

Course: Old Testament History

Genesis (1-11)

From Adam to Nimrod

and the

Tower of Babel

Text: ‘All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:’ (2 Timothy 3:16)

These notes are given to help develop Bible study groups and to encourage group participation through discussion.

It is intended to be a road through the Old Testament and not a detailed study.

Introduction to the book of Genesis

Part One (Genesis 1-11)

1. The Book of Genesis begins with **creation**.
2. It explains how **mankind fell** and sin entered into the world.
3. It shows the **godless line of Cain and the godly line of Seth**.
4. The influence of the godless line even corrupts the godly line of Seth until **just one family is godly, Noah and his family**.
5. How **the world was destroyed by a flood** and
6. How **the nations developed from the Sons of Noah**.
7. Rise of Babylon and **the beginning of an organised idolatrous system**.
8. **Abrams departure from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran**

Course: Old Testament History

Lesson Outline

1. Creation and the Fall of Man

Elohim and Jehovah

2. Noah

The Flood

Spread of Nations

3. Nimrod

Empire building - idolatry

Tower of Babel

4. Abram

Ur of the Chaldees - Haran

In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth... Genesis 1:1



Creation - Light and the sun

Day 1	Light and Darkness	—	Day 4	Sun, Moon and Stars
Day 2	Sea and Sky	—	Day 5	Birds and fishes
Day 3	Dry Land, Trees	—	Day 6	Animals and Man

There could not be light on Day 1 without the sun.

Genesis 1:16

Day 4 – The sun was not created (bara) on Day 4 it was made (asah)

The difference in the Hebrew word is that the Sun began to operate (was made to function) from Day 4 so that life on earth could benefit from it.

Creation of Man – Male and Female.

Adam was created (bara) with the ability to reproduce (1:27).

Male and female were created from the beginning (1:27-28 and 5:2).

God formed (yatsar – as a potter) Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him. (2:7)

God took from the rib (tsela) of Adam (2:21-23)

Rib (tsela) means side chamber. (2:21-22)

Took ‘one of his side chambers’.

Eve was built (banar) from the side of Adam (2:22).

The two were one flesh in the beginning. (2:24)

The two come together in marriage.

The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:4 –3:24) – The four rivers of Eden

Eden means delight

Location:

River flowed from Eden –
watered the garden- divided
into Four Rivers

(2:11-12) River Pison –
encompasses land of Havilah,
where there is gold, bdellium
and onyx.

(2:13) River Gihon,
encompasses land of Ethiopia

(2:14a) River Hiddekel
(Gesenius: rapid Tigris): goes
towards the east of Assyria.

(2:14b) River Euphrates.



Pison and Gihon no longer exist but they
were probably located near the north end of
the Persian Gulf.

Protoevangelium – First promise of salvation

Genesis 3:15

‘And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.’

The Seed of the woman – bruised heel

The devil – bruised (crushed) head

Enmity between the devil and the woman – the woman will be reconciled with God.

The Seed of the woman – Christ

The seed of the devil – the children of the devil.

Jesus spoke to the religious leaders and said ‘You are of your father the devil’. (John 8:44)

The Names of God

Elohim אלֹהִים

The Creator (Genesis 1:1)

Elohim - created mankind in His own image for fellowship with Himself.

Elohim – rules, judges – over His works

Judges – called Elohim

Angels – called Elohim

Jehovah יְהוָה

The nature and character of God (Genesis 2:4)

The One who is.

The existing God.

He is who He is

The Line of Cain and the Line of Seth

Jehovah יְהוָה

Name used in Genesis 4

Cain and his descendants

Jehovah – holy, righteous God

Elohim אֱלֹהִים

Name used in Genesis 5

Seth and his descendants

Relationship

Descendants of Cain (Genesis 4:17-24)

Cain – Enoch - Irad – Mehujael – Methushael – Lamech

Enoch – Cain named city after his son Enoch

Lamech

Polygamy – 2 wives (Adah and Zillah)

Jabal (son of Adah) – father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock

Jubal (son of Adah) – father of those who play harp and flute.

Tubal-Cain (son of Zillah) – instructor of craftsmen in bronze and iron.

Sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.

Lamech murders a young man

Lamech has no fear of God. Proud of his sin. (4:23-24)

Genealogy

Adam – Noah.

Line of Seth

	Date BC			
Adam	4004		Adam	
Seth born	3874	130		130 Genesis 5:3
Adam died	3074	930		800 Genesis 5:4-5
			Seth	
Enosh born	3769	235		105 Genesis 5:6
Seth died	2962	1042		807 Genesis 5:7-8
			Enosh	
Cainan born	3679	325		90 Genesis 5:9
Enosh died	2864	1140		815 Genesis 5:10-11
			Cainan	
Mahalaleel born	3609	395		70 Genesis 5:12
Cainan died	2769	1235		840 Genesis 5:13-14
			Mahalaleel	
Jared born	3544	460		65 Genesis 5:15
Mahalaleel died	2714	1290		830 Genesis 5:16-17
			Jared	
Enoch born	3382	622		162 Genesis 5:18
Jared died	2582	1422		800 Genesis 5:19-20
			Enoch	
Methuselah born	3317	687		65 Genesis 5:21
Enoch departs	3017	987		300 Genesis 5:22-23
			Methuselah	
Lamech born	3130	874		187 Genesis 5:25
Methuselah died	2348	1656		782 Genesis 5:26-27
			Lamech	
Noah born	2948	1056		182 Genesis 5:28
Lamech died	2353	1651		595 Genesis 5:30-31
			Noah	
Ham Shem Japheth	2448	1556		500 Genesis 5:32
Date of the Flood	2348	1656		600 Genesis 7:11

Noah's Ark

Date of the flood according to Ussher c.2348-9 BC



Gen 6:14

Gopherwood

Compartments

Cover with pitch

Gen 6:15

300 cubits length

50 cubits wide

30 cubits high

wikipedia.org - public domain

Gen 6:16

Window cubit from top. Door on side. Lower, second and third floors.

