



# OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

*Sunday Adult Class*  
*9:45 AM*

# The Geography of Palestine

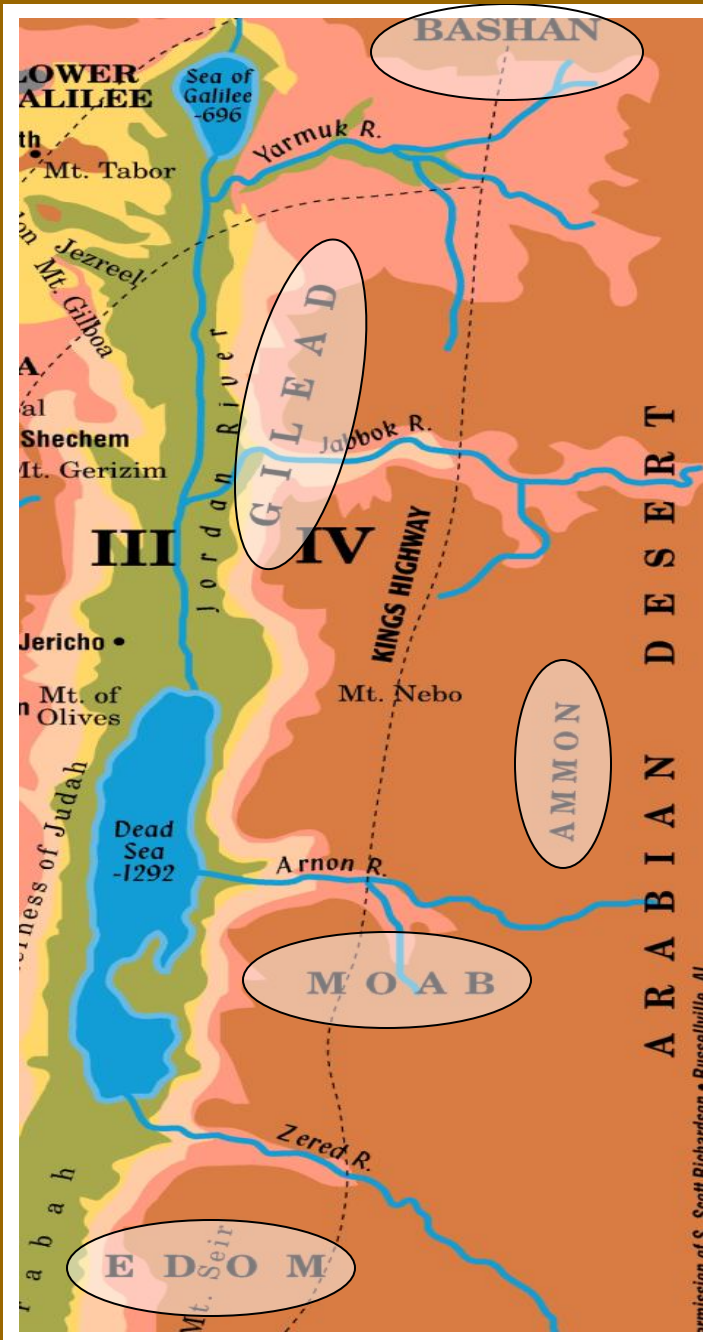
## The Land of Palestine



- **Distinct Parallel Zones**

- Mediterranean Sea
- Coastal Plain
- Western Hill Country
- Jordan Valley
- High Tableland
- Arabian Desert





# Trans-Jordan Plateau

- **Regions of the Trans-Jordan:**

- Bashan
- Gilead
- Moab
- Edom
- Ammon



# Trade Routes

- **Way of the Sea**
  - Coastal plain
  - Through Megiddo
  - Busy route

# PALESTINE PHYSICAL FEATURES

Scale of Miles  
0 10 20 30 40

Mediterranean Sea

- I. Coastal Plain
- II. Hill Country
- III. Jordan Valley
- IV. Trans-jordan Plateau



