

## Chapter 11: Mesoamerica

Lesson	TE pages	ST pages	AM pages	Content and skill objectives	Vocabulary
117	325–30	289–94	159–63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate on a map the site of the ancient Mesoamerican civilizations, modern Mesoamerica and its regions, and the surrounding countries</li> <li>• Color a map of Mesoamerica according to a key</li> <li>• Analyze the obstacles to discovering the origins and history of Mesoamerica's ancient civilizations</li> <li>• Analyze the different possible migrations of people to the continents of North and South America</li> <li>• Describe Mesoamerica today</li> <li>• Describe the discovery and use of rubber</li> <li>• Trace the history and the impact the Olmec civilization had on other Mesoamerican civilizations</li> </ul>	anthropologist basalt
118	331	295	164	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw conclusions based on observations</li> <li>• Determine the characteristics of a person based on his possessions</li> </ul>	
119	332–35	296–99	159–62, 165, 241–51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret and compare photographs</li> <li>• Identify the period and trace the history of the Mayas as they developed into a civilization</li> <li>• Describe Mayan achievements</li> <li>• Evaluate the contribution of Diego de Landa to the knowledge of the Mayas</li> <li>• Identify the importance of being able to read Mayan hieroglyphs</li> <li>• Describe the physical appearances of the Mayan people</li> </ul>	cenote codex
120	336	300		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illustrate the appearance of a Maya</li> <li>• Sculpt a model from clay</li> </ul>	
121	337–40	301–4	159–62, 166	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Mayan dress for men and women</li> <li>• Sequence the steps of Mayan farming during the dry season</li> <li>• Describe the level of social classes in the Mayan civilization</li> <li>• Describe Mayan dress</li> <li>• Explain the importance of the cacao bean to the Mayas</li> <li>• Describe the types of Mayan homes</li> <li>• Describe the daily lives of the various levels in Mayan society</li> </ul>	stucco maize
122	341–44	305–8	159–62, 167	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguish social-class characteristics of the Mayas</li> <li>• Describe the role of women in the Mayan society</li> <li>• Discuss trading in the Mayan civilization</li> <li>• Analyze the Mayan religion</li> <li>• Identify the religious significance of the Mayan ball game</li> <li>• Discuss the decline of the Mayan civilization</li> </ul>	obsidian appease
123	345	309	159–62, 168–69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contrast Egyptian pyramids with Mesopotamian pyramids</li> <li>• Experience making a codex in the same style the Mayas used</li> <li>• Illustrate the use of an organizer for comprehending the content in a lesson</li> </ul>	
124	346–49	310–13	159–62, 170–71, 241–51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast the Aztecs with the Mayas using a Venn diagram</li> <li>• Examine the Bible to answer questions concerning the worship of idols</li> <li>• Trace the migration and development of the Aztec civilization</li> <li>• Describe the unusual location and building of the city of Tenochtitlán</li> <li>• Contrast Aztec beliefs with biblical truth</li> <li>• Describe the military ability and objectives of the Aztecs</li> <li>• Describe the Aztec social structure</li> </ul>	chinampa causeway conquistador
125	350–52	314–16	159–62, 170, 172–73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contrast Mesoamerican beliefs with biblical truth</li> <li>• Identify places on a map of Mesoamerica</li> <li>• Evaluate the economy of the Aztec civilization</li> <li>• Discuss the significance of the Aztecs' language and technological advances</li> <li>• Analyze the effect the Spanish invasion had on the demise of the Aztec civilization</li> </ul>	dike
126	353	290–316	174	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recall concepts and terms from Chapter 11</li> </ul>	
127	353			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of concepts from Chapter 11 by taking the test</li> </ul>	

**A complete materials list for the chapter is provided on the Teacher's Toolkit CD.**

# Chapter 11



## Mesoamerica

### Chapter Overview

How could the Mesoamerican people accomplish so much being so far removed and unknown to the rest of the world? That the Olmecs, the Mayas, and the Aztecs had the same intellectual ability as other well-developed civilizations reflects the truth that man was created in the image of God. In addition to examining the accomplishments of the Mesoamericans, this chapter also explores their religious beliefs and practices, which reveal the sinful nature of man in its darkest form and a distorted concept of redemption.



#### TEACHER HELPS

**Web links**—Check [www.bjupress.com/resources](http://www.bjupress.com/resources) for Web links that will enhance your lessons. Links have been carefully selected from reputable sites. However, be sure to carefully evaluate all material before you present it. Also be aware that links to some sites may become outdated, though efforts are made to keep them current.



**Learning names of modern countries**—Challenge the student to learn and memorize the names and locations of the modern countries in the region covered in this chapter. Blank outline maps are provided on the CD.

### ♦ Lesson 117 ♦

#### Objectives

- Analyze the obstacles to discovering the origins and history of Mesoamerica's ancient civilizations
- Analyze the different possible migrations of people to the continents of North and South America
- Describe Mesoamerica today
- Describe the discovery and use of rubber
- Trace the history and the impact the Olmec civilization had on other Mesoamerican civilizations

#### Vocabulary

anthropologist  
basalt

#### Materials

- Chapter 11 Organizer, AM pp. 159–62
- globe
- The Bering Strait, M 11.1
- Mesoamerica Then & Now, M 11.2

#### Preview

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

#### Introduction

Direct attention to Student Text page 289.

► Look at the large structure in the background. What type of structure from other ancient civilizations does it remind you of? *the Mesopotamian ziggurat and the Egyptian pyramid*

► The people who built this structure were unaware of the civilizations in other parts of the world. In this chapter you will learn about these people and their highly advanced way of life.

## Teach for Understanding

## Discussion

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Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

- 💡 Were the people from what is now Mexico and Central America uncivilized and unskilled when European explorers first met them? *no*
- What were some of the skills of the ancient American peoples? *art, mathematics, and architecture*
- How did the ancient American civilizations exist for many years without being seen by the rest of the world? *Vast oceans isolated the Americas.*
- 💡 Why do you think there are so many unanswered questions about the ancient civilizations of the Americas? *possible answer: There are few written records and artifacts from them.*
- ✳ Use a globe to find the locations of civilizations already studied.
- ✳ Direct the student to compare distances between European and Asian countries with distances between those countries and the Americas.
- ✳ Other than South America and North America, what continent is closest to Central America? *Africa*

Direct attention to the timeline at the bottom of the page.

- ☒ Which civilizations began after the birth of Christ? *the Mayan and the Aztec civilizations*
- ☒ Which ancient civilization lasted the longest? *Olmec*
- ☒ Which ancient civilization was the last to exist in Mesoamerica? *Aztec*



## Answers

1. Archaeological findings vary on where these people migrated from.
2. the Olmecs

1. Why is it difficult to know where the early Americans came from?

2. What was probably the oldest Mesoamerican civilization?



world. Consider the boat technology needed to make such a voyage between continents.

A number of questions surround the beginnings of people in the Americas. Where did these civilizations originate?

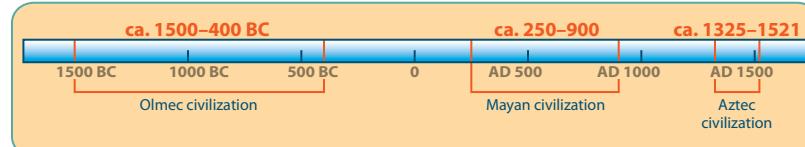
## The Other Side of the World

Thousands of miles from Rome and Greece, people lived in what is now part of Mexico and Central America. They were accomplished artists, mathematicians, and builders. Their huge civilizations were a secret from the outside world until Christopher Columbus met one of their sailors on his voyage to the Americas. Even then, it was years before a European saw their cities.

Notice on the globe the vast oceans that separate the continents of North and South America from the other continents. These oceans isolated the ancient American civilizations from the rest of the



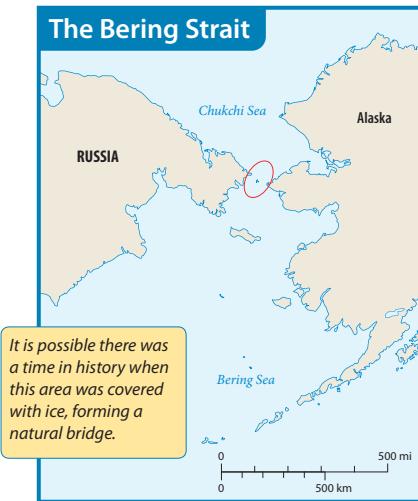
How did the ancients get to the Americas? Why did they migrate? These questions still mystify scholars today.



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In the next lesson you will need to provide an unlabeled paper bag for each student for an archaeology activity. The student will bring ten items that give a hint of his habits and activities.



So far, archaeological findings vary on where these people migrated from. Some **anthropologists** (scientists who study the origins of man) think that

they migrated from Africa. Others link together evidence that early Americans may have come from Asia, particularly India or China. The most popular theory suggests that migration to North America started as people crossed over the Bering Strait into what is now Alaska. Migration then continued southward to an ancient region researchers call **Mesoamerica** (MEZ oh uh MEHR ih kuh). *Meso-* comes from the Greek word for "middle." Mesoamerica includes lands from central Mexico to Costa Rica in Central America.

From studying the Bible we know that God created Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. All people descended from them. We know the whole world was covered with a flood and Noah and his family were the only survivors. But how did some of their descendants finally arrive in the Americas? There is much about the past that is not known. Archaeologists continue to study, trying to piece together possible answers.



An archaeologist at work

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## Discussion

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- What do anthropologists study? *the origins of man*
- What does the Bible teach about the origin of man? *God created man*.
- What are some of the theories anthropologists hold about where the ancient Americans migrated from? *Early Americans may have migrated from Africa or Asia (India or China). People from what is now Russia may have crossed the Bering Strait into what is now Alaska and continued southward.*
- Display *The Bering Strait map.*

**💡 Why do you think most anthropologists suggest that the Bering Strait is where people migrated to the Americas?** *possible answers: It is the closest location to another continent. It is possible that a natural bridge of ice once existed where the strait is.*

- If a bridge of ice across the Bering Strait existed, it would have had to form after what important biblical event? *It would have formed after the Flood; otherwise, the bridge would have been destroyed.*
- How did Mesoamerica get its name? *Meso- is from the Greek word for "middle" and describes the location of the land in the central portion of the Americas.*
- What lands are included in Mesoamerica? *central Mexico to Costa Rica in Central America*

**📘 How do we know that people have not always lived in the Americas?** *Noah and his family were the only survivors after the Flood. Noah's descendants began to migrate to different parts of the world, and eventually some people migrated to the Americas.*



### Ice bridge across the Bering Strait

—Some scientists claim that the ice bridge existed about twenty thousand years ago. If an ice bridge had existed that long ago, however, it would have been destroyed in the Flood. This does not mean that there could not have been an ice bridge in that area after the time of Noah; other changes on the earth that we do not know about could have taken place after the Flood. Some scientists theorize that the Flood caused an ice age.