Noah's Ark rested on Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4).



Mount Ararat – Picture by NASA (public domain)

Searching for Noah's Ark.

Noah's drunkenness (Genesis 9:20-14)

First mention of strong drink

Noah planted a vineyard.

Drank of the wine and became drunk.

Noah's drunkenness appears almost accidental.

Unaware of the dangers.

What did Ham do?

Ham looked upon his father's nakedness – but it was more than just looking.

His father knew what his younger son had done to him (Gen 9:24).

Shem and Japheth walked backwards and placed a blanket on their father.

Covered his nakedness without looking.

The Sons of Noah – the spread of the nations.

Ham (burning heat) – the races of Africa. Canaanites.

Shem (splendour or glory) - Semite nations. Israelites

Japheth (enlargement) – European nations

Cursed be Canaan – servitude

Blessed be the God of Shem (praise)

God will enlarge Japheth (promise)

Japheth will dwell in the tents of Shem.

The tents of Shem bring blessing to Japheth who will be enlarged and Canaan who will serve.



Genealogy

The Flood - Abram

	Date BC		Shem	
Date of the Flood	2348	1656		100 Genesis 11:10
Arphaxad born	2346	1658		102 Genesis 11:10
Shem died	1846	2158		500 Genesis 11:11
			Arphaxad	
Salah born	2311	1693		35 Genesis 11:12
Arphaxad died	1998	2006		403 Genesis 11:13
			Salah	
Eber born	2281	1723		30 Genesis 11:14
Salah died	1878	2126		403 Genesis 11:15
			Eber	
Peleg born	2247	1757		34 Genesis 11:16
Eber died	1817	2187		430 Genesis 11:17
			Peleg	
Reu born	2217	1787		30 Genesis 11:18
Peleg died	2008	1996		209 Genesis 11:19
			Reu	
Serug born	2185	1819		32 Genesis 11:20
Reu died	1978	2026		207 Genesis 11:21
			Serug	
Nahor born	2155	1849		30 Genesis 11:22
Serug died	1955	2049		200 Genesis 11:23
			Nahor	
Terah born	2126	1878		29 Genesis 11:24
Nahor died	2007	1997		119 Genesis 11:25
			Terah	
Abram, Nahor, Haran	2056	1948		70 Genesis 11:26
Alternative date	1996	2008		130
Sarai born	2046	1958		
Alternative date	1986	2018		
Terah died in Haran	1921	2083		205 Genesis 11:32

Nimrod and the founding of Babylon

Genesis 10:8-9

'And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.'

Nimrod's kingdom – King over the people.

Idolatry was central to the building of his kingdom.

Proverb 'Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD'.

'...before the LORD' Hebrew: פְנֵי מ 'paniyim'

Means in this context 'in opposition to the Lord'

His kingdom was established in rebellion against the LORD.

He introduced an idolatrous counterfeit. cf. Rev 17:5.

Nimrod

Genesis 10:8-10 ‘And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.’

Babel - Babylon

Erech - Uruk (Warka)

