UNIT 2 - CHAPTER 5: THE RISE OF RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

Natural Highways: River travel allowed early civilizations to trade goods and ideas. These people are traveling on the Euphrates River, one of the two main rivers of ancient Mesopotamia.

Gift of the River: River water was key to farming in early civilizations. This farmer is using water from the Huang He (Yellow River) in China to water her crops.

From Village to City: With the development of agriculture, people settled into farming villages. Over time, some of these villages grew into large cities. These ancient ruins are near Memphis, Egypt.

New Activities: Today, people live in the Indus Valley, pursuing activities like farming, trade, and writing.

Natural Highways: River travel allowed early civilizations to trade goods and ideas. These people are traveling on the Euphrates River, one of the two main rivers of ancient Mesopotamia.

Gift of the River: River water was key to farming in early civilizations. This farmer is using water from the Huang He (Yellow River) in China to water her crops.

From Village to City: With the development of agriculture, people settled into farming villages. Over time, some of these villages grew into large cities. These ancient ruins are near Memphis, Egypt.

New Activities: Today, people live in the Indus Valley, pursuing activities like farming, trade, and writing.
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What was the Neolithic Revolution?
- What factors led to the rise of the first civilizations?
- What were the accomplishments of the early river valley civilizations?
CHAPTER 5 VOCABULARY

- Culture
- Neolithic Revolution
- Civilization
- Mesopotamia
- Nile River
- Pharaoh
- Hieroglyphics
- Cuneiform
- Indus River
- Huang He
- Theocracy
- Monarchy
- Monotheism
- Ten Commandments
- Code of Hammurabi
A. The earliest humans survived by hunting and gathering their food. They used tools of wood, bone, and stone. They also learned to make fire.

B. About 10,000 years ago, people in the Middle East developed the first agriculture and domesticated animals during the Neolithic Revolution.

C. A civilization is a form of human culture in which some people live in cities, have complex social institutions, use some form of writing, and are skilled at using science and technology.
D. The first civilizations arose in fertile river valleys, where favorable geographic conditions allowed farmers to grow a surplus of food.

E. The Sumerians in Mesopotamia invented the wheel, sailboat and cuneiform writing. The Egyptians developed an advanced civilization along the banks of the Nile. They built large stone pyramids for the afterlife of their ruler – the pharaoh – and developed a form of writing known as hieroglyphics.
F. Other early civilizations developed along the Indus River on the Indian subcontinent and along the Huang He (Yellow River) in China.

G. The earliest civilizations were theocracies and monarchies. In a theocracy, religious leaders govern; in a monarchy, a hereditary ruler heads the government.

H. Judaism, the religion of the ancient Hebrews (Jews), was the first religion to worship only one God.
Anthropologists study the origins, customs, and beliefs of humankind. Most anthropologists now believe the Great Rift Valley in East Africa was the birthplace of humankind. Many scientists believe that human beings as we know them today – *homo sapiens* – first appeared sometime between 400,000 and 200,000 years ago, during the last Ice Age.
The Importance of Culture

- Human beings had several important advantages over other animals: superior intellect, the use of hands to make tools, and the ability to communicate through speech.
Because human beings had these ways of communicating, remembering and making things, they were able to pass on what they learned and their way of doing things from one generation to the next. In this way, the first human cultures developed.

Culture refers to a people’s way of life. Culture includes such things as a people’s language, types of clothing, homes, family organization, system of government, and methods of obtaining food. Culture also includes a people’s crafts, arts, music, and religious beliefs.
People in the earliest human societies were hunter-gatherers. They did not know how to grow their own food. Instead, they relied on hunting, fishing and gathering wild plants for food. They learned to make fires, to make spears with pieces of bone or stone, and to make canoes and boats out of logs.
Because these people made tools of stone, historians refer to these early societies as Stone Age cultures. Over thousands of years, Stone Age peoples also learned to make clay pottery and to domesticate (tame) dogs.
In the Paleolithic Age, humans used stones for hunting which was found in nature and already had cutting edge. They used tree branches, leaves and stones to make shelter for living. They ate plants and meat, gathered berries. They may have eaten flesh of dead animals left behind by other larger predators. They used fire by rubbing stones together and roasted meet.

In the Mesolithic age, humans started to sharpen their stone tools for hunting and looked for stones (such as flint) that was harder and could be sharpened easily. They started to settle in one place but still remain hunter and gatherer of meet, fish, berries, nuts and fruits.