# Trade Routes

- **Way of Shur**
  - Along hill country
  - Israelite main route



# Trade Routes

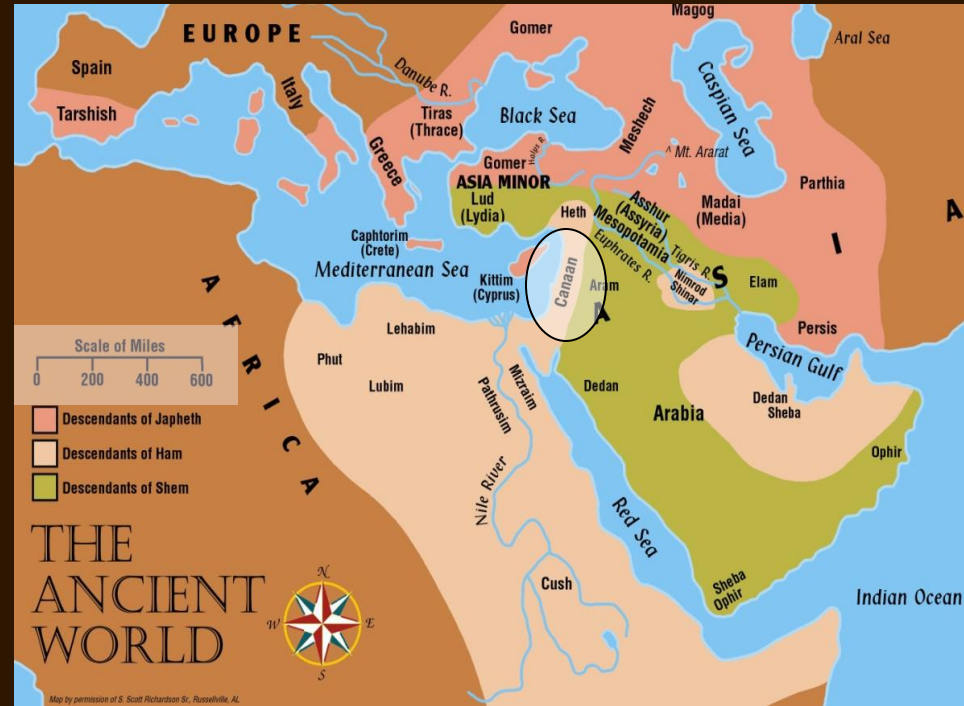
- **King's Highway**  
– Trans-Jordan Plateau
- Wars fought to gain control of the routes

# Old Testament Lands





# Scale of Miles Comparison



When reviewing and studying maps be sure to look at the scale of miles to get a proper understanding of how large or small an area really is

# Mesopotamia



# Mesopotamia

# Rivers



- Tigris and Euphrates
  - Flow southeastward into the Persian Gulf
  - **Tigris** is swift and is over 1,150 miles long

# Mesopotamia

# Rivers



- Tigris and Euphrates

- Euphrates is about 1,700 miles long

- Called “Great River” or simply “The River” in Old Testament times

The description of Eden includes these rivers  
(Hiddekel and Euphrates)





## Genesis 15:18

18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”



## Joshua 1:4

4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.





# Mesopotamia



# The Area

- Mesopotamia
  - The word means “between the rivers”
  - Term will be used to refer to the entire area reaching from the Persian Gulf to the Ararat Mountains

## Judges 3:8-10

8 The anger of the LORD burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years. 9 But when they cried out to the LORD, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them. 10 The Spirit of the LORD came on him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The LORD gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him. (NIV)

## Judges 3:8-10

8 Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. 9 But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10 The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

# Mesopotamia

# The Area



- Mesopotamia
  - Geographic term
    - Never a nation of people
  - Great Assyrian and Babylonian Empires originated here

## Genesis 28:2

2 Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.



# Mesopotamia



# Mesopotamia Facts of the Area



- **Villages**

- Grew into cities over the years
- Able to conquer and control their neighbors

- **Technology**

- Early irrigation systems, Wheel invented, Metals to make tools
- Mathematical systems began – that we still use



- **Technology**

- Early irrigation systems, Wheel invented, Metals to make tools
- Mathematical systems began – that we still use
- Cuneiform writing began
  - Sounds and syllables depicted with wedged shaped characters
  - Some date as early as 3,000 B.C. (1,000 years before Abraham)
  - Aramean tribes developed an early alphabet making for an easier language
  - Aramaic became the official language of Mesopotamia empires
  - Aramaic was used by the Jews in captivity and often the language of Jesus

