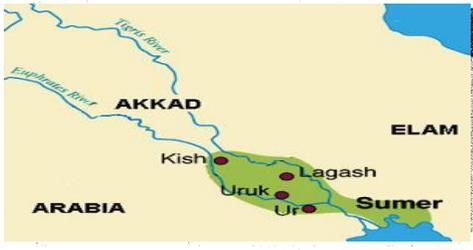
Answer Aim:

Name: MS. Farmer / Turner

# Mesopotamia

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_

G



Geography

## Sumerian Civilization

Social

### 3500-2000 B.C.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

R



Religion

ARTIFACTS

Architecture

Political Government



- Potters, Stone Carvers, Brick makers, Goldsmiths, Farmers
- Fishermen, Shepherds, Weavers, Leather dealers, Accountants
- Merchants, Kings, Priests, Carpenters, Judges, Scribes, Armies, Commanders, Bakers, Basket makers, Butchers, Chariot drivers, Cooks, Harpists, Horse trainers, Musicians
- Perfume makers, Doctors, Royal bodyguards, Singers, Tax collectors, and Veterinarians

A



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## G.R.A.P.E.S.

## Mesopotamia

There were four main classes of people in ancient Sumer - the priests, the upper class, the lower class, and the slaves. The priests were powerful. They were in charge of making sure everyone behaved in a way that would make the gods happy. They were the doctors of the time. If you were sick, you called for a priest. The upper class men and women wore jewelry, especially rings. Men wore skirts and had long hair, curly moustaches, and long beards. Women wore dresses, off one shoulder. They had long hair, which they braided or wore up in fancy arrangements. It was easy to tell who the priests were. The priests shaved their heads. Everyone wore cloaks made from sheep wool to keep warm in winter. The lower class people were paid for their work. If they ran a shop or worked in the fields, they were paid for their goods or labor. Stealing was a serious crime and punishment was severe. Everybody paid, even the king. Although the lower class did not have the luxury lifestyle of the rich, they were comfortable. They worked very hard, but they had homes. They wore jewelry, although perhaps it was not made of gold. They followed the clothing fashions of the time as much as possible. The slaves consisted of prisoners from other conquered towns. Slaves worked for the king, the temple and the wealthy. Slaves were bought and sold. Records have been found recording the amount paid for a slave. Typically, a slave bought at auction cost less than a donkey but more than a cow.

People talk about Mesopotamia as if it were a single civilization or culture. Actually, Mesopotamia was an area, not a civilization. It was composed of several independent city-states, each with its own religion, laws, language, and government. Many civilizations have existed in Mesopotamia, some of them at the same time. While one culture may have dominated a certain period, other cultures may have existed and were seeking to become independent. Some of the cultures that have existed in this area are Sumeria, Assyria, Babylon, and Iraq.

### THE SUMERIANS AND THE AKKADIANS

The first group of people to inhabit Mesopotamia were the Sumerians. They originally lived in the mountains, but moved to the Plain of Shinar near the Persian Gulf to take advantage of the fertile soil. First, they drained the marshes and then controlled the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers by building levees and irrigation canals. As a result, the Sumerians had a stable food supply, and not everyone was needed to farm, hunt, or fish. Some Sumerians became tradesmen, merchants, soldiers, priests, government officials, and artisans. Their country was called Sumer.

The Sumerians are given credit for many inventions. One of the most important was the invention of a written language. Writing was invented so the Sumerians could keep records. Their writing was, of course, very simple. It was composed of pictures called pictographs. Scribes, who were professional writers, drew the pictures on clay tablets using a wedge-shaped instrument, or stylus. Over a period of time, the writing became more sophisticated. The pictures were replaced with shapes and lines. This type of writing is called cuneiform. Other inventions include the wheel,

#### SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION AT A GLANCE

**WHERE:** In the Middle East, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers

**WHEN:** 3500 B.C.—2000 B.C.

**ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- The world's first civilization where people lived together in a city-state
- Invented a written language
- Developed science and mathematics to a high degree; were able to divide the year and the circle into 360 parts
- Developed a twelve-month calendar based on lunar cycles
- Used the wheel and made vehicles
- Invented the plow and the sailboat

which was developed for making pottery, but was later used to make vehicles. They also invented the water clock, the twelve-month calendar, the plow, and the sailboat.