During the Neolithic Age, group of hunters learned about agriculture. At first they collected wild crops and domesticated wild animals. By 10,000 years ago they started to produce grains, fruits and vegetables from seeds. They made plow out of antlers, stone and wood and started to cultivate the land with the help of herded animals. They used stone mortars and pestles to grind cereals and grains.
Early humans spent most of their time hunting for food. They migrated to areas where food – nuts, berries, fruits, grains and especially herds of wild animals – could be found. During the Ice Age, people migrated out of Africa to other parts of the world. Eventually, people even migrated to the Americas and Australia. Wherever people went, they showed great ingenuity in adapting to local conditions.
About 10,000 years ago, one of the great turning points in history occurred. People began to change from hunters and gatherers to producers of food. Two important developments brought about this change: people learned how to grow food and how to herd animals.
Anthropologists believe this change first occurred in parts of the Middle East, where wild wheat and barley were plentiful. People noticed they could spread the seeds of these grains to plant and grow their own crops. They also learned how to herd farm animals such as goats, sheep and cattle. These advances are now referred to as the Neolithic Revolution.
Major Hearths of Agriculture

Goosefoot, gourds, sunflowers, marsh elder 3000 BC

Maize, beans, cacao, chili peppers, avocados, squash, tomatoes, 5000 BC

Gourds, squash, potatoes, lima beans, quinoa, chili peppers, 4000 BC

Asparagus, cabbage, grapes, lettuce, olives, pears, 4000 BC

Wheat, barley, lentils, chickpeas, dates, peas, pistachios 10,000 BC

Millet, sorghum, yams, oil palm, coffee 3000-2000 BC
Wherever agriculture was introduced, people no longer had to wander in search of food. Instead, they could build permanent homes and villages and established a fixed way of life. Populations grew. Although the emergence of agricultural societies is believed to have first occurred in Southwest Asia, it also took place independently at later times in Southeast Asia, Africa and the Americas.
The Neolithic Revolution brought both benefits and problems. People could grow more food than they had been able to gather or hunt, but they were also more vulnerable to attack by other peoples. Thus changes in economics – how these people met their needs for food and shelter – led to social and political changes.
The Emergence of Social Classes. The introduction of agriculture and settlements led to the emergence of two new social classes: warriors and priests. Defense of the village became a major concern, resulting in the emergence of a warrior class. A priesthood emerged to conduct religious rituals in order to promote a good harvest and to protect the village from danger.
2. THE RISE OF RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

- As agricultural societies developed and grew, their way of life further changed. Around 3,500 B.C., the first civilizations arose.

A civilization is a form of human culture in which some people live in cities, have complex social institutions, use some form of writing, and are skilled at using science and technology.
The first civilizations developed in four separate river valleys. Each of these river valleys offered a mild climate and a water highway to other places. Water from the rivers also could be used for drinking and for cooking food. Each of these valleys was also a flood plain where an overflowing river deposited fertile soil. This rich soil led to abundant harvests and food surpluses.
Sometime between 5,000 and 6,000 years ago, the first river valley civilization developed in Mesopotamia, the region located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (in present-day Iraq). Mesopotamia was a Greek term meaning the “land between two rivers.”
Agriculture. Although Mesopotamia was hot and dry, people learned how to irrigate the land by diverting water from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Irrigation allowed farming settlements to flourish and food supplies to increase. Fewer people were able to produce more food, leading to a surplus. Other people could begin to specialize in activities other than farming. Some became potters, weavers or metal workers. Others became warriors and priests.
Government. The people of Mesopotamia built several cities. At first, each city-state, such as Uruk, Ur, and Babylon, had its own ruler and local gods. Later, several of these city-states were united together under a single ruler.
**Building.** The Mesopotamians were the world’s first city-builders. They lacked stone or timber to build their cities. Instead, they made their buildings from mud bricks and crushed reeds. They built walled cities, temples with arches, and stepped-pyramids known as ziggurats. Each ziggurat was made of a series of square levels, with each level slightly smaller than the one below it.
Cultural and Scientific Contributions. Some of the most important inventions in history took place in ancient Mesopotamia. The Sumerians (the people of Sumer) invented the wheel and the sailboat. They were able to figure how to reroute some of the water to irrigate fields farther away. They also developed tools and weapons of copper and bronze. Bronze is made by melting tin and copper together: it is stronger than copper alone.
Cultural and Scientific Contributions. The Sumerians devised a calendar, dividing the year into 12 months. Later, the Babylonians developed a number system based on 60, providing the basis for our seconds and minutes today.
Cultural and Scientific Contributions. They also invented the world’s earliest known writing system, cuneiform, a form of symbol writing on clay tablets. Cuneiform writing used three-dimensional marks by a stylus into clay before it hardened. Only the elite could read and write in cuneiform. Generally, priests and scribes were the ones who had this knowledge.
 Legal System. The Babylonians developed the earliest written law code – the Code of Hammurabi. It covered most occurrences in daily life. Its aim was to ensure justice and protect the weak.