# Ancient Writings

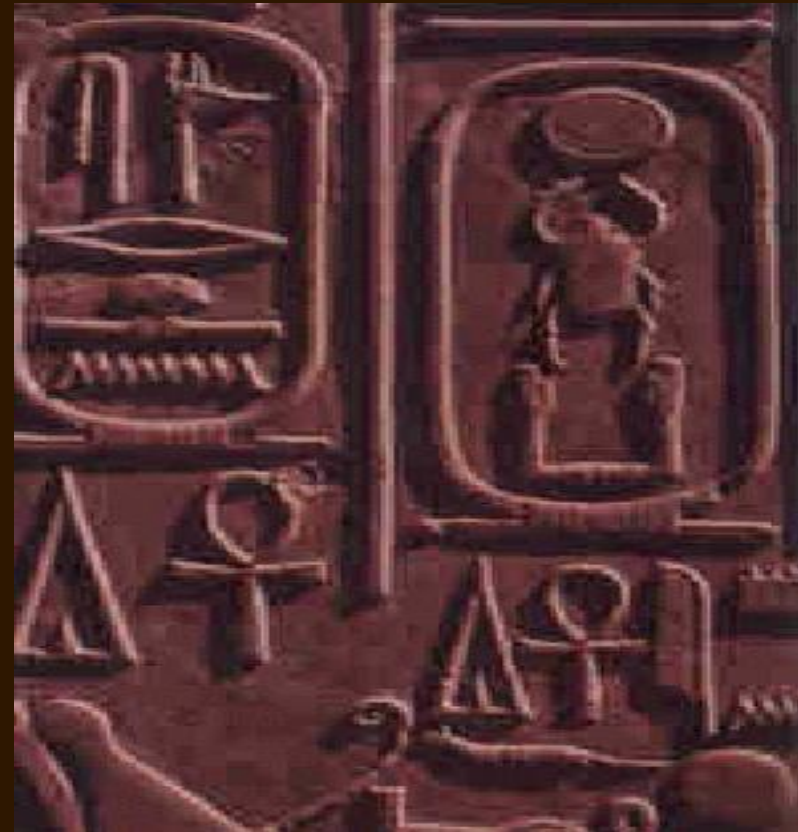
**Cuneiform**

From Mesopotamia



**Hieroglyphics**

From Egypt



## 1 Kings 15:17-20

17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi began to reign over Israel, and he reigned ten years in Samaria. 18 And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart all his days from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin. 19 Pul the king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that he might help him to confirm his hold on the royal power. 20 Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy men, fifty shekels of silver from every man, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in the land.

## 1 Kings 15:27-29

27 In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned twenty years. 28 And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin. 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and he carried the people captive to Assyria.

## 1 Kings 16:1-4

1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD his God, as his father David had done, 3 but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. 4 And he sacrificed and made offerings on the high places and on the hills and under every green tree.

## **1 Kings 16:5-9**

**5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem, and they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. 6 At that time Rezin the king of Syria recovered Elath for Syria and drove the men of Judah from Elath, and the Edomites came to Elath, where they dwell to this day. 7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and rescue me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me." 8 Ahaz also took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasures of the king's house and sent a present to the king of Assyria. 9 And the king of Assyria listened to him. The king of Assyria marched up against Damascus and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir, and he killed Rezin.**

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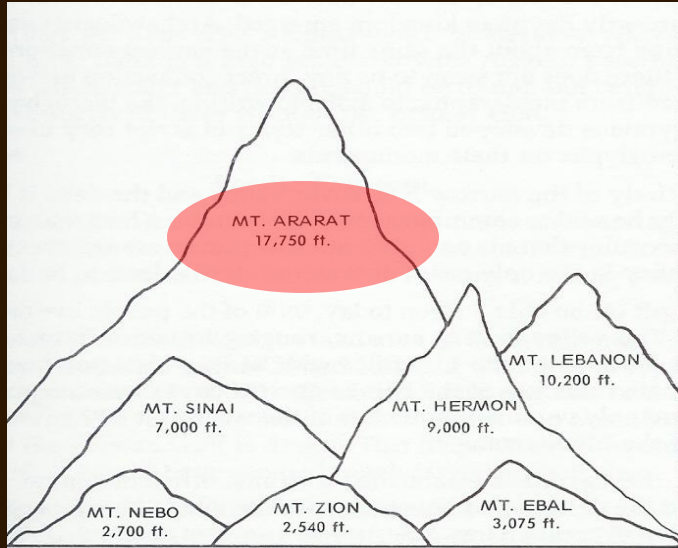
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# Mountains

- **Zagros Mountains**
  - Parallel to Tigris River
  - Average 9,000 ft high
  - Passes between mtns
    - Trading with one another
    - Descendants of Noah's son Japheth (Medes) developed a civilization east of Zagros Mtns

