

Mesopotamian Empires

Social Studies

Grade 6

Sumer

- Sumerians (people of Sumer) built the first cities in Southwest Asia, including:
 - Ur (uhr)
 - Uruk (OO-rook)
 - Eridu (ER-i-doo)
- Cities became the centers of civilization that controlled the lower part of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys

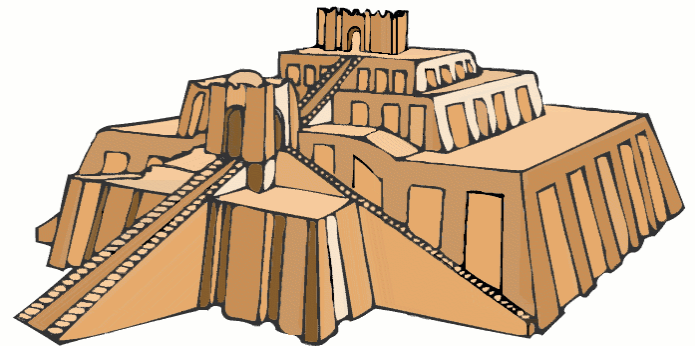


Sumer's City-States

- Each city-state had its own government
- Population ranged from 5,000-20,000 people
- It's believed that each city-state was surrounded by a large city wall.
 - Mud from rivers used as main building material

Sumerian Empire

- By 2400 BC the Sumerian city-states were becoming weaker and weaker
- Stronger kingdoms arose in northern Mesopotamia and in Syria
 - Rulers of these kingdoms began to look at Sumer as a target



Akkad

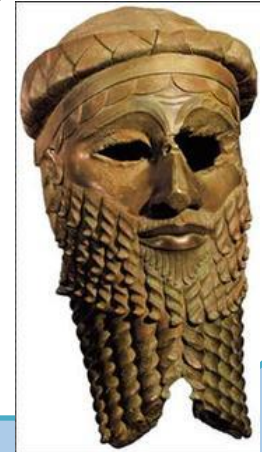


- The kingdom of Akkad formed in northern Mesopotamia
- The ruler was Sargon, a motivated leader who moved his armies south around 2340 BC and conquered what was left of the Sumerian city-states
- Sargon united the lands of Akkad and Sumer and became the king of Sumer & Akkad
 - Stories vary as to how he came to power; some believe he organized the military to overthrow his king, while others believe power was passed down to him.



Akkad

- Sargon formed the world's first empire when he united Sumer and Akkad
 - Eventually he extended the empire to include all of Mesopotamia
- His empire lasted for over 200 years before it was conquered

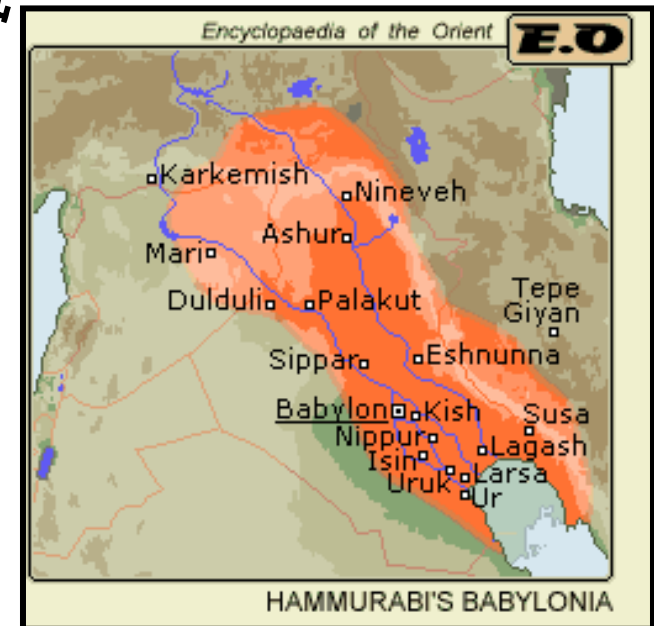


Babylon

- The king of Babylon was Hammurabi. Hammurabi united the cities of Sumer and then expanded his empire all the way to Asia Minor
- The most extravagant of the cities was Babylon
 - Located on the eastern bank of the Euphrates in present day Iraq

Babylon

- The Babylonian Empire stretched from the Persian Gulf, across the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and west to the Mediterranean Sea.
- The Babylonian Empire lasted from around 1800 BC to 1600 BC.