Code of Hammurabi written in cuneiform script.
Women in Mesopotamia. Most girls stayed at home with their mothers, where they learned cooking and housekeeping. Women were responsible for raising children and crushing the grain. There were enormous variations in the rights enjoyed by women in different social classes. Wealthier women were able to go to the marketplace to buy goods, could complete legal matters in their husband’s absence, and could even own property. These women could engage in business for themselves, and obtain divorces. A few women, such as relatives of the ruler, enjoyed even higher status in Mesopotamia society.
Egypt is located in Northeast Africa. The world’s longest river, the Nile, runs through it. Each year, the Nile floods the lands along its banks, depositing fertile soil. With bright sunshine, a long growing season, rich soil, and an ample supply of fresh water, Egyptian farmers were able to grow large amounts of food. Farmers along the Nile were able to support a large number of craftsmen, warriors, priests, and nobles. Ease of communication along the river encouraged the development of a highly centralized government.
EGYPT

- **Government and Society.** The most powerful person in ancient Egypt was the pharaoh (king). The pharaoh governed Egypt as an absolute ruler. The pharaoh owned all the land, commanded the army, made laws, controlled irrigation and grain supplies, and defended Egypt from foreigners. Egyptians considered the pharaoh to be a god.
Egypt was a monarchy, a system of government in which political power is inherited. Each pharaoh inherited absolute power from his father.
Government and Society. Next in the social order below the pharaoh came the priests and nobles. Then came Egypt’s warriors, scribes, merchants, and craftsmen. At the bottom of society were peasants and slaves. They spent their time farming, herding cattle, and working on building projects for the pharaohs.
Religion. The ancient Egyptians believed the body should be preserved after death to participate in the afterlife. When pharaohs died, their bodies were embalmed and buried in a special room under a large triangular stone tomb known as a pyramid. Here they were surrounded with gold, jewels, and other precious objects for use in the afterlife, which Egyptians imagined as similar to life before death. Archaeologists have used these artifacts to learn a great deal about ancient Egypt.
**EGYPTIAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Medicine.** Egyptians developed knowledge of the human body through *embalming* (*preserving*). They performed surgical operations, such as setting fractures.

**Hieroglyphics.** Ancient Egyptians developed one of the earliest forms of writing, based on picture symbols. Hieroglyphics appeared on temples, pyramids, and on scrolls of reed paper, known as papyrus.

**Building and Art.** Egyptian architects and engineers built magnificent pyramids, palaces, and temples of stone. They decorated their buildings with paintings and sculptures.

**Geometry and Astronomy.** Egyptians developed geometry to build projects such as pyramids. By observing the stars, they developed a calendar based on 365 days.
APPLYING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

★ Identify one way in which Egyptian and Mesopotamian societies were similar.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

★ Identify one way in which Egyptian and Mesopotamian societies differed.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
More than 5,000 years ago, the Indus River Valley became another of the first centers of human civilization. In this region, as in Egypt and Mesopotamia, a river deposited rich soil over the neighboring plain during its annual flood.
Agriculture and Building. Farmers grew barley, wheat, dates and melons. Food surpluses allowed people to build large cities like Harrappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Each of these cities had more than 30,000 people.
Agriculture and Building. More than 1,000 cities and settlements belonging to the Indus River Valley civilization have already been excavated. The artifacts found in these settlements suggest a technologically advanced urban culture. Dockyards, granaries, warehouses, brick platforms and protective walls were present in many of their cities. They were also among the first “urban planners,” with almost all their houses connected to public sewers and a water supply. These people, known as the Harrappans, were also the first people known to make cotton cloth.
Trade and Collapse. Trade was an important part of the Harrappan economy. Many small clay seals, probably used for trading purposes, have been discovered by archaeologists. They have also found kilns for making pottery and evidence of the use of metals. The Harappans developed their own form of writing, although scholars are still unable to decipher it. No one knows exactly why this civilization collapsed, but its end occurred suddenly.
What were some of the achievements of the Harappan civilization in the Indus River Valley?
About 500 years after the settlement of the Indus River Valley, China’s first civilization emerged in the fertile plains along the Huang He (Yellow river).
Agriculture. As in the Nile and Indus River Valleys, the fertility of the soil along the Huang He was increased by the river’s periodic floods. Around 4,500 B.C., people along the Huang He began growing millet (a type of grain). Later, they learned to farm soybeans and raise chickens, dogs, and pigs.
Government. Around 1700 B.C., a ruling family, or dynasty, known as the Shang, took power. They built the first Chinese cities and established their capital at Anyang, near the Huang He. The Shang ruled with the help of powerful nobles. Shang kings were military leaders. They were also high priests who offered sacrifices to their royal ancestors.
Cultural Contributions. The people living in the Huang He Valley were skilled at many crafts. Their ability in bronze work can be seen in many objects surviving from this period, including superior weapons and ceremonial vessels. They also were the first to make silk textiles from silkworm cocoons.
Cultural Contributions. Finally, they developed a system of writing with pictographs, known as characters. Each character represented one word. Their pictorial characteristics, often with only minor modifications, are still used in written Chinese today. Even those speaking different dialects use the same characteristics.
Complete the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civilization</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indus River Valley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ancient Hebrews, or Israelites, lived south of Phoenicia in the area occupied by present-day Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan. Because of their location, the Hebrews were deeply influenced by the civilizations of both Mesopotamia and Egypt. According to tradition, the forefather of the Hebrews, Abraham, grew up in Mesopotamia in the city of Ur. Abraham moved to Israel.
Unlike other ancient peoples, the Hebrews did not believe in many gods. Instead, they believed in one universal God, who was both just and all-powerful. This new religion was called Judaism. Jews did not believe that God had human characteristics or the head or body of an animal, like the gods and goddesses of Mesopotamia and Egypt.
THE ANCIENT HEBREWS