Accad - Akkad

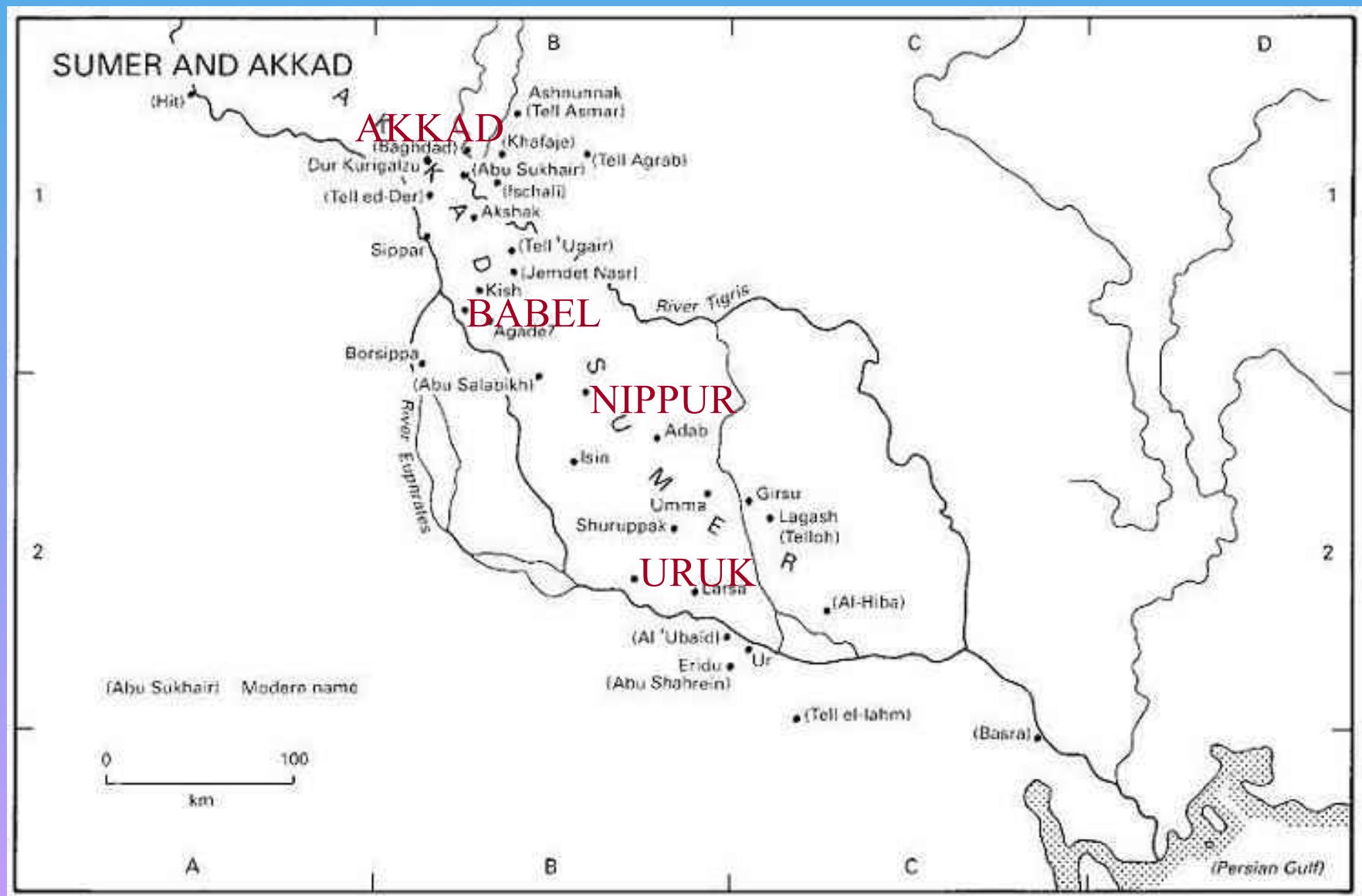
Calneh – possibly Nippur

Cities dedicated to particular deity.

Uruk dedicated to Inanna (Mother goddess).

Nippur dedicated to Enlil

The rise of Babylon and the kingdom of Nimrod



Found at Warka – Uruk (Erech Gen 10:10)

Dedicated to Ishtar (Inanna)

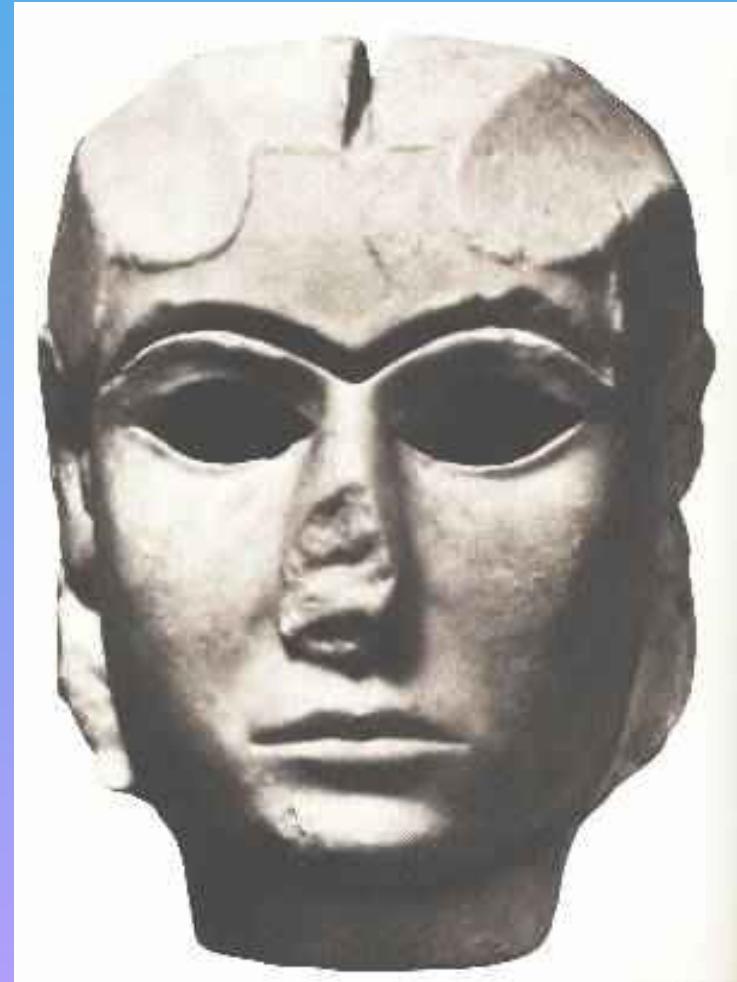
Kingdom of Nimrod.

1. Face of a woman from Uruk

Made of Marble.

Size 20.3cm

Date c. 3000 BC



Found at Warka – Uruk (Erech Gen 10:10)

2. Religious Votive Cone '(freewill offering cone made on behalf of the King)

Made by priests.

Pilgrims bought the cones to place them in the wall of the temple to the goddess Ishtar (Inanna). It was an offering for the welfare of the King.

'For Sin-ga-shid, the mighty hero, King of Erech, King of Amanu, in the temple of the goddess Ishtar which he built in the royal residence of his kingdom.'

Date: 2100 BC



Accad (Akkad)

Flourished under **Sargon** c.2334 BC.

Who established an Akkadian Empire.

Daughter of Sargon made priestess of moon god in Ur

She took the name Enheduanna – wrote hymns to the gods of Babylon

She was succeeded by Enmenanna, a daughter of **Naram-Sin**.