The Sumerians had a numbering system based on the number 60. We still use the Sumerian system today when measuring time. For example, sixty seconds make a minute and sixty minutes make an hour. Also, a circle has 360 degrees.

Between 3500 and 2000 B.C., the Sumerians were living in large villages. Eventually they became prosperous, and the villages developed into self-governing city-states. The buildings in these city-states were made of sun-dried mud bricks. The Sumerians used these mud bricks as building materials because there was no building stone and very little timber in Sumer, and the rivers were a great source for mud.

The buildings in Sumer were different from other civilizations, such as the Egyptians. Sumerians learned how to use a keystone to make arches. A keystone is a wedge-shaped stone in an arch that causes the arch to lock together. The doorways, gates, and other openings in buildings in the Sumerian cities had arches. Similar openings in Egyptian buildings were square.

Priests, wealthy citizens, and merchants had two-story houses. These houses had an open courtyard that all the rooms of the house opened into. There were smaller homes for others, also.

Religion was important to the Sumerians. At the center of each city-state was a temple that was surrounded by courts and public buildings. These temples were called ziggurats. Ziggurats were originally built on platforms, but eventually became temple-towers brightly decorated with glazed bricks. They were like huge pyramids with terraced sides that were flat on the top.

The Sumerians had many gods. They believed the gods spoke to them through their priests. Since the priests were representatives of the gods, they had a great deal of power in Sumer. When a priest commanded that something be done, the people believed the command was actually coming from one of their gods, and they obeyed. The ability to make important decisions and have people obey them elevated the status of priests. They became priest-kings and ruled large areas.

While Mesopotamia offered many advantages for settlement, such as rich soil, water, and game, there was one great disadvantage. The land did not provide any natural protection from invaders. Enemies could easily march into Sumer from almost any direction. This made Sumerians vulnerable to attack, not only from foreign armies, but from other Sumerian cities as well. Wars between Sumerian cities were common.

The importance of natural protection cannot be overstated. Compare the location of Egypt with Sumer, for example. Egypt is protected by a desert on both sides of the Nile River, which is difficult to navigate in some spots. Nations wanting to conquer Egypt would have a difficult time overcoming these natural barriers to launch an attack. Consequently, Egypt's culture grew rapidly. Sumer, on the other hand, did not have natural barriers. Sumerians not only had to worry about invading armies, but also about other groups of people who wanted to share the fertile soil of Mesopotamia.

One of the groups that moved into Sumeria was the Akkadians, who had been living on the Arabian peninsula. The Akkadians were a Semitic people. This means they spoke a Semitic language related to languages similar to Arabic and Hebrew. The Akkadians formed their own country where the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers were close together. Their country was called Akkad. The Akkadians adopted much of the Sumerian culture. After many clashes between the Sumerians and the Akkadians, more Semites invaded Sumeria. The Sumerian culture was eventually absorbed by the invaders. This combined civilization lasted until about 1950 B.C. when the Amorites and the Elamites captured Ur, Mesopotamia's most important city.

## REVIEW:

What is a scribe?

Professional writers

Why are scribes important?

The kept records for the kings and the priests

Name a city of Mesopotamia

Sumer

What shape is the fertile crescent?

A crescent moon

What are the two rivers Mesopotamia is between

Tigris and Euphrates

What are the positive and negatives of these rivers?

Positive: fertile soil, water for crops, clay, fish, reeds to make boats  
Negative: people, animal and crops were wiped out

What have city states created?