Hammurabi

- Hammurabi was the son of a king
 - Hammurabi was a powerful king and conquered cities to the north and south setting up an empire.
 - Hammurabi is best known for his code of laws. Although his laws were CRUEL they marked an important step toward a fair system of justice.



Hammurabi's Code

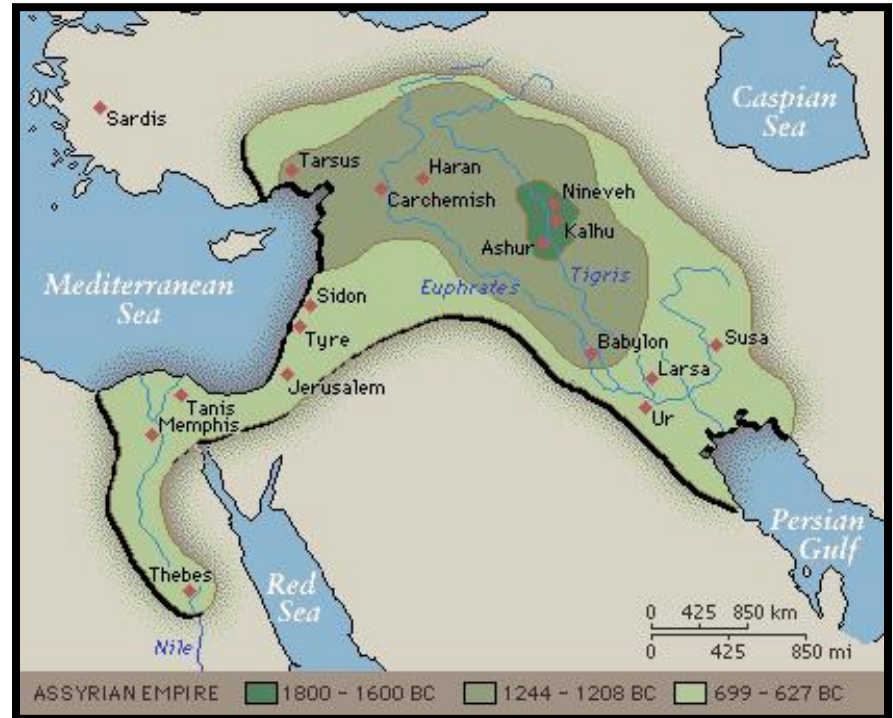
- The code called for punishments that matched the crime
 - Ex: “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth”
- 282 laws
- Engraved on stone posts called stelae

Assyrian Empire

- The Assyrian Empire began about 1,000 years after Hammurabi
- Assyria was large, and spanned four present day countries
 - Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq
- Built a large, strong, and powerful military to protect their land
 - This army, around 900 B.C. started to conquer the rest of Mesopotamia