## The Region Today

### Discussion

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- ❖ Display the Mesoamerica Then & Now map.
- ❖ Locate and describe the area of Mesoamerica. *It extends from near the middle of Mexico to the central part of Central America.*
- ❖ What is the name of the landmass extending into the Gulf of Mexico? *the Yucatán Peninsula*
- ❖ Caption answer: *Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala*
- Describe the climate of the region today. *The Yucatán Peninsula is dry in the north with more rain in the south. The southernmost region of Mesoamerica has mild temperatures.*
- How do the locations in the area differ in topography? *The peninsula is a lowland, the central lands have rainforests, and the southernmost land has mountains and plateaus.*
- What are the natural resources of the rainforest and highlands? *Lumber and rich soil for growing coffee, cotton, rubber trees, spices, and bananas*
- What crops are grown in the northern region? *cocoa (made from cacao beans) and sugar cane*
- What water sources are in Mesoamerica? *natural lakes and rivers*



**Activity Manual**—Section C on page 163 in the Activity Manual may be completed following the above map questions instead of at the end of the lesson.

### Mesoamerica

**Location**—Mesoamerica extends from near the middle of Mexico to the central part of Central America. It includes the **Yucatán** (yoo kuh TAN) **Peninsula**, which is the landmass extending into the Gulf of Mexico in present-day southern Mexico. **Climate**—The northern part of the Yucatán Peninsula is dry, receiving only 20–40 inches (51–102 cm) of rain per year. The southern part receives more. The temperatures in the peninsula range from 68°F to over 86°F (20°C–30°C). Lands south of the peninsula have temperatures averaging around 80°F (27°C) and receive almost daily rain. The mountains in the

southernmost region of Mesoamerica have a mild climate and receive 20–30 inches (51–76 cm) of rain per year.

**Topography**—The peninsula is a lowland with thin soil. The central lands are mainly rainforest. The southernmost land rises into mountains and plateaus.

**Natural Resources**—The rainforest and highlands offer rich sources of lumber and good places to grow coffee, cotton, rubber trees, spices, and bananas. The northern region provides the right conditions for growing cocoa and sugar cane. Many minerals, natural lakes, and rivers can be found throughout the region.



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Olmec head in Villahermosa, Mexico

located in Mexico on the northeastern coast of Mesoamerica.

Very few written records exist about the Olmec culture and its everyday life. Historians do know from archaeological evidence that the Olmecs lived near rivers and were hunters and fishermen as well as farmers.

The most famous findings from the Olmec civilization

are gigantic stone heads. The Olmecs carved these heads from stone, jade, and a volcanic rock called **basalt**. Some of the stones were from as far away as sixty miles and weighed over forty tons. It is astonishing to people today that the Olmecs could accomplish the seemingly impossible feat of transporting these huge stones. Some archaeologists suggest that the Olmecs floated the stone heads down rivers on rafts.



Olmec ceramic fish container

- What is one way the Olmecs could have transported the stone heads? *by floating the stone heads down a river on a raft*

## Olmechs

The ancient **Olmec civilization** is considered one of the earliest great civilizations in Mesoamerica. Its culture developed around 1500 BC. Historians believe the Olmecs lived along the southern Gulf Coast of Mexico. The Olmec civilization declined by about 400 BC.

The major center of the Olmec civilization included the cities of Tenochtitlán (teh NOHCH tee TLAHN), San Lorenzo, and Potrero Nuevo. Historians call this urban center **San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán**. San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán had water and drainage systems. Houses were constructed of wood, clay, and palm leaves. Another city, **La Venta**, was one of the largest and most famous Olmec cities. La Venta was

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## Discussion

page 293

- When did the Olmec civilization develop? *around 1500 BC*
- Where do historians believe the Olmecs lived? *along the southern Gulf Coast of Mexico*
- How do we know the Olmecs had an advanced system of living for that time? *They had water and drainage systems in their cities.*
- What was the major urban center of the Olmec civilization? *San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán*
- What is the name of another large and famous Olmec city? *La Venta*
- ❖ Display the *Mesoamerica Then & Now* map.
- ❖ Locate the Olmec area on the map. Locate the ancient cities of San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán and La Venta.
- 💡 Why do we have very few details about the Olmec culture? *Few written records about it exist.*
- What have archaeologists been able to discover about the occupations of the Olmecs? *The Olmecs were hunters, fishermen, and farmers.*
- What is the most famous archaeological finding from the Olmec civilization? *gigantic stone heads*
- What is astonishing about the stone heads? *The heads are very heavy, yet some were found many miles from any source of their stone. People today wonder how the heads were transported.*

**Discussion**

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- Why was the culture of the Olmecs important to the rest of the Mesoamerican civilizations? *Many of the Olmec beliefs and customs were passed on to other Mesoamerican civilizations.*
- Why did historians name the civilization the Olmecs? *Olmec means "rubber people"; the Olmecs are believed to be among the first people to use the substance that was later known as rubber.*
- Why were cahuchu trees important to the Olmecs? *The Olmecs used the sap to make everyday items.*
- What do we call the sap from these trees today? *Latex*
- What was useful about items made from the cahuchu sap? *They were waterproof.*
- What items did the Olmecs make from the sap? *Items included containers, foot coverings, and bouncing balls.*
- 💡 What do you think they did with the balls they made from rubber? *possible answer: played games with them*
- In what century was cahuchu sap taken to Europe for further experimentation? *the eighteenth century (1700s)*
- How did the substance get the name rubber? *It was used to rub away pencil marks.*
- What are some items we use today that are made of rubber? *possible answers: tires, surgical gloves, shoes (the soles)*

**Activity Manual**

Study Skill—pages 159–62

This codex organizer will be made into a Mayan book (codex) in the Discovering How activity in Lesson 123.

Reinforcement—page 163

**MAKING RUBBER**

The Olmecs are believed to have been among the first people to use rubber. The name Olmec means "rubber people." The Olmecs and the people of later Mesoamerican civilizations developed a method to collect sap from trees. The people called these trees *cahuchu* ("weeping trees"). The cahuchu sap is a milky white liquid. Today it is known as latex. Early Mesoamericans used it to make waterproof items such as containers and foot coverings. It also was used to make balls that bounced.

By the 1700s, cahuchu sap had been taken to Europe. Scientists experimented and developed new uses for it. In 1770 Joseph Priestley found that pieces of the hardened sap could be used to rub away pencil marks. This use led to the substance being called "rubber."

Today latex and rubber products are used every day. The tires of cars, the soles of shoes, and the gloves used by surgeons are just a few of the items made of rubber.

Latex being collected



Many of the Olmec beliefs and customs were passed on to other Mesoamerican civilizations. The calendar used for centuries in Mexico may have originated with the Olmecs. Astronomy

was important to them, and later peoples continued studying the heavenly bodies. Some historians believe that the Olmecs were the first to play a ritual ball game that became popular in later Mesoamerican civilizations.

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**Items for Lesson 118**—Assign the students to collect and bring in the items needed for the activity in Lesson 118. See the materials list and "Paper bags" under Teacher Helps in that lesson.

**Activity**

**Rubber collection and photo gallery**—Direct the student to put together a collection of items made from rubber. Large items, such as tires, may be represented with pictures for convenience. Encourage the student to make an identification tag for each item that includes the uses of the item. Additional information from research, such as where the item was manufactured, could also be included.

## Exploring Together

### Drawing Conclusions as an Archaeologist

What do you think of when you hear the word *archaeologist*? Do you think of a person exploring dark caves or dusty ruins? Do you picture a person sitting with a magnifying glass studying an artifact? The job of an archaeologist includes these tasks and many others. An important part of an archaeologist's job is to use artifacts and other evidence to determine characteristics of the people he is studying.

1. Collect ten items at home that tell about you. Place them in an unlabeled paper bag and staple it closed. Give the closed bag to your teacher. Take care not to let anyone see the items.
2. Work with a partner. Get two stapled bags from your teacher. Open one bag and examine the items inside.
3. Use the questions on the Activity Manual page to help determine the habits and activities of the items' owner. Discuss your ideas with your partner and record your conclusions.
4. Repeat this process with the second bag.
5. Share your results. Try to identify the owner of each bag.



### ◆ Lesson 118 ◆

#### Objectives

- Draw conclusions based on observations
- Determine the characteristics of a person based on his possessions

#### Vocabulary

There are no vocabulary words to introduce.

#### Materials

- paper bag of items for each student (See Teacher Helps.)

#### Introduction

► **Being an archaeologist requires good investigative skills. An archaeologist makes his conclusions based on his**

**observations. He also bases his assumptions on his worldview.**

Discuss how a Christian can make contributions to the field of archaeology.

#### Teach for Understanding

#### Discussion

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**Note:** Assign the students to collect the items needed for this activity at least one day before this lesson.

Discuss that an archaeologist's job is to study artifacts to determine characteristics of people.

► **Read and follow the instructions on the page.**

Give each student a stapled bag. Allow the students to work in pairs to examine the items.

Direct the student to complete the Activity Manual page for the bag he was given.

Remind the student not to provide clues to help others identify his items.

Provide time for each student to present the items he examined and reveal his conclusions about the owner's identity.

#### Activity Manual

**Activity—page 164**

#### Assessment

⌚ **Rubric—pages R 2–5**

Select one of the prepared rubrics or customize a rubric to meet your specific needs. You may choose to grade Activity Manual page 164 rather than use a rubric.



**Paper bags**—Provide each student with a paper lunch bag. Instruct him to place ten items in the bag that would help identify who he is. Remind him that none of the items should have his name or initials on them. Direct him to fold down the top of the bag and staple it shut before bringing it to the lesson.

**Identifying the bags**—Prepare a randomly numbered list of student names. As you collect the stapled bag from each student, label it with the student's number from the list. When distributing the bags, make certain no student gets his own bag.

**♦ Lesson 119 ♦****Objectives**

- Identify the period and trace the history of the Mayas as they developed into a civilization
- Describe Mayan achievements
- Evaluate the contribution of Diego de Landa to the knowledge of the Mayas
- Identify the importance of being able to read Mayan hieroglyphs
- Describe the physical appearances of the Mayan people

**Vocabulary**

cenote  
codex

**Materials**

- Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117
- Mayan Number Chart, V 11.1

**Preview**

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

**Introduction**

- You have already learned about the Olmecs. What other civilizations of ancient Central and South America have you heard of before? *Accept reasonable answers.*
- What products other than rubber do you think come from this region? *possible answers: cocoa, sugar cane, gold*

**Teach for Understanding**

Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

**Discussion**

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- How far back in time do archaeologists date Mayan-speaking villages? *to the time of the Olmecs*
- What did archaeologists find that indicated the Mayas lived in villages prior to becoming a civilization? *groups of houses and public buildings surrounded by fields*
- Where did the Mayas build their homes? *in the rainforests, on high plateaus, and in lowlands*
- Where was water available in the lowlands? *in deep sinkholes called cenotes*
- By when had the Mayas become a dominant civilization? *AD 250*

- What great advances did the Mayas make?
- What changes did the Mayas make to their appearance?