Government, god or goddesses, army and a king

## **SECTION 2: FERTILE CRESCENT EMPIRE**

**DO NOW:** Copy vocabulary words into your notebook

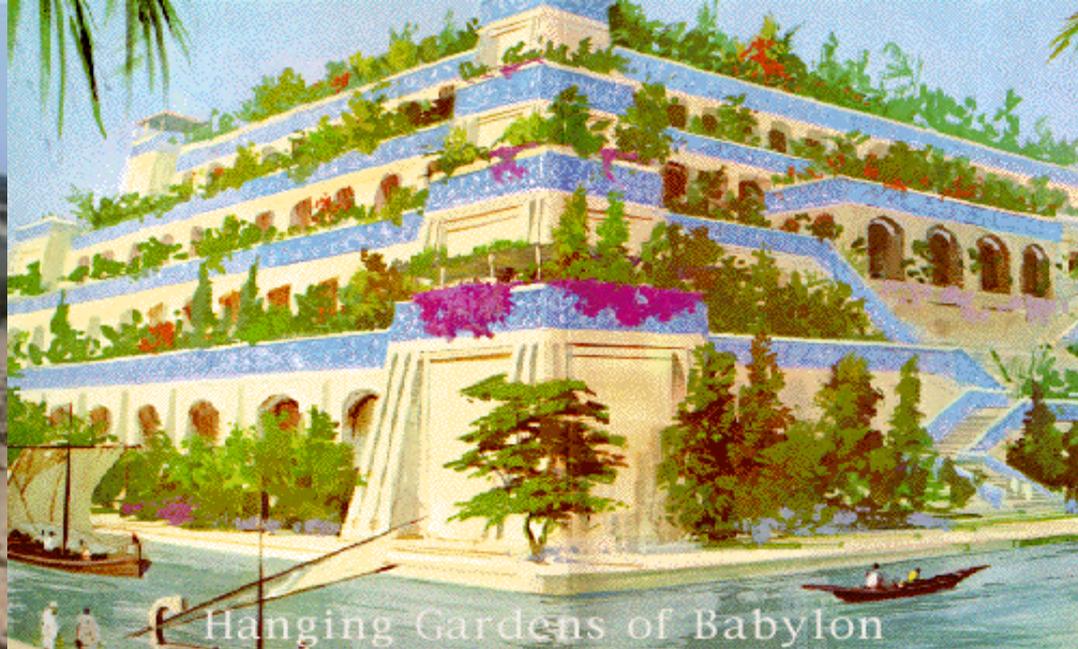
**Empire** – Many territories and people controlled by one government

**Babylon** – the capital of Babylonia, a group of great wealth and luxury

**Caravan** – a group of travelers journeying together

**Bazaar** – a market selling different kinds of goods

**Zoroastrianism** – a religion that developed in ancient Persia



## SECTION 3: THE LEGACY OF MESOPOTAMIA

**DO NOW:** Copy vocabulary words into your notebook

Code – an organized list of laws and rules

Hammurabi – the king of Babylon from 1792 to 1750  
B.C. creator of the Babylonian empire

Cuneiform – groups of wedges and lines used to write  
several languages of the fertile Crescent

# AIM

Explain the Legacy of  
Mesopotamia

# Mesopotamia Web Quest – Time

AIM: What is the legacy of Mesopotamia?

**Task:** Explore the sites of [Mesopotamia online at The British Museum](#). Click on *time* and answer the questions [below](#).

- What occurred over six thousand years ago? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did the first few cities consist of? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are four items that early civilizations consist of? \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Click on Explore to find the answers to the graph

**Directions:** Click on Explore to find the answers to the graph

| Name of item/<br>person | Year | Supporting Sentence |
|-------------------------|------|---------------------|
| pictograph              |      |                     |
| Gilgamesh               |      |                     |
| Cuneiform               |      |                     |
| UR ---Ziggurat          |      |                     |
| Akkadin                 |      |                     |
| Hammurabi               |      |                     |

## SECTION 4: MEDITERRANEAN CIVILIZATIONS

**DO NOW**: Copy vocabulary words into your notebook

Alphabet – a set of symbols that represent the sounds of a language

Monotheism – the belief in one god

Famine – a time when there is so little food that people starve

Exile – to force someone to live in another country

## SECTION 5: JUDAISM

**DO NOW:** Copy vocabulary words into your notebook

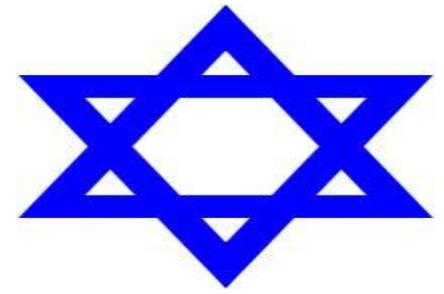
Covenant – a binding agreement

Moses – an Israelite leader whom the Torah credits with leading the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan

Prophet – a religious teacher who is regarded as someone who speaks for God or a god