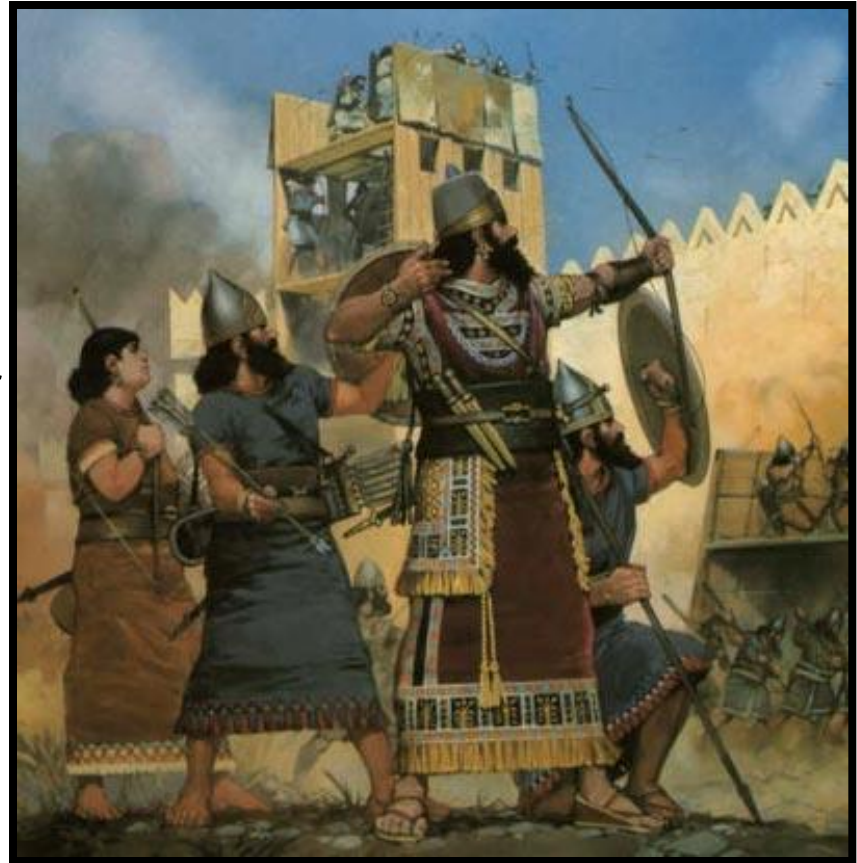
Assyrian Empire

- Assyria was a small kingdom of walled cities that was located north of Babylon.
- Their city was located in open land that was easily attacked, and they had to constantly defend themselves against invaders. Therefore, they became skilled warriors.



Assyrian Empire

- The Assyrian army was well taught and orderly
 - Contained infantry (foot soldiers), cavalry (horse soldiers), & charioteers
- Fought with slingshots, bows and arrows, swords, and spears

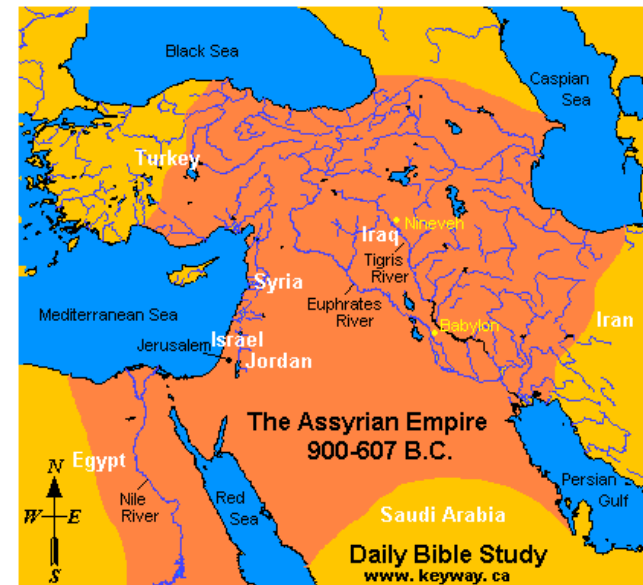


Assyrian Empire

- During battle, the Assyrians robbed people, destroyed towns, and set crops on fire
- They took tribute, meaning they forced people of conquered lands to pay
- The Assyrians drove people from their homes
 - They were brutal and many surrendered without a fight

Assyrian Empire

- The Assyrians were successful in war due to the use of iron weapons



Assyrian Empire

- The Assyrian Empire stretched from the Persian Gulf in the east to the Nile River in the west
- Kings divided their empire into provinces
 - Political districts
 - Government built roads that connected these provinces
- Kings chose officials to govern, collect taxes, and carry out laws
- Soldiers stood guard at stations along the roads to protect travelers and traders from robbers
 - Messengers used these stations for rest/exchange of horses

Assyrian Empire

- Assyrians had law codes with harsher punishments
- Writing based on Babylonian writing
- Built large temples and palaces with carvings and statues
- Farmed and traded
- Wrote and collected stories
- King Ashurbanipal built one of the world's first libraries
 - Contained 25,000 tablets of stories and songs to the gods