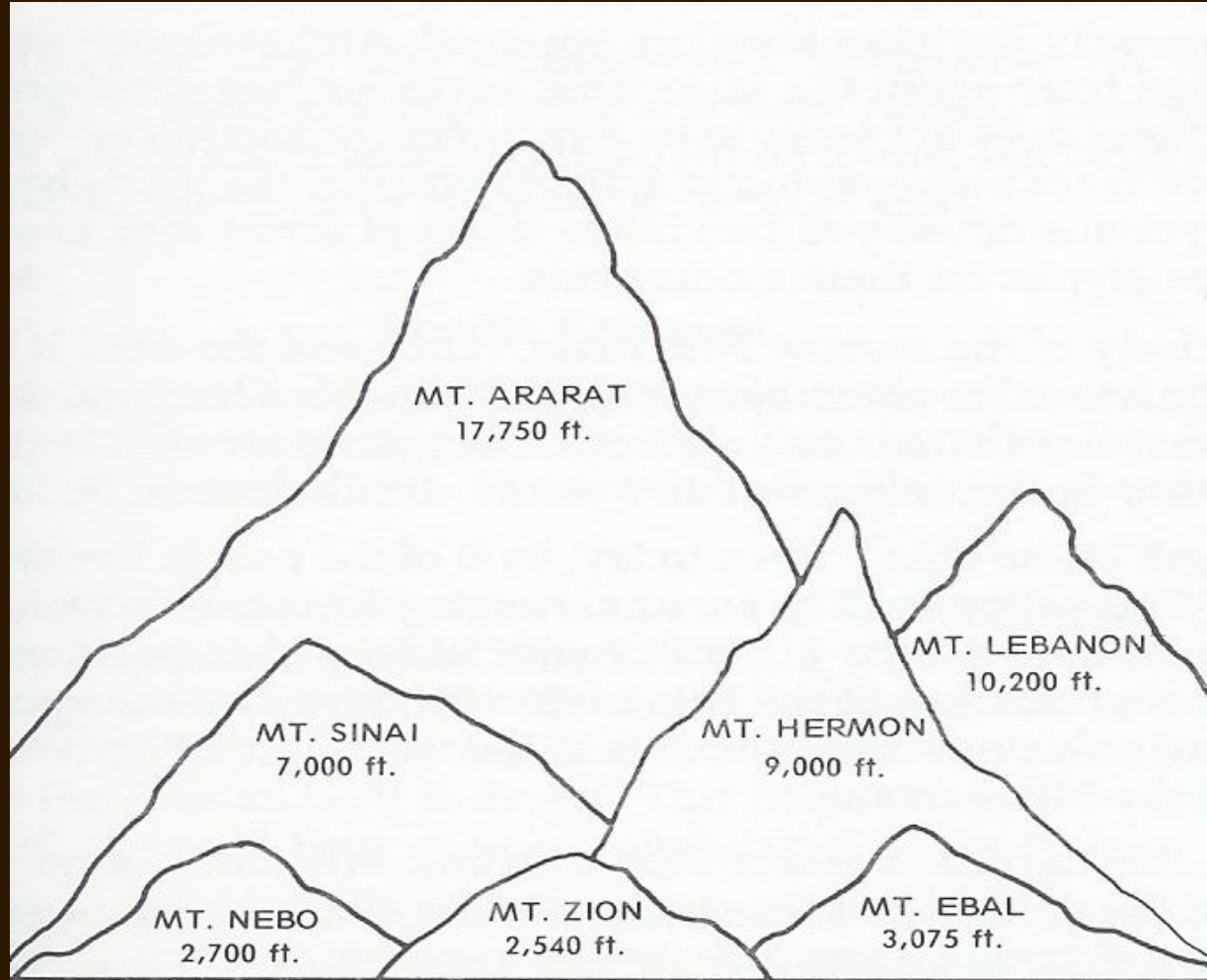


# Mountains



- **Ararat Mountains**
  - High rugged range
    - Formed mostly of lava
    - 20,000 feet above sea level
  - Noah's Ark rested here
    - Descendants of Japheth settled north of the mountains

# Mountains



Mountains  
formed range  
mostly of lava  
feet above sea  
level  
Noah rested here  
Abraham  
dants of  
settled north  
of mountains