Sargon

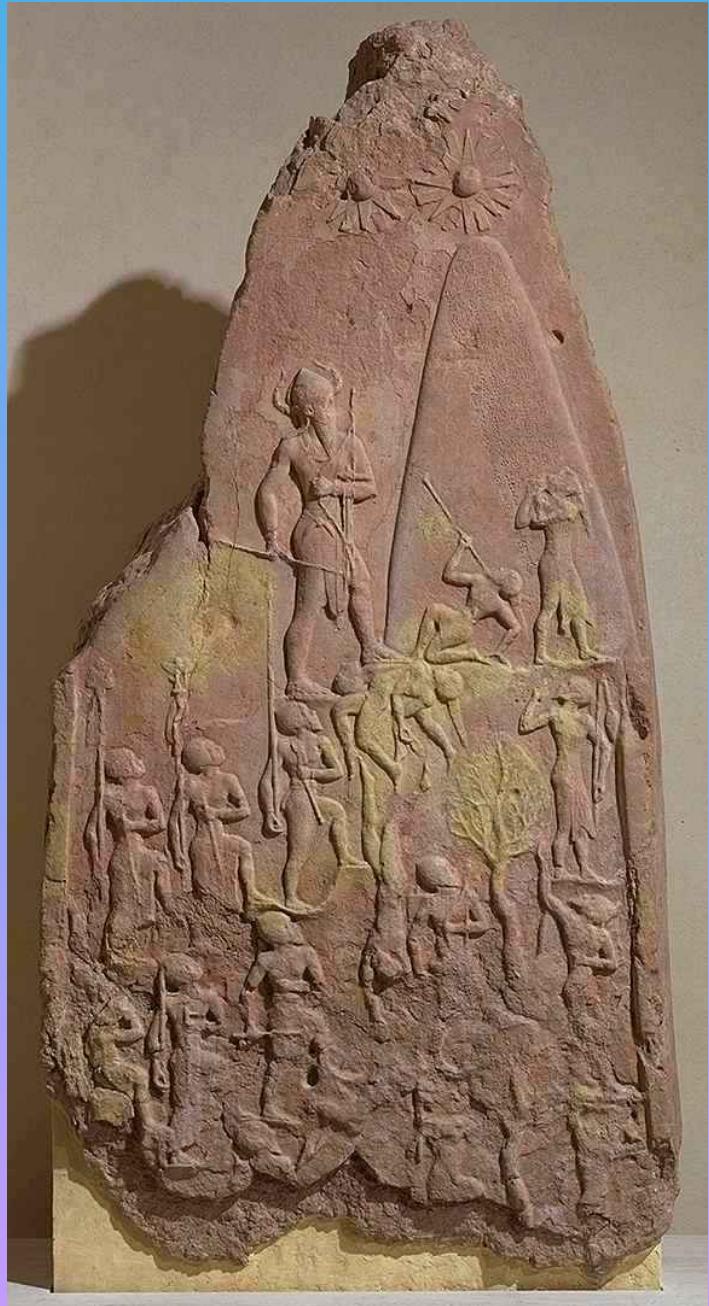
Accad (Akkad)

Naram-Sin the grandson of Sargon

Stele of Naram-Sin King of Akkad showing his victory over King Satuni of the Lullubi tribe from Zagros c.2230 BC.

The Akkadian King leads his troops under the protection of the gods. His horned helmet denotes his deity, and he tramples his enemies under his feet.

Kept in the Louvre, Paris.



Akkadian language

The Akkadian language became the language of diplomacy in the Ancient Near East.

Cuneiform tablets have been found at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in the languages of Sumerian, Hurrian, Akkadian, and another language known as Ugaritic.

Calneh (location unknown possibly Nippur)

Nippur was dedicated to Enlil



The ziggurat of the temple of Enlil in Nippur.

More cities built.

Genesis 10

11 Out of that land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and Rehoboth-Ir, and Calah,

12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (the same is the great city).

Nineveh - Kuyunjik

Rehoboth-Ir (Not known)

Calah - Nimrud

Resen (Not known)

Nineveh dedicated to Inanna

Nineveh - Kuyunjik

Founded by Ninus (Nimrod)

Situated by the Tigris

Known for worship to the goddess Ishtar
(also known as Inanna)



Image of Inanna from c. 2254-2193 BC

The Libraries of Nineveh

Kuyunjik (Nineveh).

Two libraries of cuneiform clay tablets were discovered in Nineveh.

- In the Palace of Sennacherib, and
- In the Palace of Ashurbanipal. Ashurbanipal reigned Assyria between 669-633 BC.

Over 20,000 clay tablets were found in the ruins.

They are all damaged so they probably form about 10,000 texts.

The Epic of Gilgamesh

It was in the library of Ashurbanipal that the Epic of Gilgamesh was found.

The tablets are now in the British Museum.

The author of the epic was a person called Shin-eqi-unninni.

Gilgamesh is thought to have reigned over Uruk in Babylonia c.2500.

The Epic consists of 12 stone tablets written in the Akkadian language

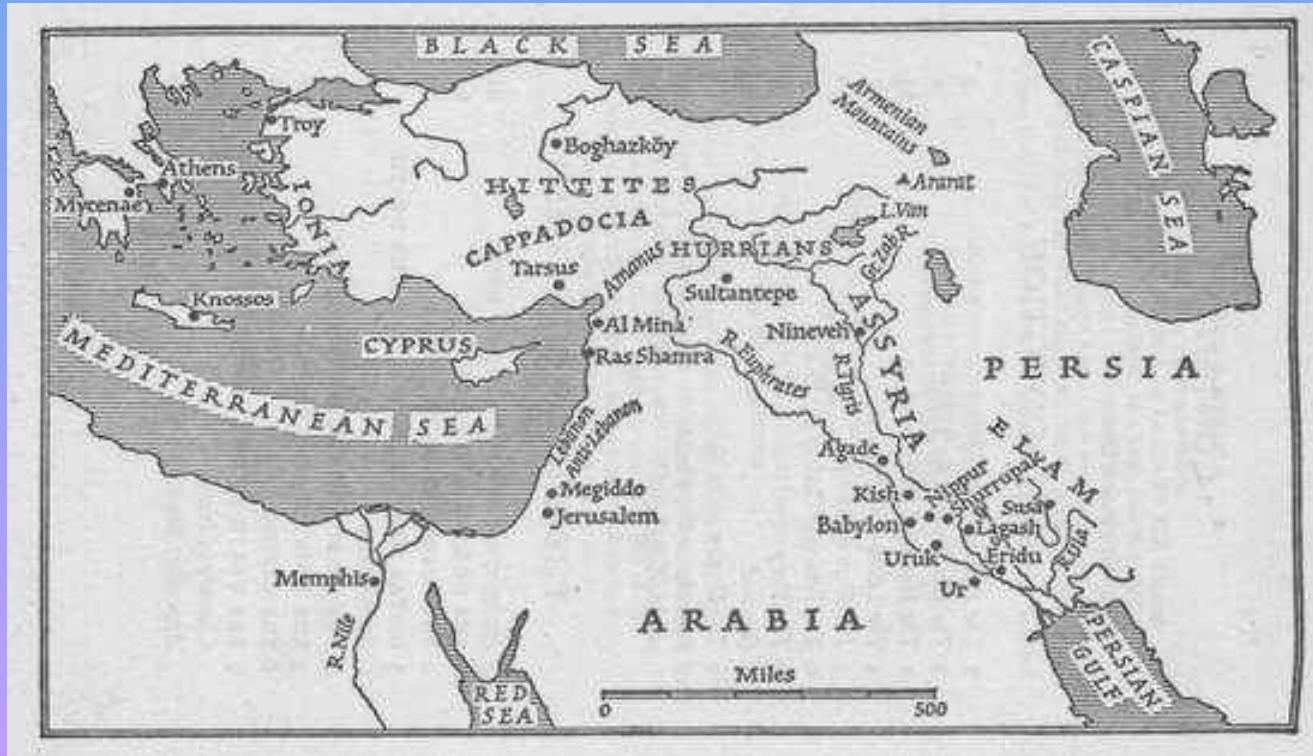
Tablet XI contains the Babylonian record of the flood.