Diaspora – the scattering of people who have a common background or beliefs

# Judaism



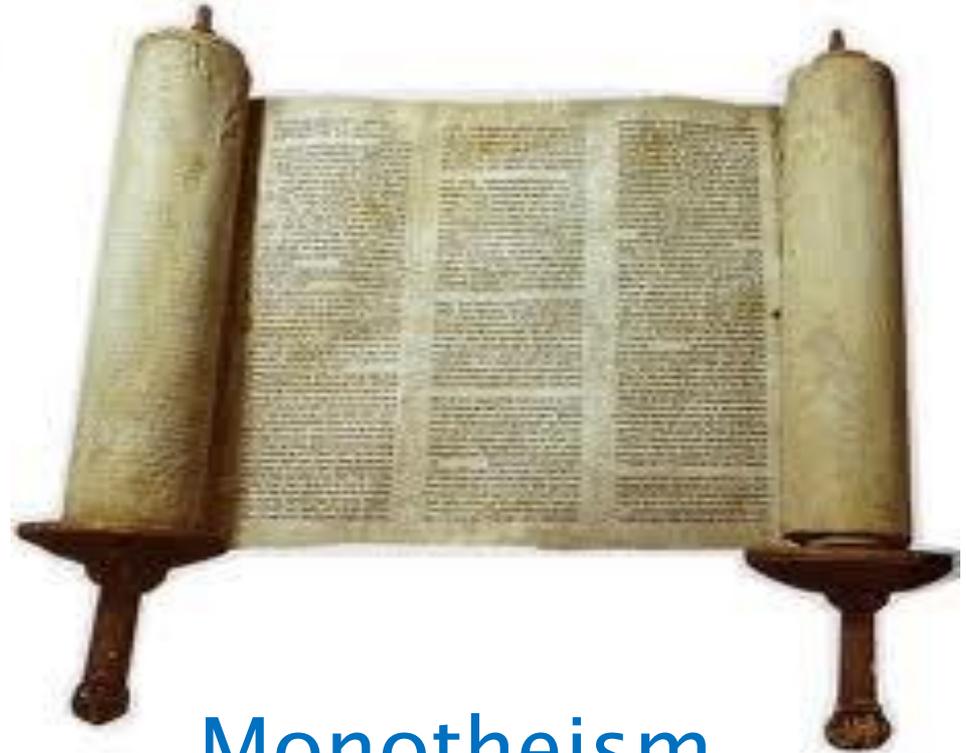
## TORAH

-Records important events and laws important to the Israelites

-Made up of 5 books of the Jewish Bible:

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

- Later, the Jewish adopted the Old Testament of the Christian Bible



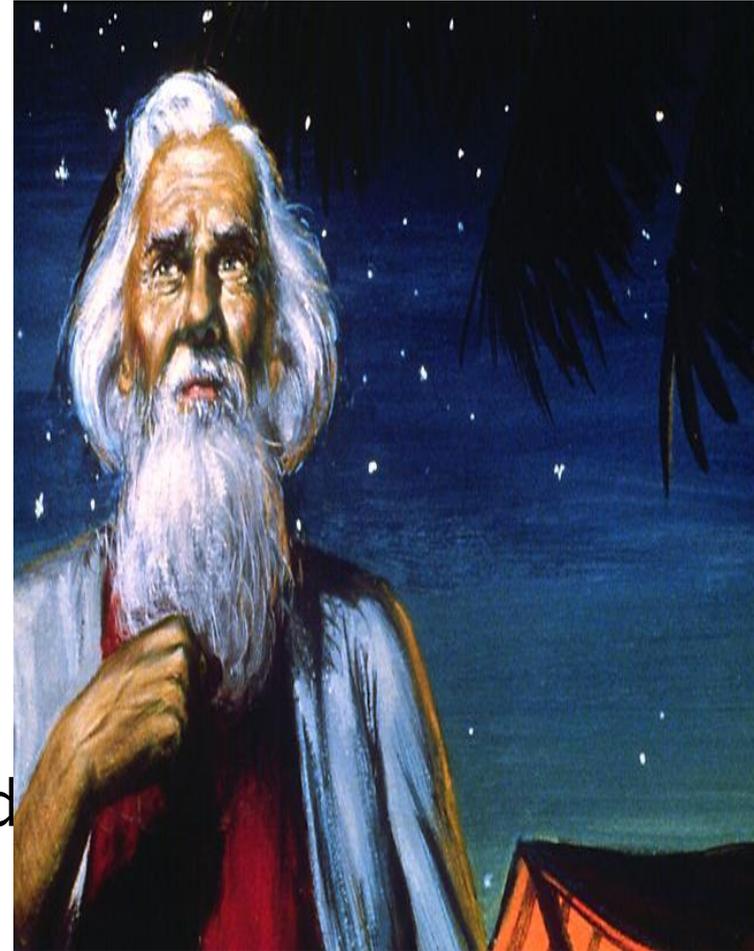
## Monotheism Belief in one God

Beliefs:

- that God is everywhere
- that God has complete power

# Israelites - Abraham

- Israelites trace their beginnings to Mesopotamia
- God told Abraham that his people would become Kings and build nations if they were to leave Mesopotamia
- Covenant - binding agreement
- Abraham led them to Canaan
- After some time a famine occurred and the Israelites fled to South Egypt
- Eventually, the Israelites were forced into slavery



# Israelites – Moses

Moses – an Israelite leader who lived sometime around 1200 B.C.

–Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt (Exodus – departure from Egypt)

–This led the Israelites to roam the Sinai deserts for 40 years

–God gave Moses the  
The Ten Commandments

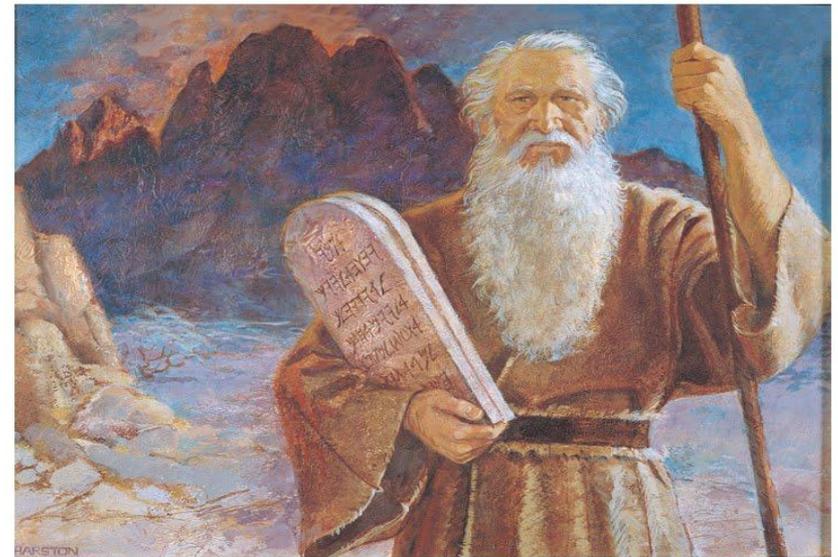


## GOD

- 1: Do not worship any other gods
- 2: Do not make any idols
- 3: Do not misuse the name of God
- 4: Keep the Sabbath holy

## MAN

- 5: Honour your father & mother
- 6: Do not murder
- 7: Do not commit adultery
- 8: Do not steal
- 9: Do not lie
- 10: Do not covet



Moses and the Tablets, by Jerry Harston, © IRI

# Canaan

Eventually the Israelites ended back up in Canaan

- Israelites moved from farming and herding to building their own cities
- United under their first King, Saul, who defended them against their enemies
- The next King, David, established the city of Jerusalem
- After the death of David, his son, Solomon, took over
- After Solomon died, the kingdom was split into two parts --Israel and --Judah



- Assyrians conquered Israel and took control of Judah
- The Israelites resisted Assyrian rule so the Assyrians exiled the Israelites

# Judaism – Kosher

In Judaism, certain meals call for foods to be Kosher :fit for use”