For about 2,500 years the Mayas built farms and homes in the rainforests and high plateaus. The Mayas also settled in the lowlands. There they could get fresh water from deep sinkholes called **cenotes** (suh NO teez).

As the Mayas prospered, their population increased and their villages grew larger. By AD 250, Mayas dominated the region and built city-states. One of the largest and most magnificent city-states was **Tikal**. Archaeologists believe this city-state's population was at least sixty thousand. Tikal's buildings and people covered more than forty-seven square miles.

**Mayas**

Another great civilization in Mesoamerica was the **Mayan civilization**. Archaeologists have found early traces of Mayan-speaking villages dating as far back as the time of the Olmecs. These villages contained groups of houses surrounded by fields. Some villages had public buildings, possibly for religious and governmental uses.



Archaeologists have uncovered more than three thousand buildings of the ancient city of Tikal in the Guatemalan rainforest.



The plaza of Tikal

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- Look at the History TimeLine in the Activity Manual. What other events were going on in the world about the time of the Mayan civilization? *possible answers: the Sasanid period in Persia, the Yamato clan in Japan, Diocletian's reign of the Roman Empire*

- Why is Tikal considered one of the most magnificent Mayan city-states? *because of its large population (at least 60,000) and its size (over 47 square miles)*

- Guide the student in locating the buildings in both pictures. (The pictures are of the same location but have different viewpoints.) In the aerial picture, the large building at the upper end of the clearing is where the bottom picture was taken. The pyramid structure in the bottom picture

is the structure toward the center in the aerial view.

Discuss the kinds of achievements of the Mayas.

The text says that the Mayas "traded regularly within the network of their own cities." What do you think this "network of cities" means? *several cities populated by Mayas*

**FOCUS Answers**

- advances in art, architecture, literature, math, and astronomy
- the shape of their heads, crossed eyes, and large earlobe plugs

In the mid-1500s, a Spanish priest named **Diego de Landa** tried to make the Mayas accept Roman Catholicism. When the Mayas refused to accept the new religion, de Landa had some of them stretched on pulleys, burned with candles, or tortured in other ways. De Landa had an entire library of Mayan books burned in 1562 “since they contained nothing but superstitions and falsehoods of the devil.”

Afterward, de Landa realized that converting the Mayas would be easier if he knew more about them. He became a careful student of the Mayas and tried to translate their symbolic writing into Spanish. Much of the information known today about the Mayas of the 1500s and their ancient ancestors comes from de Landa’s writings. The rest of the information has been carefully gathered from the stones and artifacts in Mayan lands.

Today some Mayan descendants still play the music of their ancestors. Some of the ball courts, irrigation systems, and roads the traders used can still be seen.

But many of the buildings and statues lie in ruins. Almost all the Mayan books are gone and with them, much information about how the Mayas lived and thought.

### Math and Astronomy

Is there a zero in your telephone number or your street address? The ancient Mayas were one of the early civilizations that developed the idea of zero. With their zero, the Mayas were able to do difficult calculations and keep detailed records. Their math system was based on the number 20, unlike our decimal system now, which is based on 10.

The Mayas also made calendars similar to the calendar developed by the Olmecs. The Mayan calendar was based on the cycles of the moon and the sun. Their solar year had the same number of days that ours does. The calendar was made after years of careful observations of the sky. These observations were so accurate that the Mayas were able to figure out the orbits of the planets and could predict an eclipse of the sun.

<b>Mayan Numbers 0–24</b>				
0	1 •	2 ••	3 •••	4 ••••
5 —	6 —•	7 —••	8 —•••	9 —••••
10 ——	11 —•	12 —••	13 —•••	14 —••••
15 ——	16 —•	17 —••	18 —•••	19 —••••
20	21 ••	22 •••	23 ••••	24 •••••

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### Discussion

page 297

- How did the Mayan economy benefit from more than just their own network of cities? *The Mayas also traded with other peoples.*
- Why was Diego de Landa interested in the Mayas? *He wanted to convert them to Roman Catholicism.*
- In what way did he try to convert them at first? *through physical torture*

Choose a student to read Romans 10:17.

- ☛ What was missing in Diego de Landa’s attempt to convert the Mayans? *the work of the Holy Spirit in people’s hearts as they hear the Word of God*

- Why did de Landa have the Mayan books burned? *He thought they were full of superstitions and falsehoods of the Devil.*
- Why did de Landa decide to learn more about the Mayas? *He believed it would be easier to convert them if he understood them better.*
- What did de Landa contribute to our knowledge of Mayan history? *Much of what we know of Mayan history comes from his writings.*
- What remnants of the Mayan culture still exist today? *Descendants of the Mayas still play the music of their ancestors. Some Mayan ball courts, irrigation systems, and roads can still be seen today.*

- Why do we have little firsthand information from the Mayas even though they had a written language? *Most of their books are gone.*
- Direct attention to the *Mayan Number Chart* visual.
- What important mathematical concept did the Mayas develop? *the number 0*
- How did the Mayan math system differ from ours? *Theirs was based on the number 20. Ours is based on the number 10.*
- What does the thin horizontal line in the Mayan number system represent? *5*
- Do you see any patterns in the way that the Mayas wrote their numbers? *Answers will vary.*
- How was the Mayan calendar similar to our own? *It was based on the cycles of the moon and the sun. Its solar year had the same number of days ours does.*
- How do we know that the Mayas’ observations of the heavenly bodies were amazingly accurate? *The Mayas were able to figure out the orbits of the planets and to predict an eclipse of the sun.*



**Mayan hieroglyphs**—In our century researchers at Harvard University’s Peabody Museum are still studying Mayan hieroglyphs. Within the last twenty-five years, some Mayan symbols have been newly deciphered and the Mayan writing system has become better understood. A recent translation has been made of a stele dating back to AD 378 from the archaeological site of Tikal.



**Mayan math**—Mayas used a bar and dot system to represent numbers. A dot represented 1, and a bar represented 5. Mayas did not use fractions. Merchants often used cacao beans to calculate transactions.

Challenge the student to write and solve math problems using the Mayan number system.

## Things People Did

### Discussion

page 298

- How much of known Mayan writings have been translated today? *85 percent*
- Describe Mayan writing. *It was a combination of words and units of sound. Anything that could be spoken could be written.*
- How does the ability of the Mayas to speak and write a language demonstrate the special creation of man by God? *possible answers: Other than man, none of God's created beings on earth have ever been able to communicate with a verbal language. It demonstrates that man was created in the image of God, Who, the Bible reveals, used a verbal language to create the world and to communicate to people.*
- How did the Mayas obtain paper for making books? *They soaked the bark of fig trees to remove the sap and beat the bark to make a flat surface for writing.*
- What did the Mayas do to strengthen the strips of paper? *coated the strips with a gummy substance*
- How did the Mayas make the paper white? *painted it with lime*
- What type of liquid did the Mayas write with? *paints made from vegetables and minerals*
- How were the Mayan books folded and bound differently from modern books? *Each strip of paper was folded accordion style and bound between wooden covers.*
- What is the type of book the Mayas made called? *a codex*
- What have we learned about the Mayas from one of their three existing books? *their observations of Venus and their ability to predict solar eclipses*
- Caption answer: *Refer to the chart on page 297.*
- What important information is missing from the Mayan books? *the Mayas' customs and history and what eventually happened to their civilization*

### Writing and Books

It was not until the 1970s that the Mayan hieroglyphs were understood. Today, 85 percent of known Mayan texts have been translated. Mayan writing was a combination of words and units of sound. Thus, anything that could be spoken could also be written.

Furthermore, the Mayas made books of their writings. They wrote on long strips of "paper" made of fig-tree bark. To make this paper, the Mayas pulled bark off the fig trees and soaked it in water to remove the sap. Then they beat the bark with wooden hammers and stretched it out to make a wide, flat surface. The material was then cut into strips.

Each strip was coated with a thin layer of a gummy substance for strength. Then the strip was painted over with lime to make its surface white. Scribes wrote and drew on the paper with paints made from vegetables and minerals. When the strips were dry, they were folded in an accordion fashion and bound between wooden covers. The type of book that the Mayas made is called a **codex**. A Mayan codex was usually about eight inches high and several yards long when unfolded.

Today only three Mayan books are known to exist. One contains observations about the planet Venus and charts used to predict solar eclipses. It does not tell anything about Mayan customs or history, nor does it give any clues to the fate of the Mayan civilization.



A portion of the Dresden Codex  
*What numbers do you see?*

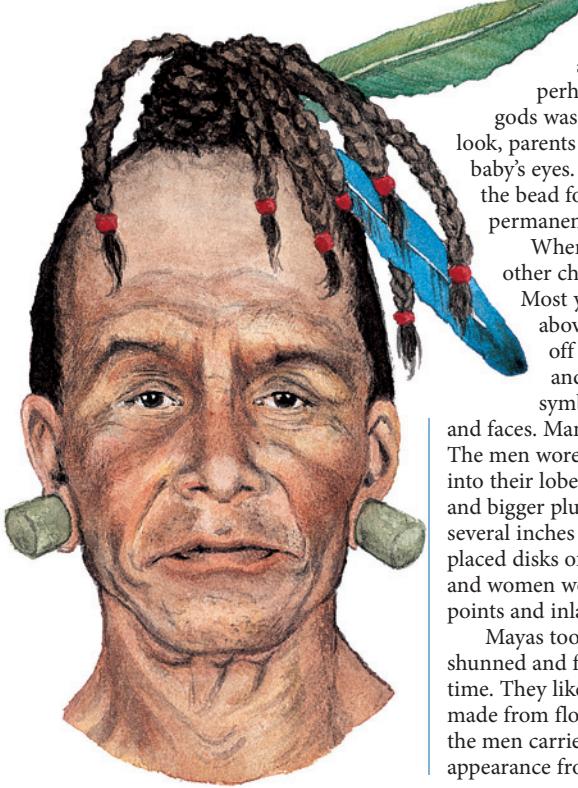
298

## Mayan People

### Physical Appearance

Historians today can see how the ancient Mayas looked from the sculptures and paintings they left behind.

According to Diego de Landa, the Mayan people were about five feet tall. They had thick, dark hair. The men wore their long hair in braids around the tops of their heads with one braid down the back. Women also wore braids,



usually coiled around their heads and held in place with ribbons.

The Mayas appeared to have preferred long noses and sloping foreheads. Some used clay to create a ridge from the top of the forehead to the bridge of the nose. A true sign of beauty, the sloping head, had to be formed early in life. Parents bound newborns' heads between boards until the soft bones grew into a slanted, almost cone shape.

Historical evidence indicates that Mayas also preferred crossed eyes, perhaps because one of their gods was cross-eyed. To achieve this look, parents hung a bead between the baby's eyes. After the baby looked at the bead for months, his eyes grew permanently crossed.