- Jews saw their God as an invisible but powerful force or spirit that created the world and that demanded proper moral conduct. Monotheism, the belief in one God, became the basis for several later religions, including both Christianity and Islam.
The early history of the Hebrews and their relationship with God is told in the first books of the Bible, known as the Old Testament. According to the Bible, the ancient Hebrews migrated to Egypt to escape food shortages from drought. They remained in Egypt for hundreds of years, where they became enslaved. Their leader, Moses, later took them out of Egypt and freed them from slavery.
According to the Bible, Moses also presented the Hebrews with the Ten Commandments, which came directly from God. These commandments forbade stealing, murder, adultery, and other forms of immoral behavior. They also commanded the Hebrews to worship one God and to keep the Sabbath (a day to rest).
When the Hebrews returned to Israel from Egypt, around 1,000 B.C., they found it was occupied by new peoples. This led to a series of wars, ending with the Jewish re-conquest of Israel. The Hebrews then established their capital at Jerusalem, where they built a temple to worship God.
Examine each of the following commandments and explain how it was important in creating a moral society.

★ “Honor your father and your mother.”

★ “Thou shall not kill.”

★ “Thou shall not steal.”

★ “Thou shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”
### Mesopotamia

- **Location:**
- **Characteristics:**
- **Achievements:**

### Egypt

- **Location:**
- **Characteristics:**
- **Achievements:**

### India

- **Location:**
- **Characteristics:**
- **Achievements:**

### China

- **Location:**
- **Characteristics:**
- **Achievements:**

### Hebrews

- **Location:**
- **Characteristics:**
- **Achievements:**

---

**THE FIRST CIVILIZATIONS**
Culture / Civilization

★ Culture. A people's way of life — their foods, clothing, customs and beliefs. Culture is a form of learned behavior that is passed from one generation to the next.

★ Civilization. Advanced form of society in which some people live in cities, have complex institutions, use some form of writing, and are skilled in science and technology.

River Valley Civilizations

The first civilizations developed along rivers with fertile soil from periodic floods. Here, farmers were able to grow a surplus of food, allowing the rise of civilization.

★ Mesopotamia. The region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; invented the sailboat, irrigation, the wheel, calendar, and bronze.

★ Egypt. Developed along the Nile River in North Africa; Egyptian society was ruled by a powerful pharaoh; built pyramids.

★ India. The Indus River deposited rich soil over the neighboring plain.

★ China. China's first civilization emerged in the fertile plains along the Huang He.

Neolithic Revolution

The Neolithic Revolution occurred in the Middle East 10,000 years ago. People saw they could obtain food by planting seeds.

★ Food Surpluses. People began to change from hunters and gatherers to producers of food.

★ Domestication of Animals. People learned to domesticate animals such as goats, sheep, and cattle.

★ Settlements. People no longer had to wander in search of food and could now establish settlements with permanent homes.

Judaism

Judaism was the religion of the ancient Hebrews. It began in the ancient lands now known as Israel. Moses led Jews out of Egyptian slavery.

★ Judaism is the first religion to teach monotheism — the belief in one God.

★ Old Testament. History of Jewish people is told in the first books of the Bible, known as the Old Testament.

★ Ten Commandments. Established a moral code of conduct: emphasizes living justly; belief in one God; honoring one's parents, not killing or stealing.