Epic of Gilgamesh - King of Uruk (c.2700 BC)

Poem telling the story of Gilgamesh's journey to find the spring of youth.

The futile search for immortality.

The Babylonian record of the flood is contained within the epic of Gilgamesh.



Babylonian record of the flood



Tablet XI

Gilgamesh Epic

The flood to destroy the world. Utnapishtim built an ark to preserve living things. When the flood ended birds were sent out to see if they found dry land.

British Museum

Calah - Nimrud

30km South East of Mosul

Assyrian palace found here
by Austen Henry Layard
(1817-1894).

The Black Obelisk (Jehu)
was found here in 1845



Tower of Babel (Date c. 2233 BC)

Genesis 11:1-9

Babylon (Akkadian 'Babilu') means 'Gateway of the god'

One language – sound

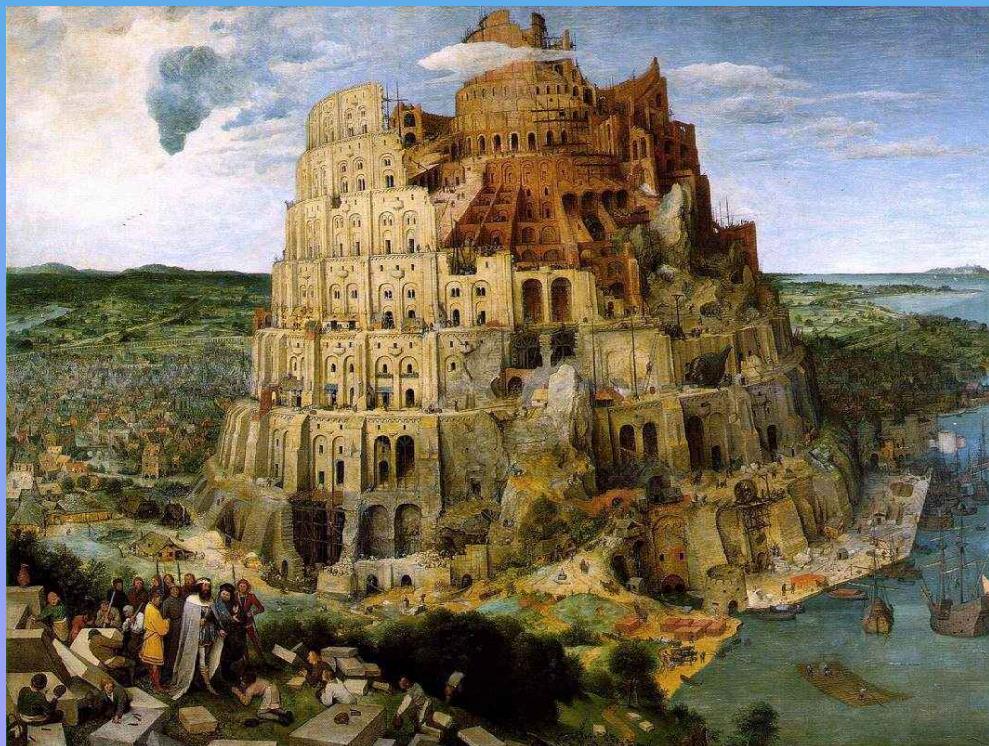
- One speech - words
- Refusing to obey the word of the Lord.
- God scattered the nations by confusing the languages

Character of the builders of Babel – Let Us

Man's independence of God, exaltation of himself, rebellion against God's word.

- Self Dependence – man made materials (means to glorify themselves)
- Self Exaltation – let us build to the heavens (a city and a tower)
- Self Adoration – let us make us a name (to be worshipped)

Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)



Tower of Babel by Peter Bruegel (1563)
Museum Boymans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam.

Tower of Babel was a Ziggurat.