When older, the Mayas made other changes to their appearances. Most young men shaved the hair above their foreheads to show off their slanting foreheads and brows. They also tattooed symbols on their arms, legs, and faces. Many had their ears pierced. The men wore earplugs in holes sliced into their lobes. They kept adding bigger and bigger plugs until the holes were several inches across. In these holes they placed disks of jade or shell. Both men and women would often file their teeth to points and inlay them with jade.

Mayas took frequent baths, a practice shunned and feared in Europe at the time. They liked perfume, which they made from flowers and herbs. Most of the men carried mirrors to check their appearance from time to time.

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### Discussion

page 299

► How are historians able to tell how the ancient Mayan people looked? *from sculptures and paintings*

► How did the men and women differ in hairstyles? *The men wore their hair in braids wrapped around the top of their heads with one braid hanging down the back. Women also wore braids, usually coiled around their heads and held in place with ribbons.*

💡 How do we know that the Mayas valued long noses and sloping foreheads as marks of beauty? *possible answers: Mayan artwork commonly showed the people with these characteristics. Historical evidence shows the Mayas went to extremes to create this look.*

► What is a possible reason the Mayas preferred crossed eyes? *One of their gods had crossed eyes.*

► What other changes to their appearance did Mayan men make? *shaved hair above foreheads; tattooed arms, legs, and faces; pierced ears; wore earplugs and disks in ears; filed teeth and inlaid them with jade*

► How did the men get such large earplugs into their earlobes? *The men cut slits in their earlobes and kept adding bigger and bigger earplugs to the holes until they were several inches across.*

💡 Why do people within a culture dress in similar ways to each other? *possible answers: They want to be accepted by others. They want to be identified with each other.*

- How did Europeans and Mayas think differently about bathing? *Mayas took frequent baths, while Europeans feared and shunned frequent bathing.*
- How did the Mayan men ensure that their appearance was always right? *They carried mirrors to check their appearance from time to time.*

### Activity Manual

Study Skill—pages 159–62

Review—page 165

This Study Guide reviews Lessons 117 and 119.

### Assessment

#### Quiz 11A

The quiz may be given anytime after completing this lesson.

**♦ Lesson 120 ♦****Objectives**

- Illustrate the appearance of a Maya
- Sculpt a model from clay

**Vocabulary**

There are no vocabulary words to introduce.

**Materials**

- modeling clay for each student
- plastic knife
- toothpick

**Introduction**

► God made all people in His image although He made each person unique in appearance. God has a purpose for our appearance. For us to greatly distort that appearance is to reject God's purpose for the way He created us (Ps. 139:13–15).

You may choose to discuss how this truth applies to trends in modern society.

**Teach for Understanding****Discussion**

page 300

► Read and follow the steps to complete the sculpting activity.

Direct the student to look through the chapter for pictures of Mayas (pp. 298–302, 305, and 308). Discuss the physical features he should include in his sculpture.

You may choose to provide newspaper or other material to serve as a work mat.

The student may wish to add details using materials such as paints, yarn (black or brown), beads, felt, and feathers.

Provide a place for the student to display his finished work.

**Assessment**

⌚ Rubric—pages R 2–5

Select one of the prepared rubrics or customize a rubric to meet your specific needs.

**Discovering How****Sculpting a Maya**

The Mayan people had distinctive facial features and hairstyles. Research to find details of what they looked like. Make a model of a Mayan person to display.

1. Get a lump of clay about the size of your fist, a plastic knife, and a toothpick.
2. Set aside about 1/3 of the clay.
3. Mold the remaining clay into an egg-shaped head with a neck and shoulders.
4. Use clay from the smaller lump to add ears, a nose, and hair. Include braids, earplugs, and other details. Refer to descriptions and photos from your research as you work.
5. Display your model.



Clay figure of a Mayan official



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- FOCUS**
- What were the levels in Mayan society?
  - How did the houses that the Mayas lived in show their social class?

### Social Classes

Classes of Mayan society had several levels. At the top was the ruler, the absolute king. Like the Egyptians, the Mayas believed that their kings were descended from the gods and that they should be obeyed without question. The kings, in return, claimed to speak to the gods on behalf of the people. Most kings took advantage of this absolute authority and cruelly mistreated the people.

Each city-state had a unique hieroglyph to represent it and its king. Through these hieroglyphs, scholars have been able to identify thirty-three rulers of the city-state Tikal. At least one ruler was a queen. One notable king of Tikal was Jasaw Chan K'awiil I. Tikal had been weak and struggling when Jasaw came to power. Under his leadership it became strong once again. Many stelae and other carvings tell of this king.

Just below the kings in power were the priests. There were at least four classes of priests. The highest-ranking priests were in charge of all the others. They taught writing, astronomy, mathematics, and religious rituals. Lower ranks included priests who treated sickness. Sometimes their cure was more dangerous than the illness. Imagine going to the doctor with a nosebleed only to have your foot cut off! This was done to the

sufferer to let him bleed freely. Other priests were fortunetellers. The priests also offered sacrifices to the gods.

In the same social class as the priests were the nobles. All the priests came from the nobility. The nobles, both men and women, were educated, and they held important positions in the government.

Lesser nobles included the artists and architects, traders and scribes, and advisors and engineers. Although they did not have the high positions of the first class of nobles, they had many of the same privileges. No nobleman or noblewoman had to do manual work, such as planting crops, grinding corn, or cleaning. Such labor was left to the common people.



**BIOGRAPHY**

**Who:** Jasaw Chan K'awiil I  
**What:** ruler of the Mayas  
**When:** ruled AD 682–734  
**Where:** ancient Guatemala

Jasaw Chan K'awiil I ruled the Mayas from the city-state of Tikal. When Jasaw defeated a rival city-state, Tikal began to prosper. He began rebuilding Tikal. Unlike other rulers who were harsh to their people, Jasaw tried to help his people make their civilization strong.

301

## ◆ Lesson 121 ◆

### Objectives

- Describe the level of social classes in the Mayan civilization
- Describe Mayan dress
- Explain the importance of the cacao bean to the Mayas
- Describe the types of Mayan homes
- Describe the daily lives of the various levels in Mayan society

### Vocabulary

stucco  
maize

### Materials

• Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117

### Preview

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

### Introduction

► Every civilization is made up of social classes. Some are more rigid than others, but usually each social class in a civilization has a role to play. In the Mayan society it appears that people from each social class accepted their role as a design of the gods.

💡 What factors divide people into different social classes today? *possible answers: wealth, job position, political position, fame, popularity*

### Teach for Understanding

#### Discussion

page 301

Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

- What was the highest social class in Mayan society? *the king*
- Why did the people obey the king without question? *They believed he was a descendant from the gods.*
- What did the king claim to be able to do for the people? *speak to the gods on their behalf*
- How did many of the kings take advantage of their authority? *They often cruelly mistreated the people.*
- Read 2 Samuel 23:3. How should a ruler act toward his subjects? *He should rule justly and righteously in the fear of God.*
- What famous king of Tikal have scholars learned about from stelae and carvings? *Jasaw Chan K'awiil I*
- What was unique about K'awiil that made him an effective ruler? *He was not harsh. He rebuilt Tikal and tried to help his people make their civilization strong.*
- What class came just below the king? *priests and nobles*
- How many classes of priests were in Mayan society? *at least four*
- What kinds of roles did the priests have? *They taught different subjects, treated sickness, told fortunes, or offered sacrifices to the gods.*
- Why would a priest sometimes cut off a person's foot if that person had a nosebleed? *The Mayas thought that letting blood flow freely would cure the problem.*
- What were the roles of the nobles who were not priests? *governmental officials, artists, architects, traders, scribes, advisors, and engineers*



#### Answers

- king, priests and nobles, peasants, and slaves
- size, types of materials used, and closeness to the center of the city

#### Additional pronunciation

Jasaw Chan K'awiil (KAH WEEEL)



**Discussion**

page 302

- How did the roles of common peasants differ from those of nobles? *The peasants did the manual work, such as farming, cleaning, growing cotton, producing fabrics, serving as soldiers, and constructing buildings.*
- What kind of people were slaves? *those in debt, criminals, or prisoners of war*
- 💡 Why do you think the most important prisoners would be used as human sacrifices? *possible answer: They would be considered the most valuable, and the Mayas wanted to give the best to their gods.*
- How did the men and the women dress differently from each other? *Men wore tunics and loincloths, sometimes with a short cape; women wore dresses or wraparound skirts and long blouses.*
- In what ways were men and women alike in appearance? *They both wore a lot of jewelry.*
- How could someone tell the wealthy people from the common people? *The wealthy people wore the same things but with more embellishments, such as feathers, animal skins, or jade.*
- How did people recognize the king? *He wore jaguar skins and jade breastplates. He had three-foot plumes in his headdress and on his clothes. He wore jade bands on his wrists and ankles and gold rings on his toes.*

The peasants did the hard manual work of the Mayan society. They grew, harvested, and processed the food. The peasants grew cotton and produced fabrics. They tended the buildings. Some were soldiers in the armies and laborers for the construction of monuments and temples.

At the bottom of Mayan society were the slaves. Anyone who was in debt or who had committed a crime was considered a slave, the property of another. Sometimes prisoners of war were kept as slaves as well. Important prisoners were used for sacrifices. Lesser ones were made to work.

**Mayan Dress**

Most Mayas wore simple cotton clothes. The men wore tunics and loincloths, sometimes with a short cape. The women wore straight, plain dresses or wraparound skirts and long blouses. The Mayas either went barefoot or wore sandals made of straw and rope. Both men and women wore a lot of jewelry: earrings, rings, armbands, and necklaces. They made jewelry from jade, shells, volcanic rock, or animal teeth and bones.



Mayan priest

Wealthy people wore the same things as the common people, only with more embellishments, such as feathers woven into the fabric. They wore shoes made of deerskin.

The kings wore jaguar skins and jade breastplates. The three-foot plumes in their headdresses and on their clothes

came from the quetzal, a beautiful bird of the rainforest. Kings also wore jade bands on their wrists and ankles as well as gold rings on their toes. To the common Maya, a king's appearance must have been dazzling indeed.

The Mayas obtained feathers of many brilliant colors from native birds to use in their clothing.



302

## Echoes from the Past

### The Desire for Chocolate

Do you like hot chocolate? Many people do. It is a tasty “echo” from the tables of Mayan kings and nobles. The Mayas invented the drink that, with some variations, has been popular for centuries. The Mayas made their hot drink from powdered cacao beans.

Chocolate was so special to the Mayas that the cacao beans were also used for money. In the Mayan society, a slave was worth one hundred cacao beans. Because cacao beans were so valuable, counterfeiters sometimes filled empty bean pods with dirt or sand and passed them off as real beans. If caught, the counterfeiter was made a slave. Poor people could rarely afford the luxury of grinding up their money to make a hot drink.



### Discussion

page 303

- Who invented hot chocolate? *the Mayas*
- What did they use to make it? *cacao beans*
- How do we know the Mayas greatly valued chocolate? *Cacao beans were valuable enough to be used as money.*
- What method of “counterfeiting” did some people practice in the ancient Mayan civilization? *They filled empty cacao bean pods with dirt or sand.*
- What happened to people who got caught making counterfeit beans? *They were made slaves.*
- Why did only the wealthy drink hot chocolate? *They were the only ones who could afford it.*



**Making cocoa**—Direct the student to research the process of making a powdered chocolate mix for beverages. Challenge him to write a brief how-to description of the process.