The Assyrian Empire

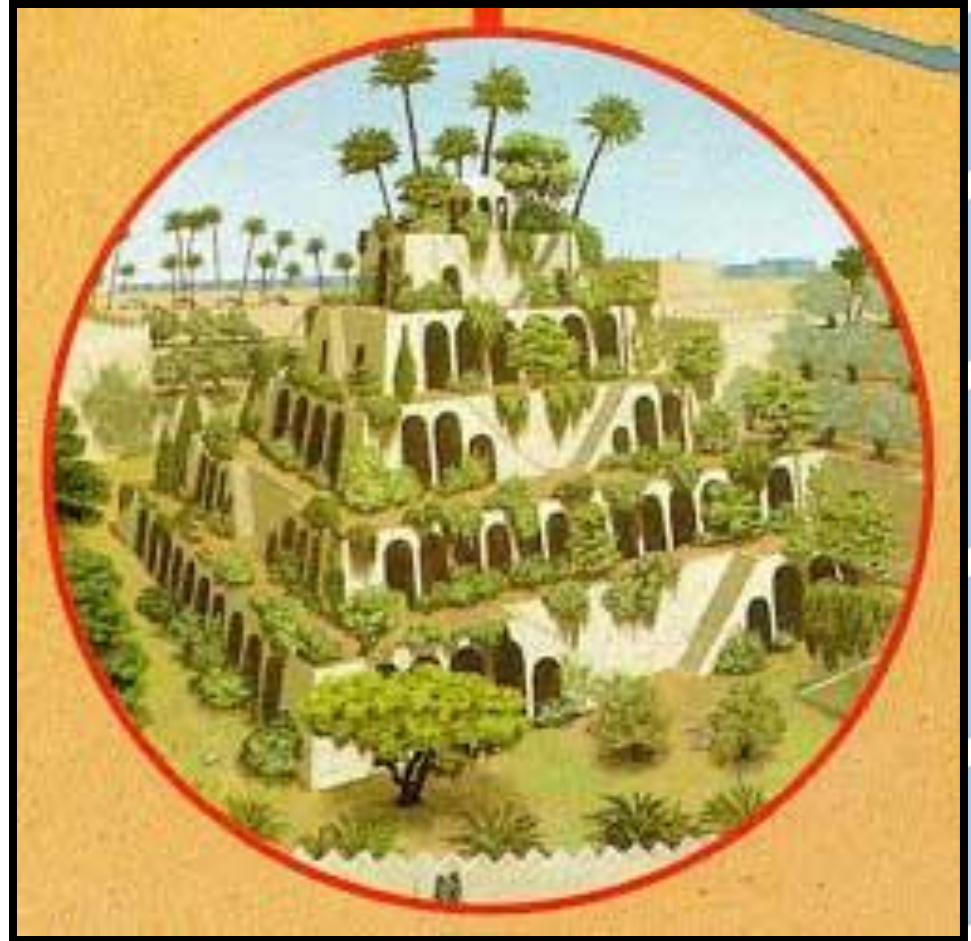
- The Assyrian Empire lasted about 300 years, stretching from the Persian Gulf to Egypt
- The Assyrians were harsh rulers, and there were many rebellions
- In about 650 B.C fighting broke out over who would be the next King

The Chaldean Empire

The Chaldeans defeated the Assyrians in 612 BC.

A new empire was centered at Babylon

The greatest king of Babylon was Nebuchadnezzar II. He built a great palace with hanging gardens.



The Chaldean Empire

- Babylon became a center of learning and science.
- Chaldean astronomers charted stars and measured the correct length of the year.
- Chaldean farmers raised bees for their honey.
- Many people came to Babylon to share ideas and discoveries.



The Chaldean Empire

- The second Babylonian empire came under attack and was defeated by the Persians, who were led by Cyrus, in 539 BC.
- Though the Chaldeans were defeated, the city of Babylon was spared from destruction.