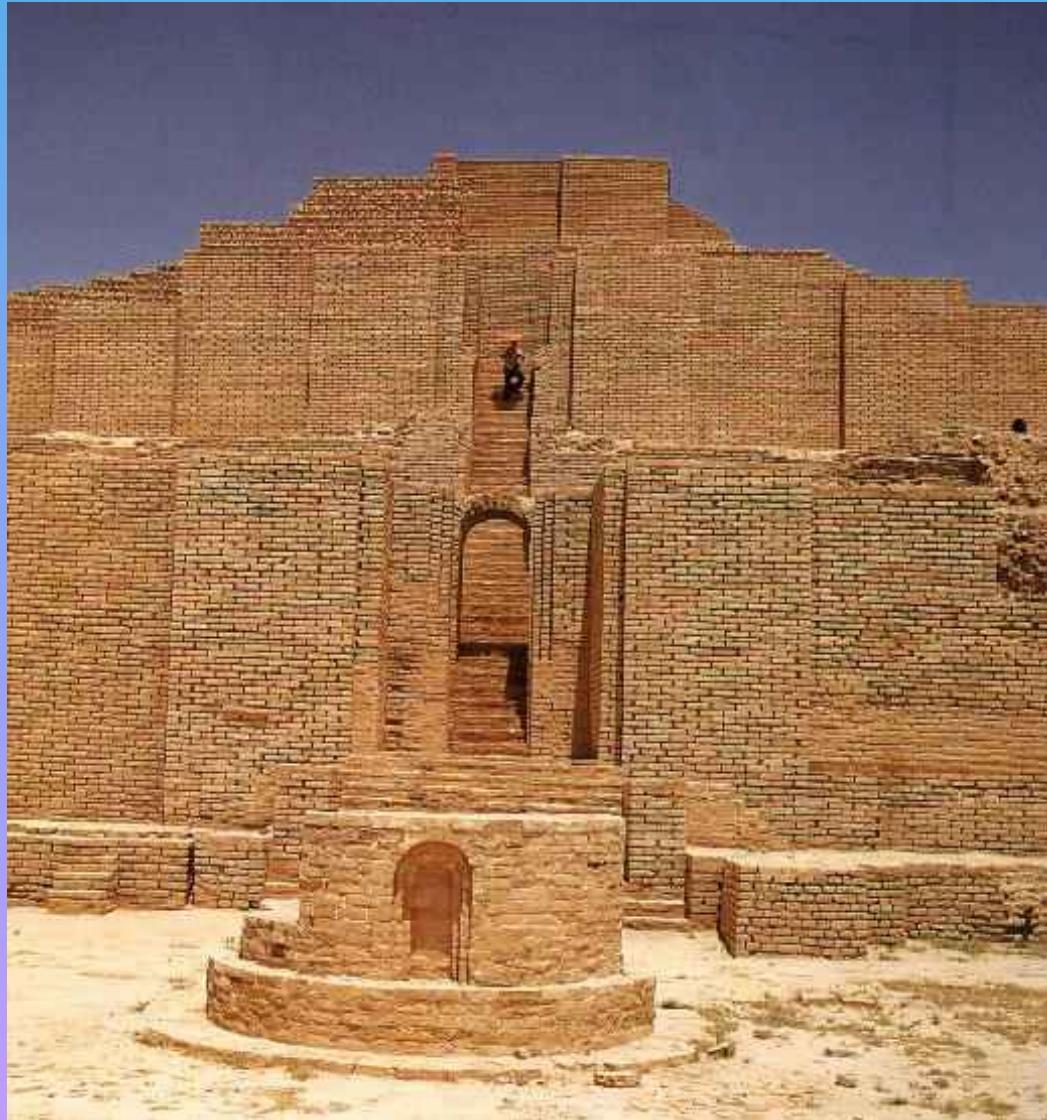
It was built by Nimrod in opposition to worship of the true God.

The Tower of Babel is the origin of idol worship. See Revelation 17:5

The worship of the Mother and child began with Babylonian religion through Nimrod's wife, Semiramis.

Nebuchadnezzar's hanging gardens were named after her.

Ziggurat



Ziggurat means 'rise high'.

It had different stages.

The Ziggurat was associated with temple worship.

Josephus Book 1 Chapter IV

2. (113) Now it was **Nimrod** who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was **the grandson of Ham**, the son of Noah—a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe to God, as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness.

(114) He also gradually **changed the government into tyranny**, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. **He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! and that he would avenge himself on God for killing their forefathers!**

3. (115) Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of **Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God**; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work; and by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than anyone could expect;

Josephus then gives the same account as scripture. (Genesis 11:1-9)

Built of burnt brick (for stone) and bitumen (for mortar)

(116) but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was. **It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water.** When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners;

(117) but he caused a tumult among them, by producing in them various languages, and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. **The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon; because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, Confusion.**

Josephus quotes the account of the Sibyl.

The first part corresponds with scripture.

The account of the destruction of the tower does not come from scripture.

(118) **The Sibyl** also makes mention of this tower, and of the confusion of the language, when she says thus:—

“When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven; but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave everyone a peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon.”

{a} Moses Charenenses, an Armenian historian, states that God overthrew this tower by a terrible storm.

(119) But as to the plan of Shinar, in the country of Babylonia, Hestiaeus mentions it, when he says thus:—"Such of the priests as were saved, took the sacred vessels of Jupiter, (Enyalius,) or conqueror and came to Shinar of Babylonia."

The Tower of Babel and the Spread of Religion from Babylon

Revelation 17

3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Babylonian religion - Mystery Religion

Anu – the father of the Anunnaki.

Anunnaki – the High Council of the Sumerian gods

Triad

Anu (the sky god) –
the Head.