**Discussion**

page 304

- In what ways was a Maya's social class reflected? *his job, his dress, and his house*
- How were the homes of kings different from the rest of the people's homes? *Kings lived in palaces that covered many acres.*
- How would people know that a house belonged to a noble? *Nobles lived in large stucco houses near the center of a city.*
- How did nobles make their houses comfortable? *They put embroidered draperies, fireplaces, ovens, and possibly plumbing in their homes.*
- What were the peasants' houses like? *They were small wooden houses with grass-thatched roofs.*

Caption answer: *peasant*

- How did the common person's life differ from that of a king or a noble? *Common people led quiet, simple lives of labor. Kings and nobles practiced ceremonies, waged wars, and planned huge building projects.*
- How did farmers plant maize? *They made ridges in the soil, poked holes in them with a planting stick, dropped corn kernels in the holes, and covered the holes.*
- Why did the farmers cut down trees and burn underbrush in the rainforest? *to plant corn in the ashes*
- Why did farmers have to move to different sections of land every one or two years? *The soil made from ashes wore out quickly.*
- How did the nobles get their food? *The farmers gave part of their crop to the nobles.*

**Activity Manual**

Study Skill—pages 159–62

Reinforcement—page 166

**Mayan Homes**

The classes of Mayan society were reflected not only in people's jobs and dress but also in the places they lived. Kings lived in palaces that covered many acres. Nobles lived in large houses near the center of the cities—the closer to the center, the more impressive. These houses had many airy rooms and walls covered with decorative plaster called **stucco**. Embroidered cotton draperies divided large rooms. Some houses had fireplaces, ovens, and possibly plumbing. Most peasant families lived in small wooden houses with grass-thatched roofs.

**Daily Life**

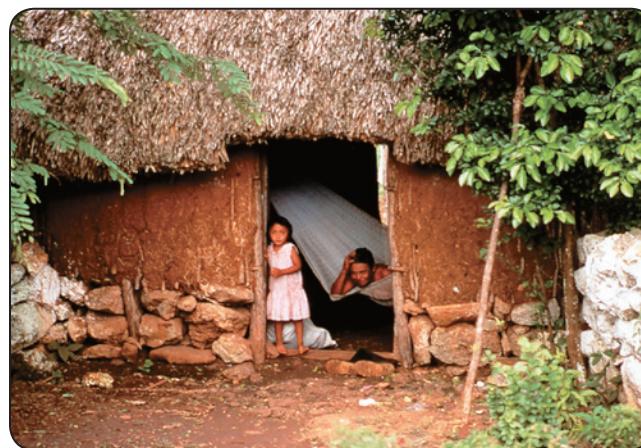
While the kings, priests, and nobility practiced their ceremonies, waged wars on neighbors, and planned huge building projects, the average Maya led a far quieter and simpler life. Before four o'clock in the morning, women were awake and building fires to prepare

breakfast. By five o'clock the men and boys had eaten breakfast and were tending to the crops. Family life was a very important part of the Mayan civilization.

**Farmers**

Farmers grew many crops. Their crops included beans, squash, avocados, and **maize** (corn). When planting corn in swampy places or on riverbanks, farmers made ridges in the soil and poked holes into the ridges with a planting stick. Another person came behind, dropping in corn kernels and covering the holes.

In the dry seasons, farmers went into the rainforests and cut down trees. They burned the stumps and the underbrush. In the ashes they planted corn. The corn grew well for a year or two, but such soil wore out quickly. The only remedy was to move to a new place to cut and burn again. Farmers gave part of all they grew to the upper classes.



A modern Mayan home  
What social class would this house represent in the Mayan civilization?

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**Planting maize**—Challenge the student to plant corn similar to how the Mayan farmers planted.

Present the following instructions and guide the student through the activity.

1. Place soil in a foil roasting pan. Make ridges in the soil.
2. Add water to make the soil very moist.
3. Poke holes in the soil and plant the corn kernels, covering each kernel with a thin layer of soil.
4. Keep the pan in a place by a window where it will get plenty of sunlight.
5. Keep a daily log of the growing process.

If you wish to allow the corn to grow tall, you will have to transplant it to a larger container or to a garden.

1. Why did the Mayas talk to objects?  
2. How did the Mayas view the shape of the world?

**FOCUS****Women**

Mayan women worked all day grinding grain in stone bowls or making cotton thread for use on looms. They also wove cloth and made clothing, kept house, and tended the children. Even the little girls helped make *tortillas* and other food. The big meal of the day, which usually included beans, fruit, *tamales*, and, occasionally, meat, came in the late afternoon. A favorite drink, *pozole*, was made from corn paste and water, sometimes mixed with honey. Women and girls made the meal, served it to the men and boys, and ate afterward.

**Traders**

Mayan cities in the highlands traded with those in the lowlands. In this way people



A Mayan woman weaving cloth

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were able to get what they needed. The lowlands produced cotton, rubber, and cacao beans. The highlands had valuable stones such as jade and obsidian. Obsidian is a sharp glasslike volcanic rock that Mayas used to make the blades of tools and weapons.

People came to the cities for festivals and games and to buy and sell goods. The markets were busy places where people came to trade salt, vegetables, animals, jewelry, jade, pottery, honey, fabrics, and, of course, cacao beans.

- 💡 How can people in other countries today be reached with the gospel? *possible answer: missionaries*

**Teach for Understanding****Discussion****page 305**

Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

- What kinds of jobs were Mayan women responsible for? *grinding grain, weaving cotton, keeping house, tending the children, preparing food*
- 💡 Why do you think the women had to wait to eat until after the men ate? *possible answers: Perhaps it was not considered proper for men and women to eat together. Men may have had a higher status than women and expected to be served by them.*
- Why was trade important between the Mayan cities of the highlands and the lowlands? *Cities in the lowlands produced crops, while the highlands had valuable stones. People from both areas needed to trade for everyone to have what they needed.*
- What was obsidian used for? *making blades of tools and weapons*
- What major events went on in cities? *festivals, games, and trade*

**FOCUS****Answers**

1. Everything was believed to have a spirit.
2. The world was a flat square mounted on a large crocodile god.

**Additional pronunciations**

tortilla (tor TEE uh)  
tamale (tuh MAH lee)  
pozole (puh ZOH lay)

**♦ Lesson 122 ♦****Preview**

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

**Introduction**

📘 Through God's creation, all people have access to certain truths about God (Rom. 1). This knowledge of God's existence and character is placed in people's hearts. Yet the Mayas chose to develop beliefs out of their own imaginations. Their lives were controlled by their beliefs about the spirit world.

📘 Read Romans 1:20–21. Does God excuse people who do not have the Bible or anyone to preach the gospel to them? *no*

**Objectives**

- Describe the role of women in the Mayan society
- Discuss trading in the Mayan civilization
- Analyze the Mayan religion
- Identify the religious significance of the Mayan ball game
- Discuss the decline of the Mayan civilization

**Vocabulary**

obsidian  
appease

**Materials**

⌚ Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117

**Discussion**

page 306

- What ordinary parts of Mayan society were dominated by religion? *ball games, cooking, ceremonies, and hunting*
- What were the Mayas especially afraid of? *invisible dwarfs who they believed caused sickness and crop failure*
- How did the Mayas try to appease, or satisfy, the dwarfs? *by putting out food for them*
- 💡 How do we know that the food did not appease the dwarfs as the Mayas thought it would? *A priest would attempt to treat sick people and help with crop failure, meaning both events still happened regardless if there was food put out.*
- How did the priests try to heal a person or help with a crop failure? *They prescribed medicines or performed rituals.*
- 💡 Why do you think some of the priests' medicines were helpful? *possible answer: They were made from herbs, many of which have genuine healing properties. (Some modern medicines are also made from herbs.)*
- 💡 Why do you think some of the "cures" were worse than the illnesses themselves? *possible answer: The cures were based on superstitious rituals rather than scientific methods.*
- How was the Mayas' belief about the world's geography flawed? *They thought the world was a flat square sitting on top of a crocodile god.*
- How was the Mayan belief about life after death incorrect? *They believed a person went to one of nine underworlds or thirteen heavens, each under a separate god.*
- Why did the Mayas have to depend on priests to keep things in order? *There were too many gods, and it was difficult for the people to keep track of how to please each god.*
- Why did the Mayas practice human sacrifice? *They thought the gods demanded human blood to be satisfied.*
- 💡 What does the Bible say is the only acceptable, perfect sacrifice? *The only sacrifice that satisfies God is the perfect sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:12, 22).*

**Mayan Religion**

The whole Mayan society, even their popular ball game, was dominated by religion. Everything the Mayas did, whether cooking beans or attending ceremonies for a solar eclipse, had to be done according to a ritual. A man about to kill a deer had to stop the hunt to first ask the deer to forgive him by saying, "I have need."

Everything, even pottery, was believed to have a spirit. Mayas talked to the objects around them and were always

in fear of imaginary evil dwarfs who they believed would cause sickness and crop failure. To **appease**, or satisfy, the dwarfs, Mayas put out food for them.

If illness came or crops failed, a priest might prescribe a homemade medicine or perform a ritual. Some of the medicines, made from herbs and other plants, were helpful and often cured the illnesses. Other "cures," however, had results that were worse than the illnesses.

The Mayas thought that the world was a flat square that was atop a giant crocodile god in a pond with water lilies. When a person died, he left the square and went to one of nine underworlds or thirteen heavens, each under the control of a separate god.

Mayas believed that almost everything had its own god—the sea, the moon, the sun, bees, medicine, corn, life, death, days of the calendar, and so on. Since there were so many gods and so many rules on how to please each god, the Mayas had to depend on the priests to keep everything in order.

Of all the rituals of the Mayan religion, the one most often written about is human sacrifice. Like other ancient religions, such as the one practiced by the priests of Baal in Bible times, the Mayan religion taught that the gods must be satisfied with human blood.

An altar near the Jaguar Temple at Tikal



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**Obsidian**—Challenge the student to research obsidian to find how it was used in ancient times, how it is used today, what its characteristics are, and how it is formed.

**A GAME OF LIFE AND DEATH**

A ball game was played throughout the ancient Mayan civilization. Every Mayan city had at least one ball court—one city had seven. The I-shaped courts measured 100–150 feet long and 25–50 feet wide. The players' goal was to hit a small rubber ball through a vertical hoop or onto a marker on the side of the wall. However, the players were allowed to use only their padded wrists, elbows, and hips.

Only the nobles could play the ball game, but everyone in the city watched. Many nobles placed bets on the outcome, losing much property or many slaves when their wagers were wrong.

The ball game was more than just a sport like soccer or basketball played in America today. The Mayan game had serious religious meaning. Crowds cheered the winners as heroes as we do today. Most likely, though, the losers did not just hang their heads and

return to the locker room. Some scholars believe that some members of the losing team may have been sacrificed to the gods in a ceremony after the game.