# Desert

- **Arabian Desert**
  - Southwest of the Euphrates River
  - Covers nearly 1,000,000 sq miles
  - Extension of the Sahara Desert
  - Nomadic tribesmen and traders made up the Arabians
    - Made their living by way of the trade routes





## Terrain Regions of North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula

Three fertile areas

And

Two desert areas









# Desert

– Not one vast sand dune



# Desert

- Not one vast sand dune
- Around 2,000 B.C. the Amorites came and established city-states from Egypt to Babylon



# Desert

- Not one vast sand dune
- Around 2,000 B.C. the Amorites came and established city-states from Egypt to Babylon
  - Huge lava beds lie immediately east and northeast of the land of Canaan. Beds are larger than Canaan itself



# Egypt



- Egyptian Kingdom
  - Emerged during the time the Sumerians were in Mesopotamia

- Hieroglyphics found dating about the same time as cuneiform writing
- A picture writing with no connection between the two

# Egypt

## • Ancient Egypt

- Consisted of the Nile River valley and the delta
- 99% of people live on 4% of the land
  - irrigated by the Nile River



# Egypt

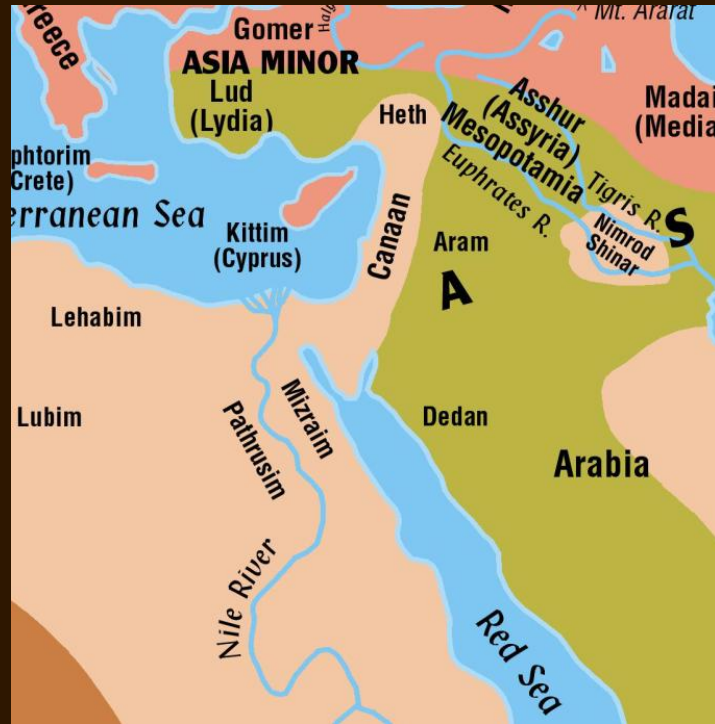
## –Nile River



- River Valley (1-24 miles wide)
- 115 miles wide at its widest point (delta) and 125 miles long
- Longest river in the world (4,100 miles) and it flows northward

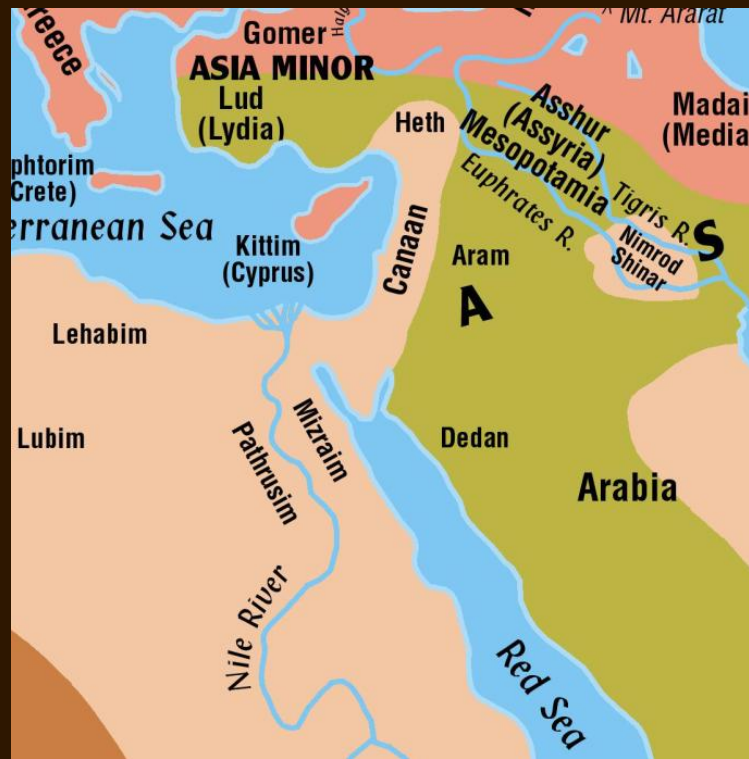


# Egypt • Egyptians



- Built monumental structures
- Pyramids still stand as testimony to the high intelligence of early man
- Built before God called Abram from Ur of the Chaldeans
- First to set up 365 day calendar
- Unmatched medical skill
  - Performed delicate operations