Enlil – the inheritor of
the throne and

Enki (Ea) – regarded
as the creator

Annuna – fifty great gods

Igigi – minor gods



Understanding the mysteries

The son of Enlil and Ninlil is Nanna (Ninlil was raped)

En was the chief priest - 'lil' means 'air'

Nin means lady

This could be based on Genesis 3 where Satan deceived Eve

Nanna means illuminator

The son of Nanna – Shamash (Sun)

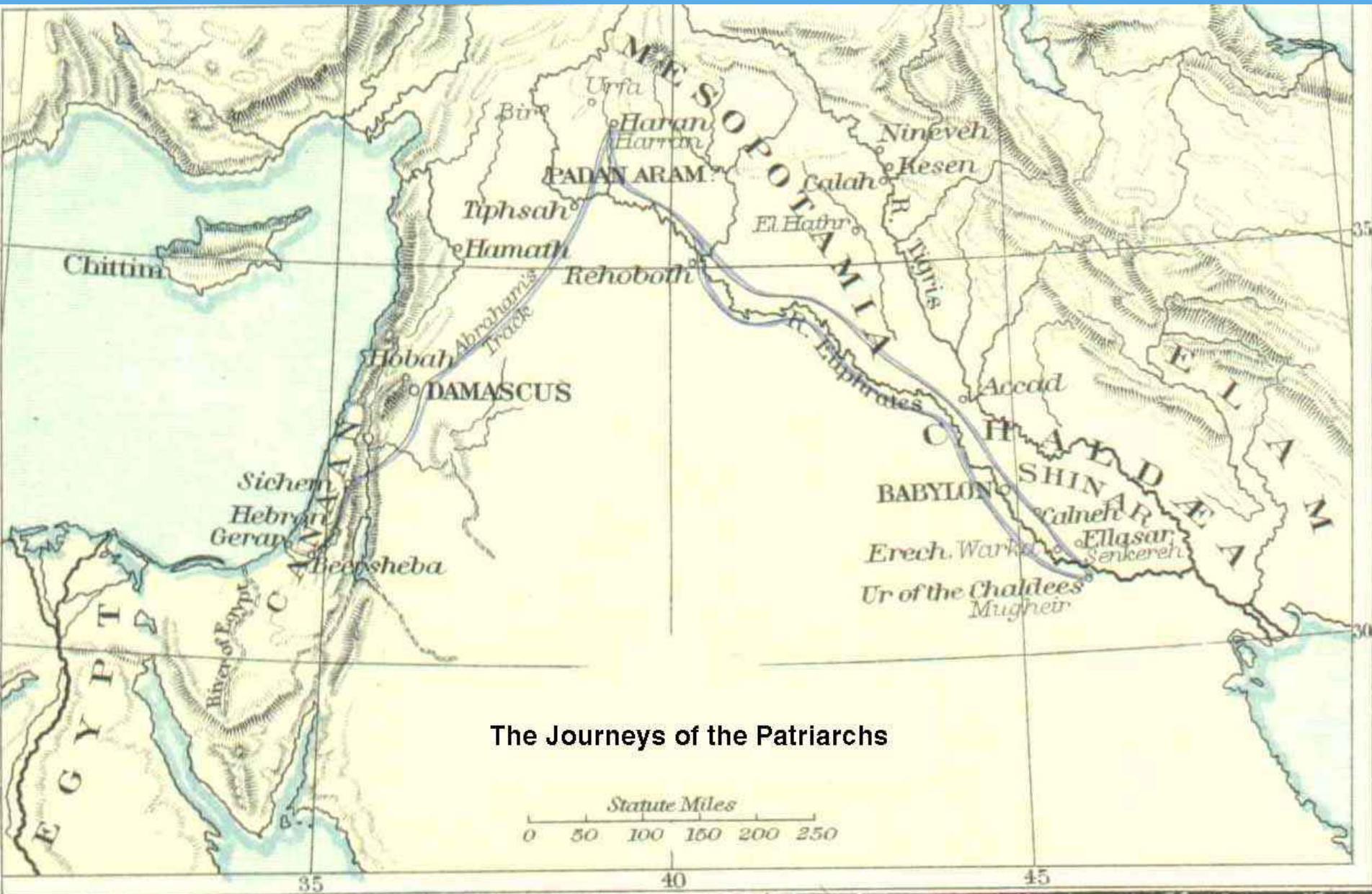
The consort of Shamash – Aya (Dawn)

Nanna the moon god was greater than Shamash the sun god. Nanna is the interpreter of the mystery. Shamash receives light from Nanna, Aya the dawn arises from the revelation given to Shamash.

Epic of Gilgamesh - Inanna daughter of Anu.

Inanna also known as Ishtar- Mother goddess.

Abram left Ur with his father and his wife, Sarai, and His nephew Lot for Haran. (Genesis 11:31)



Abram's family worshipped the Babylonian gods

Joshua 24:2-3

'And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the river in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the river, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.'

Nanna (Sin) – god of the moon

Worshipped primarily in Ur and Haran

Nanna was one of the three sky deities

Nanna – the moon god

Shamash – the sun god

Ishtar (Inanna) – the queen of the heavens (goddess of love and war).

Nanna was the father of Shamash who was the escort of Aya (Dawn)



Ziggurat

The Temple
of the Moon
god Nanna
in Ur

The Ziggurat of Ur as seen by Google



The Ziggurat at Ur. (Picture by US Military)



The City of Ur (Tell el-Mukayyar)

Ur was located East of the River Euphrates.

The course of the Euphrates appears to have changed which explains why the place thought to have been Abram's home is now west of the Euphrates.

Population: estimated at up to 65,000. Ur was possibly the largest city in the world (c.2030 – 1980 BC).