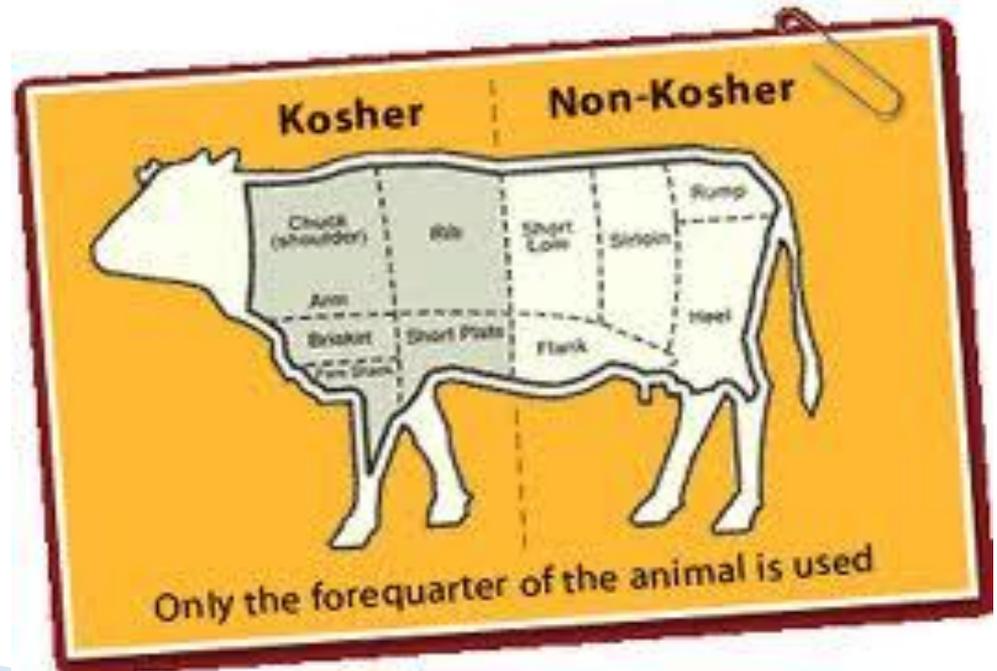
Example: Seafood must have scales and fins

Codfish – Kosher

Clams – not kosher

\_ Meat needed to be prepared a certain way

– Kosher foods have to be cooked separate from non – Kosher foods



# Symbols and Celebrations

Dreidel



Torah



Star of David



Chalice

10  
Commandments

Menorah

Yamaka



## JEWISH CELEBRATIONS

**Passover** – Celebration of the Israelites freedom from slavery and their departure, or Exodus, from Egypt



Yom Kippur – Holiest day for Jewish heritage  
– 25 hours fasting, not eating food



Hanukka – means dedication in Hebrew is an 8 day celebration during

# Effects of Judaism

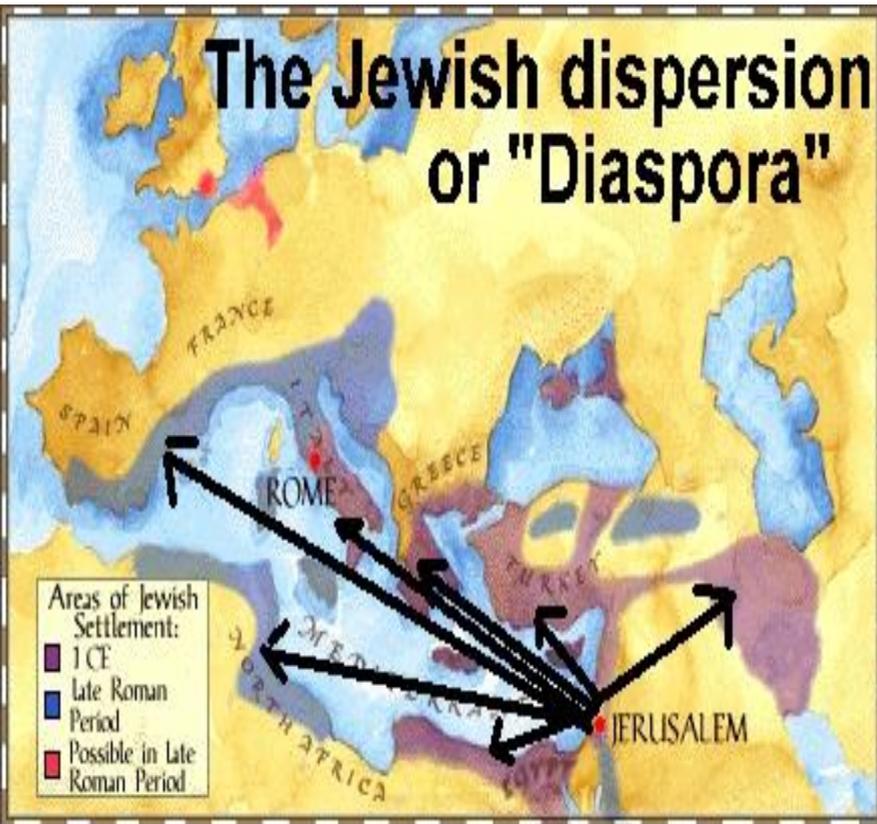
The Jewish people were driven out of Jerusalem in A.D. 135 by the Romans  
Diaspora - scattering of people