I-shaped ball court (below) and goal hoop (above)



307

**Discussion**

page 307

► How do we know that the Mayan ball game was popular throughout the civilization? *Every Mayan city had at least one ball court.*

► What rules made the game challenging? *The players had to hit a small rubber ball through a hoop or on the exact spot marked on the wall. They could use only their wrists, elbows, and hips.*

💡 What modern game do you think is most like the Mayan ball game? *possible answers: basketball, soccer*

► Why did nobles lose property over the outcome of a ball game? *They made bets on who would win.*

📖 Discuss what the Bible says about gambling. Gambling is taking risks with money that belongs to God. It is putting faith in chance rather than in God to fulfill needs. It is often driven by a love for money. It is impossible to gamble and love your neighbor as yourself since you are trying to take from him for yourself.

💡 Why do you think the article on this page is called “A Game of Life and Death”? *Some of the losers may have been sacrificed to the gods.*



**Ball game**—Challenge the student to research the history of any game that uses a ball. Direct him to include the game's rules and objectives.

**Discussion**

page 308

- Why did the Mayas have a great fear of death? *Many were uncertain of what would happen to them after death. In the Mayan religion, only priests, warriors who died in battle, and people who had been sacrificed were sure of entering paradise.*
- What determined how or where a person was buried? *the person's social class*
- Why did the common people often move after someone in their family died? *Common people who died were buried under their houses.*
- How were the rich buried differently from the common person? *They were buried in elaborately carved tombs.*
- Why were most people buried with a piece of jade in their mouths? *It was money to be used in the next life.*
- How did a king's burial show his importance? *A king was buried with great ceremony and wealth. Sometimes a mask was placed over his face as a sign of his power.*
- Why do archaeologists believe the Mayan civilization came to a sudden ending around 869? *There were no more records left after that time, and the belongings left behind suggest that the Mayas left their cities suddenly.*
- What are some possible reasons that the Mayas left the cities? *possible answers: famine, war, rebellion against superstitious beliefs*

**Activity Manual**

Study Skill—pages 159–62

Review—page 167

This Study Guide reviews Lessons 121 and 122.

**Assessment** Quiz 11B

The quiz may be given anytime after completing this lesson.

In all their care to obey the priests and please the gods, the Mayas also feared death greatly. The only people sure of entering Mayan paradise included priests, warriors who had died in battle, and people who had been sacrificed by the priests. All others, no matter how well they had kept the rules, might—by the whim of some god—be condemned to the underworld.

When someone died, he was mourned for days. He was buried according to his social class. The common people were often buried under their houses, which were then abandoned by the others who lived there. The rich could

afford tombs with heavy stone coverings that were elaborately engraved. Almost everyone, regardless of his class, had a piece of valuable jade placed in his mouth so that he would have it for money in the next life.

Kings were buried with great ceremony and wealth. One king, Pacal, was buried in a large room under a Mayan pyramid. Buried with him were six other people and a huge supply of jade jewelry and other treasures. This king had a jade mask over his face, perhaps to show his power in the afterlife.

**Decline of the Mayan Civilization**

Archaeologists have found a stele in the city of Tikal dated at 869. This appears to have been the last record of the Mayas in that location. The Mayas seem to have fled their major cities after that time. No one knows what happened. In many places the Mayas seem to have left suddenly. The belongings left behind suggest that the people meant to return, but they never did—at least not to rebuild. For the next six hundred years, they lived in other cities and parts of Mesoamerica, never regaining their former power.

Some archaeologists believe that the people moved away because of famine. Others think that war may have ended the great civilization. Still others think that the way of life in Mayan cities—full of rituals and religious superstitions—may have caused the people to rebel. Perhaps a combination of all these reasons ended the society. Forms of the Mayan civilization continued in smaller towns and in the cultures of other peoples.



Relief of Mayan nobleman

**Discovering How****Making a Codex**

The pages of a Mayan book were folded and attached to covers to form a codex. You will make your own codex to use as an organizer for this chapter.

1. Gather two cardboard squares, wrapping paper, scissors, glue, and your Activity Manual.
2. Decorate the pieces of cardboard with wrapping paper or your own design. These are the covers for your book.
3. Cut the codex organizer strips from the Activity Manual. Connect the strips as indicated on the tabs. Fold the long strip accordion style.
4. Glue a cover to each end of the long strip as indicated on the end tabs.
5. Fold the book and use a rubber band or a piece of string to hold it closed.



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**♦ Lesson 123 ♦****Introduction****Objectives**

- Experience making a codex in the same style the Mayas used
- Illustrate the use of an organizer for comprehending the content in a lesson

**Vocabulary**

*There are no vocabulary words to introduce.*

**Materials**

- Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117
- two 4" × 5" pieces of cardboard for each student
- two 5" × 6" pieces of wrapping paper for each student
- glue
- rubber band or 20" piece of string for each student

- Books in the Mayan civilization were very different from books today. As you make a codex, think about the advantages and disadvantages it has compared to a modern book.
- How would you like to read books created in the style of a codex?
- Did the organizer help you in understanding the chapter information?

**Teach for Understanding****Discussion**

page 309

Direct the student to read the page and gather the materials.

**Student Text page 309**  
**Activity Manual pages 159–62,**  
**168–69**

Guide the student in planning and making a codex.

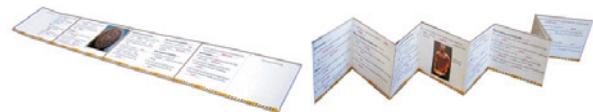
Allow the student to decorate the cardboard or cover it with wrapping paper.



Remind the student to cut the strips on the solid lines.

Guide the student in taping the strips together. Remind him to make sure that the page numbers are in order.

Help him fold the pages accordion style.



Guide the student in gluing the strips to the front and back covers. Tape may be needed for added strength.



Provide time for the glue to dry before closing the book.

**Activity Manual**

**Study Skill—pages 159–62**

The student will use these pages to make a codex.

**Expansion—pages 168–69**

These pages contrast the Mesoamerican pyramids with the Egyptian pyramids.

**Assessment**

**Rubric—pages R 2–5**

Select one of the prepared rubrics or customize a rubric to meet your specific needs.



**Cardboard**—Cereal boxes, 4" × 6" index cards, tag board, file folders, or tablet backs could be used for the cover and the back of the codex.

**♦ Lesson 124 ♦****Objectives**

- Trace the migration and development of the Aztec civilization
- Describe the unusual location and building of the city of Tenochtitlán
- Contrast Aztec beliefs with biblical truth
- Describe the military ability and objectives of the Aztecs
- Describe the Aztec social structure

**Vocabulary**

chinampa  
causeway  
conquistador

**Materials**

- Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117
- Aztec Empire, M 11.3
- Valley of Mexico, M 11.4
- Comparison Organizer, AM p. 170 (See Teacher Helps.)

**Preview**

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

**Introduction**

- Like other civilizations, the Aztecs were driven by their worldview. They believed that a superior god had directed them to a specific land and controlled their lives.
- The Aztecs' view of their god led them to commit horrible crimes against fellow human beings. The worldview of the Aztecs eventually led to their decline as a civilization.
- What do you already know about the Aztecs from books, television programs, or other media? *Answers will vary.*

**Teach for Understanding****Discussion****page 310**

Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

- From what direction did the ancient Aztecs probably migrate? *north*
- Where did the Aztecs settle? *Lake Texcoco*
- Look at the History Timeline in the Activity Manual. What plague occurred in Europe about the same time as the development of the Aztec civilization? *the Black Death*

1. What was unique about the city of Tenochtitlán?

2. Why were the Aztecs feared by surrounding neighbors?

**Aztecs**

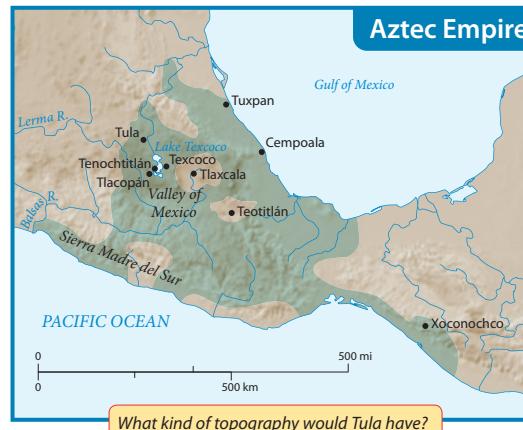
Many historians believe that some ancient Americans in the north migrated southward to settle in the area known today as Mexico. By the 1400s people in that region had developed into an advanced society known as the **Aztec civilization**. In spite of some shocking and primitive customs, they developed a complete language along with some amazing technology.

The Aztecs held to a superstitious legend that claimed their sun god would lead them to a place where they were to settle and build a city. The place that the Aztecs eventually settled in was a

swampy lake. Rather than be discouraged by this location, the Aztecs accepted this as the ideal location for them. On **Lake Texcoco** (tay SKOH koh), the Aztecs built one of the largest cities in the world at that time.

The Aztecs began building their unusual city on two small islands on the lake. The city was called **Tenochtitlán**. Part of modern Mexico City has been built on the land where Tenochtitlán had been. (This Aztec city of Tenochtitlán is different from the Olmec city of San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán.)

The resourceful Aztecs created additional garden islands called **chinampas** (chin AHM puhz). The gardens were made by bunching twigs, limbs, and sticks together and piling silt on top. Plants grew easily in the fertile soil. The Aztecs made strategic **causeways** (land bridges) to connect the islands to the mainland. Specially designed canals separated fresh water from salt water. Canoes could easily travel in these canals.



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- Why are the Aztecs considered a civilization even though they had shocking, primitive customs? *They developed a language and advanced technology.*
- ❖ Display the *Aztec Empire* map.
- ❖ Caption answer: *hills and valleys*

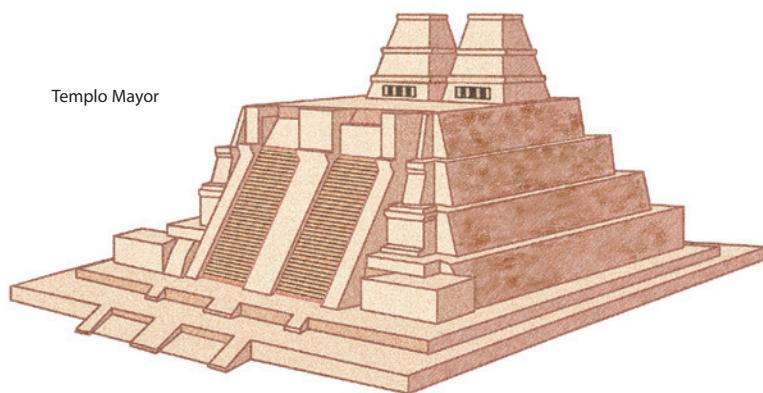


**Two organizers**—The *Comparison Organizer* in the Activity Manual provides a Venn diagram for comparing and contrasting Mayan and Aztec characteristics.