# Egypt • Egypt Tidbits



- Great Sea to the north and desert all around proved inaccessible
- Government was united
  - Not warring as were the Mesopotamia city-states
  - No walled cities or standing armies

# Wilderness of Sinai

- Red Sea
  - Opens into the Indian Ocean – 1,500 miles south of Egypt
  - Two Arms
    - Gulf of Suez
    - Gulf of Aqaba

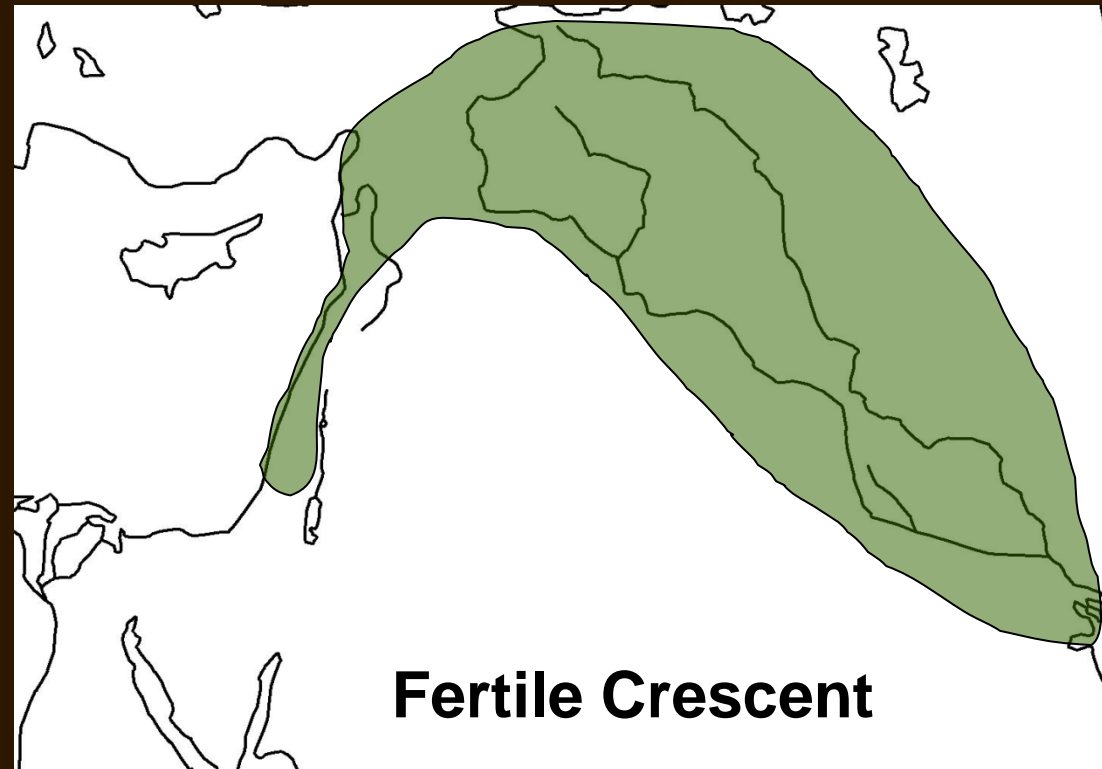


# Wilderness of Sinai

- Red Sea
  - Today, the Suez Canal joins the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea
  - Gulf of Suez is 200 miles long
  - Gulf of Aqaba is 100 miles long
  - Triangular shaped peninsula called the Wilderness of Sinai



- Entire Old Testament history takes place in this half-circle of land
  - Plus the land of Egypt
- Equals about 1/3 of the land area of the continental United States



- 1,000 miles from Egypt to the Northern tip of the Persian Gulf
- 1,000 miles from Egypt to the mountains of Ararat