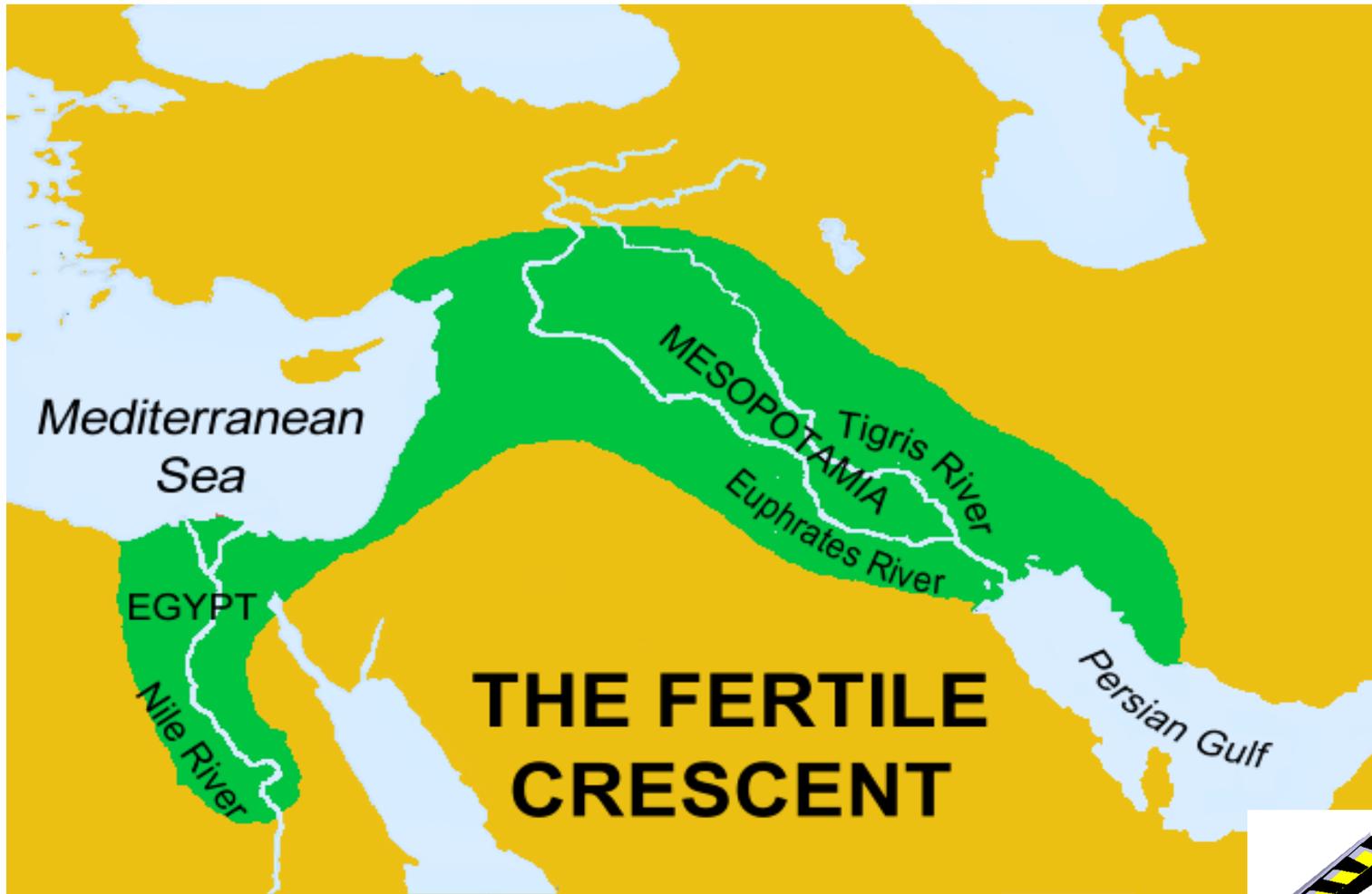
Judaism led to other religions such as:

Christianity



Islam religion





# Mesopotamians – Sargon, Hammurabi, Ashurbanipal, and Gilgamesh



“(T)hen (the gods) Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak;...to further the well-being of mankind.”

---Introduction to Hammurabi’s Code

about 1780 B.C.

20. According to the statement, what are Hammurabi’s main reasons for publishing his code of laws?

1. improve trade
2. end wicked behavior and protect the weak
3. expand Babylonian territory
4. describe the history of Babylon