Rather than requiring the student to work on this organizer at the same time as the codex organizer (*Chapter 11 Organizer*), consider allowing him to work on the codex organizer as the lesson is taught. The Venn diagram can be worked on at the end of each lesson to review the aspects that have been taught.

**Answers**

1. It was built on an island in a swampy lake.
2. They conquered for the purpose of making slaves and offering the captives as a blood sacrifice to their gods.



Templo Mayor

The Aztecs were a united people. As their population grew, they formed alliances with neighboring city-states. As their military power grew, they began to conquer peoples in the surrounding areas.

As early as the beginning of the 1500s, Tenochtitlán dominated all other cities. Its power and splendor were well-known and feared. At one point, this city had a population of about two hundred thousand people as well as an abundance of religious buildings and activities. The **Templo Mayor**, or Great Pyramid, was the primary location for religious ceremonies and rituals.

### Aztec Religion

The religion of the Aztecs ruled every aspect of their lives. While the Olmecs and the Mayas also followed religious beliefs,

the Aztecs raised their duty to the gods to a new level. The Aztecs believed their sun god had a tremendous appetite for blood and human hearts. He had to be constantly appeased or the very existence of their world was at risk.

### HOW DO THEY KNOW?

The question is often asked, What happens to people who never hear the gospel message from a believer? Ancient Mesoamericans were thousands of miles from any other civilization. Did they have an excuse for following false beliefs? How could they have heard the truth about God and Jesus? The Bible explains how these people had an opportunity to accept the truth. Romans 2:15 states that the “law [is] written in their hearts.” This statement means that their conscience lets them know when they violate God’s law.

God has provided all peoples with enough revelation for them to know that He exists and to know how to worship Him. However, every culture in the world has chosen instead to reject God’s truth. The gospel message is the power of God to bring people salvation (Rom. 1:19–23). Missionaries seek to take the gospel to every culture on earth (Rom. 10:14–17).

- How did the Aztecs work together to strengthen their power as a civilization? *by forming alliances with neighboring city-states and building a strong military to conquer nearby peoples*
- Why did Tenochtitlán dominate other cities in the Aztec civilization? *It was powerful, full of splendor, and well known and feared by other cities.*
- Why was the Templo Mayor a significant pyramid? *It was the primary location for religious ceremonies and rituals.*
- In what way did the Aztecs’ beliefs about religious duties exceed those of the Olmecs and the Mayas? *The Aztecs raised their duty to the gods to a new level by believing their sun god had a tremendous appetite for blood and human hearts.*
- ☛ Why are the ancient Aztecs without excuse for their sin? *The law was “written in their hearts”; they had a conscience and enough revelation about God to know of His existence and how He is to be worshiped.*
- ☛ Why is it important for missionaries to take the gospel to cultures like the Aztecs? *The message of the gospel has the power to bring people to salvation.*

311

### Discussion

pages 310–11

- Why did the Aztecs settle on the swampy Lake Texcoco? *They believed their sun god led them there.*
- How do we know that the Aztecs were not discouraged at being “led” to this location? *They apparently accepted the location as ideal for them and built one of the world’s largest cities there.*
- ⊕ Display the Valley of Mexico map.
- ⊕ Where did the Aztecs choose to build the city of Tenochtitlán? *on two small islands*
- What modern city occupies some of the land where Tenochtitlán used to be? *Mexico City*
- What unusual way did the people of Tenochtitlán add farmland? *They built garden islands called chinampas.*
- How did the Aztecs make the chinampas suitable for growing crops? *The Aztecs piled silt on top of sticks and twigs.*
- ⊕ How did the Aztecs connect Tenochtitlán to the mainland? *They built causeways (land bridges).*
- How did the Aztecs separate the fresh water from the salt water that infiltrated the lake? *They built specially designed canals.*
- What means of transportation did the Aztecs use to travel the canals? *canoes*

**Discussion**

page 312

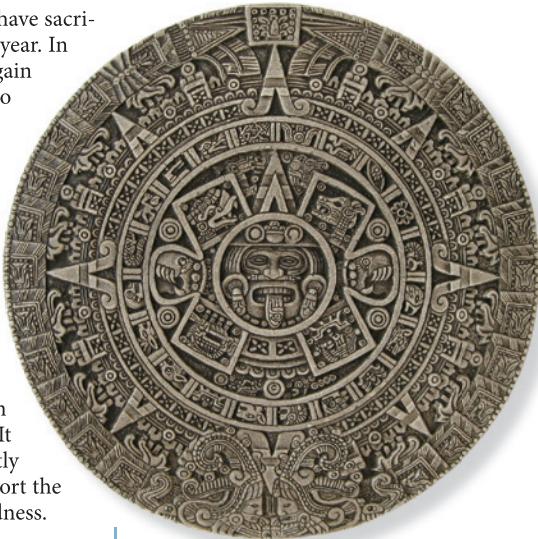
- What was the Aztecs' objective in battle? *to capture prisoners they could sacrifice to the gods*
- Why were the Spaniards horrified when they arrived in the city of Tenochtitlán in 1519? *They saw the vast scale of human slaughter in the name of religious sacrifice.*
- What lesson can modern man learn from the religious practices of the Aztecs? *Man can distort truth into unimaginable wickedness.*
- 💡 Were the Mesoamericans monotheistic or polytheistic? *Polytheistic*
- Why did the Mesoamericans pay special attention to their sun god? *They believed he was superior to all other gods.*
- 📖 How was the Mesoamericans' concept of nature incorrect? *They worshiped nature itself rather than the Creator of nature, Who tells us to have dominion over it.*
- 📖 How was the Mesoamericans' concept of a blood sacrifice distorted? *They thought that human blood had to be sacrificed to their god; this is a distortion of the Old Testament command to sacrifice animals and the New Testament teaching that the only sacrifice necessary is the Son of God.*
- 📖 Where do the wicked imaginations of men come from? *their own wicked hearts*
- 📖 How is a person able to have his sins forgiven? *by believing on Jesus and trusting Him as his Savior*



**Aztec Sun Stone**—Challenge the student to research the Aztec Sun Stone and how it relates to the Aztec religious beliefs.

The Aztecs are believed to have sacrificed thousands of people each year. In war, their objective was not to gain territory or kill the enemy but to capture prisoners to sacrifice to their gods.

When Hernando Cortés, the Spanish conquistador (kahn KEE stuh DOOR), or conqueror, arrived with his army in Tenochtitlán in 1519, they were horrified when they saw the vast scale of ritual sacrifices made by the Aztecs. Even today historians are appalled at such slaughter in the name of religious sacrifice. It is a demonstration of how greatly the sinful heart of man can distort the truth into unimaginable wickedness.



Aztec Sun Stone



Hernando Cortés with Montezuma II

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**MESOAMERICAN BELIEFS**

Mesoamericans believed in many gods. They believed that the sun god was superior. The Bible teaches that there is only one true God and no other gods (1 Cor. 8:6).

Mesoamericans chose to worship nature rather than the Creator of nature. The Bible teaches that man is created in God's image. God commands mankind to have dominion over nature and to be a good steward of it (Gen. 1:28).

Mesoamericans believed a blood sacrifice was necessary and sacrificed humans. It is out of the wicked heart that man creates wicked imaginations (Prov. 6:18). The Old Testament taught animal sacrifice, and the New Testament teaches the only sacrifice necessary is the Son of God (Heb. 7:26–28).

# Things People Did

## A Warrior's Pride

Aztec warriors began training at an early age. By going to war, they believed they were showing service and respect to the gods. Men were expected to prove their worth on the battlefield. As warriors, they were to be brave and noble.

The bravest Aztec warriors achieved the rank of jaguar warrior or eagle warrior. They were the most feared of all the Aztec warriors.

Most Aztec weapons were designed to stun and capture enemies rather than to kill them. This way the captured enemy could walk and not have to be carried to the temple for sacrifice.

Eagle and jaguar warriors on an ancient codex



## Social Classes

The social classes of the Aztecs were similar to other Mesoamerican civilizations. The nobility lived in brick or stone homes while the common people lived in homes made of interwoven twigs and mud.

Tenochtitlán and the Aztec Empire had the same ruler. All other governing officials were expected to pay tribute to this supreme ruler. As in the Mayan society, he was considered to be a

descendant of the gods. Also in keeping with the Mayan society, Aztec nobility, warriors, and priests were responsible for supporting the ruler.

The common men, which included artisans, soldiers, laborers, farmers, and merchants, were expected to support the nobles. The women worked hard at home, where they were expected to take care of their families. A commoner had little opportunity to change his life and leave his social class.

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## Discussion

page 313

- Why was military service of special importance in Mesoamerican society? *They believed warriors were showing service and respect to the gods.*
- How were warriors to act in battle? *They were to be brave and noble, proving their worth.*
- Why were the jaguar warriors or eagle warriors the most feared of all the Aztec warriors? *They were the bravest.*
- Why did the Aztecs design weapons that would only stun the enemy rather than kill them? *They could take them captive, and the enemy could walk to the temple to be sacrificed.*
- How were the homes of nobles and common people different? *Nobles lived in brick or stone homes, and common people lived in twig and mud homes.*
- Who supported the supreme ruler? *other governing officials, nobles, warriors, and priests*
- Why were people willing to support the ruler? *They believed he was a descendant of the gods.*
- Who supported the nobles? *the common people—artisans, soldiers, laborers, farmers, and merchants*
- What was the common people's life like? *They were expected to work hard and had little opportunity to change their position in society.*

Review the Aztec characteristics taught in this lesson as the student completes part of the *Comparison Organizer*.

### Activity Manual

**Study Skill**—pages 159–62

**Study Skill**—page 170

This Venn diagram compares and contrasts characteristics of the Mayas and the Aztecs.

**Bible Connection**—page 171

This page gives the student an opportunity to examine the Bible to answer questions concerning idol worship.



**Primary source: "Offensive and Defensive Arms"—**Direct the student to read Student Text page 422 (Resource Treasury). Guide a discussion with these suggested questions.

- What style of writing is this article? *a narrative*
- What offensive weapons were used in ancient Mesoamerican cities? *bows, arrows, darts, and slings*
- Who were the Mesoamericans not permitted to kill? *lords*

**◆ Lesson 125 ◆****Objectives**

- Evaluate the economy of the Aztec civilization
- Discuss the significance of the Aztecs' language and technological advances
- Analyze the effect the Spanish invasion had on the demise of the Aztec civilization

**Vocabulary**

dike

**Materials**

- Chapter 11 Organizer from Lesson 117
- Comparison Organizer from Lesson 124

**Preview**

Direct the student to read the Focus questions before reading the Student Text pages for this lesson.

**Introduction**

- Read Leviticus 20:1–3. What did God command His people to do to those who sacrificed humans, including their own children, to gods such as Molech? *to put them to death by stoning*
- In this lesson you will see how God eventually brought His judgment on the Aztecs, who practiced rituals similar to those of the Old Testament Canaanites.