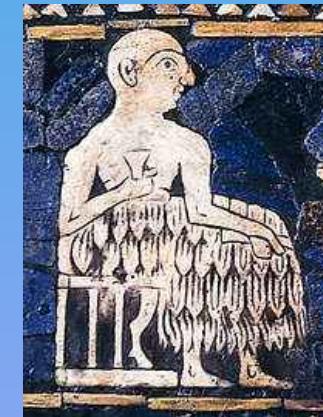
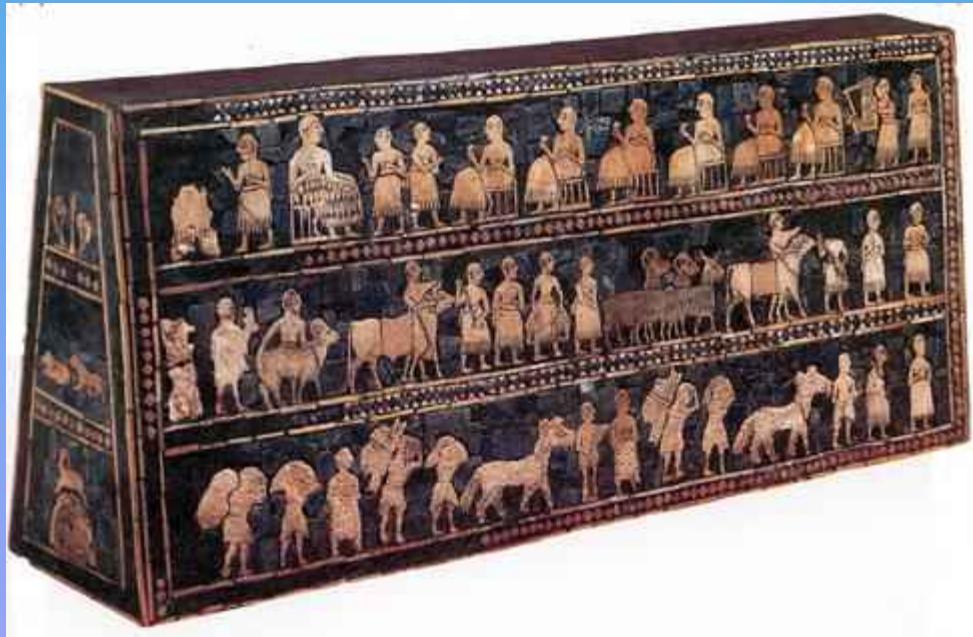
Language: Sumerian till about c. 2000BC then Akkadian

Law: Had its own law code

Zur-Nammu of Ur (C.2050 BC)

This was almost three centuries before the famous Law Code of Hammurabi (1780 BC).

Ur of the Chaldees



Peace



War

Kept in the British Museum

c. 2600 – 2400BC – Thought to have been carried on a pole as a Standard from Ur of Chaldees. One side depicts War and one side depicts Peace.

The Code of Hammurabi (1780 BC)



This is one of the earliest codes of law.

Hammurabi (1792-1750 BC). King of Babylonia.

Carving at the top shows Hammurabi being given the symbols of authority from the god Marduk.

Inscribed with 282 laws concerning business, property, work, family, injury.

Found: Susa

Now kept in the Louvre, Paris

Height: 2.25m Width: 0.65m

Mari

If Abram followed the Euphrates River when he left Ur then he would have passed through Mari on his way from Ur to Haran.



Image of Intendant Ebih II
from the Temple of Ishtar in
Mari – Louvre Museum

Modern city at time of Abraham – city destroyed by Hammurabi (1759 BC)

City known for hair styles and clothes

Major trade centre

Worshipped Sumerian gods and goddesses

Temple of Dagan

Temple of Ishtar (goddess of Fertility)

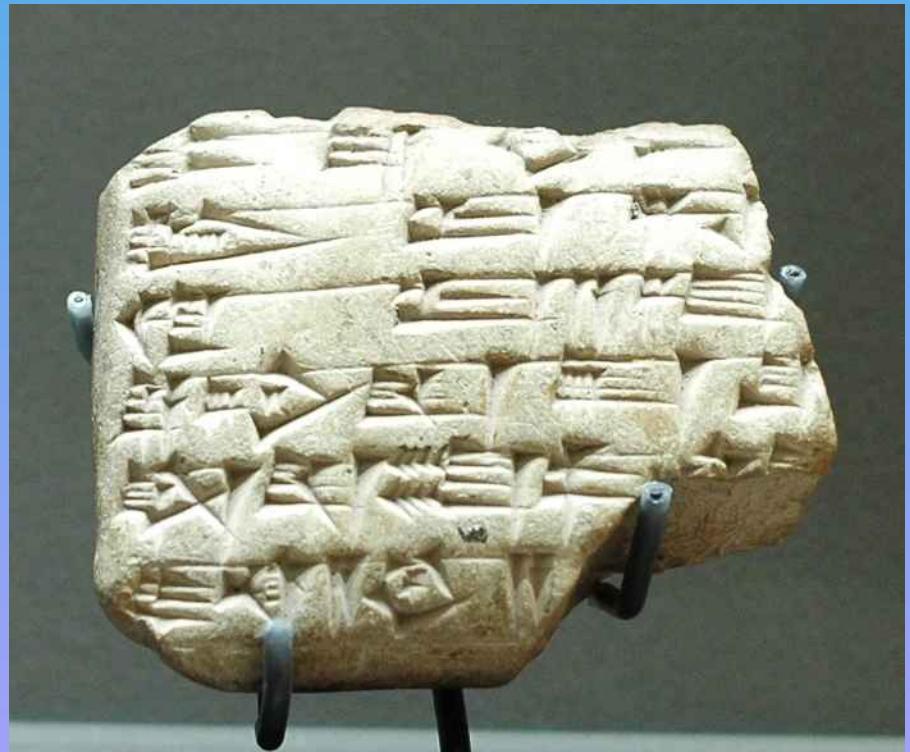
Temple of Shamash (Sun god)

Expansion of trade from Mari meant that knowledge of Sumerian gods taken to cities such as Ebla and Ugarit and integrated within their religious systems.

Palace of Mari

Tablet of King Zimri-Lin (c.1780 BC) from the Palace of Mari.

Kept: Louvre, Paris



25,000 cuneiform tablets were found in the palace of Mari.

The tablets give details concerning matters of state.

Haran

Centre for the worship of the Moon god Sin (Babylonian)



Bee-houses in Haran.

Made without wood.

This style of house was used in Haran for over 3000 years.

Abram's father, Terah, died in Haran. Abram left Haran to go to Canaan with Sarai and his nephew Lot.

Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.