**Teach for Understanding****Discussion****page 314**

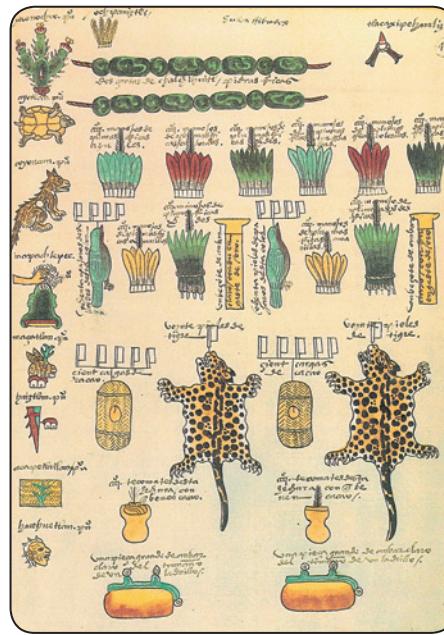
Guide the student in completing the appropriate sections of the *Chapter 11 Organizer*.

- What construction projects were the Aztec people required to work on? *dikes, temples, roads, and aqueducts*
- What were some of the goods that the Aztecs produced? *tools, pottery, figurines, jewelry, cloth, and baskets*
- What business was important to the Aztec economy? *farming*
- Where did the Aztecs go to trade? *the lowlands of the Gulf Coast*
- What goods were traded in the lowlands? *gold ornaments, salt, garments made of fine cloth, jaguar skins, tropical-bird feathers, rubber, cotton, and cacao beans*
- What role did written language play in the Aztec civilization? *It was used in conducting business and recording customs and beliefs to pass on to the next generation. It unified the Aztec culture.*

- FOCUS**
- How did a written language help the Aztecs?
  - Why were the Aztecs defeated by the Spanish conquistadors?

**Economy**

The Aztec culture was built on hard work from people of all ages and both genders. Citizens were expected to help in the building of **dikes** (walls that prevent flooding), temples, roads, and aqueducts.



This page of an Aztec codex shows the kinds of tribute that towns were required to pay.

The Aztec economy was very specialized and highly structured. A variety of goods were produced within the Aztec empire. These included tools, pottery, figurines, jewelry, cloth, and baskets. The goods were either made specifically for the ruler or sold in the local markets. As in other Mesoamerican civilizations, farming was an important business for the Aztec people.

Trade took place along the lowlands of the Gulf Coast. The Aztecs sought goods such as gold ornaments, salt, and garments made of fine cloth. In return the Aztecs offered coveted goods, such as jaguar skins, tropical-bird feathers, rubber, cotton, and cacao beans.

**Language and Technology**

The development of a written language played an important role in the Aztec civilization. Like the Mayas, the Aztecs used hieroglyphs to represent their spoken language. This written language was used while conducting business and trade. They also recorded their customs and beliefs to be passed on to future generations. This unified their culture for many years.

The Aztecs developed their technology based on the knowledge they gained from contact with the Mayas. The Aztec number system and knowledge of the solar system were very advanced compared to other cultures of the time. They developed many forms of helpful medicines, such as ointments, tonics, and salves. The Aztecs did not have access to iron or bronze but still made excellent practical tools and weapons. These included drills made of reed or bone.

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**FOCUS Answers**

- It enhanced trade and unified their culture for many years.
- They were not sure how to respond to the Spanish. They thought Cortés was the Aztec god-king and did not recognize the Spanish as an enemy.



This page from the Mendoza Codex shows the use of canoes.

The Aztecs did not have horses, mules, or other beasts of burden for transporting trade goods. They made dugout canoes for travel through the many canals, lakes, and waterways found in the Valley of Mexico.

### Spanish Invasion

**Montezuma** (mon tuh ZOO mah) was the emperor of the Aztecs when the Spanish conquistadors began landing on the shores of Mesoamerica in 1519. In less than a year, Hernando Cortés and the Spanish conquistadors entered Tenochtitlán. Montezuma was not certain of how to respond to the Spanish force. Some historians believe Montezuma thought Cortés might be the Aztec god-king who was supposed to return that

year from the east. The white skin of Cortés fit the description the Aztecs had of the god-king.

Montezuma eventually welcomed Cortés with elaborate gold and silver gifts. Cortés, on the other hand, seized control of the city and took Montezuma hostage. The Aztec people revolted under Spanish control. Cortés brought Montezuma before the people, expecting them to back down. Instead the Aztec ruler was struck by a stone while addressing his subjects. He died three days later. The Spanish gained control of all Tenochtitlán and many surrounding territories.



**BIOGRAPHY**

**Who:** Montezuma II

**What:** emperor of the Aztecs

**When:** ca. 1466–1520

**Where:** ancient Mexico

Montezuma became ruler of the Aztecs in 1502. During his eighteen-year rule from Tenochtitlán, he expanded the Aztec boundaries. He improved the Aztec way of life by building many temples, canals, and hospitals. His people did not like paying the taxes he imposed on them. After his death the empire fell to the Spanish.

315

### Discussion

page 315

- Why did the Aztecs use canoes as transportation? *They did not have horses, mules, or other animals for transporting trade goods. Canoes allowed for travel through the many canals, lakes, and waterways.*
- Who was the emperor of the Aztecs at the time of the Spanish invasion? *Montezuma II*
- What did Montezuma possibly believe about Cortés? *Some historians think that Montezuma believed that Cortés was the legendary Aztec god-king.*
- What facts about Cortés seemed to agree with this legend? *His white skin fit the description of the god-king, and it was the very year predicted for the god-king's return from the east.*
- What resulted from Montezuma welcoming Cortés? *Cortés took advantage of Montezuma's courtesy and seized control of the city, taking Montezuma as a hostage.*
- How did the Aztec people respond to Spanish control? *They revolted.*
- Why did Cortés bring Montezuma out before the people? *Cortés thought that he would persuade Montezuma's subjects to back down.*
- What happened instead? *Montezuma was struck when one of his subjects threw a stone, and he died three days later.*

**Discussion**

page 316

► Why do historians think that the Aztecs were willing to make peace without fighting? *possible answers: The Aztec superstitions made the people think the Spaniards were gods, and the Aztecs were afraid to fight them. The attack came at harvest time, when the Aztecs were not prepared for war. They were weakened by an unknown epidemic.*

► Why might the Aztecs, like other Mesoamerican civilizations, have lost their will to survive? *military defeat and the loss of their cultural and religious traditions*

► According to the Bible, what will ultimately happen to all nations that reject God? *They will bow before Him in humility.*

Review the Aztec characteristics taught in this lesson as the student completes the *Comparison Organizer*.

**Activity Manual**

Study Skill—pages 159–62, 170

Review—pages 172–73

This Study Guide reviews Lessons 124 and 125.



**Decline of the Aztec civilization**—The factors that contributed to the power and success of the Aztec civilization were also the reasons for its failure. The people's total loyalty to rulers led them down a path of destruction. In the end the Aztecs' confidence in a superior god and their devotion to satisfying his thirst for blood gave their enemy grounds to destroy them.

**The Fate of the Mesoamericans**

Why was the well-trained Aztec army defeated so quickly? There were several possible reasons for the sudden downfall. Some of their superstitions led the Aztecs to believe that the enemy was a tool of the gods. Under these circumstances, making peace without fighting may have seemed the best strategy. Even though the Aztecs by far outnumbered the enemy, fear of the gods stripped them of their power. Also, the timing of the Spanish conquest put the Aztecs at a disadvantage. Cortés attacked at harvest time, when the Aztecs were generally not prepared for war. The Aztecs had also been weakened by an unknown epidemic. As a result, Cortés succeeded in destroying the once-great Aztec empire.

Another reason historians give for the defeat of the Aztecs and other Mesoamerican populations is that these people simply lost the will to survive. Not only were the Mesoamerican peoples defeated in battle with Europeans, but they also lost their culture. As a result of the European conquests, the Mesoamericans could no longer practice

many of their traditions or any form of native religion.

Like every other civilization you have studied in this book, the Mesoamericans accomplished many great things, but they rejected the true God. God will only strive with man and his pride for a time. There will come a day when all nations will bow before Him in humility (Rom. 14:11).

This map of the Atlantic Ocean was drawn in 1513 and shows the coast of Africa on the right and the Americas on the left.



## Chapter 11 Summary

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Text pages 290–316  
Activity Manual page 174

Lessons

126–27

### Define these terms

anthropologist	codex
appease	conquistador
basalt	dike
causeway	maize
cenote	obsidian
chinampa	stucco

### Locate these places

Gulf of Mexico	Sierra Madre del Sur
Lake Texcoco	Tenochtitlán
La Venta	Tikal
Mesoamerica	Valley of Mexico
Pacific Ocean	Yucatán Peninsula



I-shaped ball court of the Mayas

### Tell about these people

Diego de Landa
Hernando Cortés
Montezuma

### Explain what happened

- the building of Tenochtitlán (Mexico City)
- the overthrow of the Aztec Empire

### Be able to . . .

- Write an essay describing the Mayan physical appearance and how it was achieved
- Identify the two earliest civilizations in Mesoamerica
- Identify the most famous archaeological find of the Olmecs
- Identify the first people believed to have used rubber
- Identify the geographic areas where the Mayas built their homes
- Identify the Mayan achievements in arts, architecture, literature, math, and astronomy
- Describe Mayan writing and the making of a codex
- Identify the Mayan social classes
- Describe the Mayan dress and architecture for the different social classes
- Describe how Mayas farmed during the dry seasons
- Identify the Mayan money
- Describe how trade benefited the Mayan empire
- Describe the Mayan ball game
- Explain why the Mayas feared death
- Identify the religious building in Tenochtitlán
- Contrast the Mesoamerican beliefs with biblical truth
- Describe why the Aztecs were feared
- Compare and contrast the Aztecs with the Mayas

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174 | Chapter 11; Lesson 127; pp. 290–314  
Chapter Review



## ◆ Lesson 126 ◆

### Objective

- Recall concepts and terms from Chapter 11

### Introduction

Materials for the Chapter 11 Test will be taken from Activity Manual pages 165, 167, and 172–73. You may review any or all of the materials during this lesson. The chapter organizers from Activity Manual pages 159–62 and 170 may help with review and study.

You may choose to review Chapter 11 by playing “Aztec Eagle Warrior” or a game from the Game Bank (G 1–2 ☰).

### Activity

#### Aztec Eagle Warrior

Remind the student what an eagle warrior looks like by directing attention to the picture of an eagle warrior on Student Text page 313. Divide the class into two teams. Each team will try to get the most feathers for his warrior. Decide which team will go first. Ask each team a question. Every time a team answers the question correctly, that team gets to draw one feather on the board. The team with more feathers wins.

### Activity Manual

Chapter Review—page 174

## ◆ Lesson 127 ◆

### Objective

- Demonstrate knowledge of concepts from Chapter 11 by taking the test

### Assessment

Tests—Chapter 11