

Ancient Near East Bronze Age

3250–1200 BCE

B.C.E.	EB1 3250-2900 3150-2850	EB2 2900-2650 2850-2600	EB3 2650-2250 2600-2300	EB4/MB1 2250-2000 2300-2000	MB2A 2000-1700 2000-1750	MB2B 1700-1575 1750-1550	MB2C 1575-1475 na	LB1 1475-1400 1550-1400	LB2 1400-1200 1400-1200
Climate	Priora oscillation dry period	Moist period begins to end.	Dry period End of EB cities in the Middle East	Low Nile Increasing aridity and failing rainfall followed by "Dark Age"	Dry period begins to end. Cities return in Palestine.	High Nile			
Southern Mesopotamia	Sumerian Uruk III and colonies Ziggurat temples and communities <i>Cuneiform writing</i> Cylinder seals. Potter's wheel 3500 Major river flood, 2900	Early Pre-dynastic Period, 2900-2334: City-states, wars; hereditary monarchies; kings and priests head hierarchical societies. Gilgamesh of Uruk? Wheeled vehicles	Early Dynastic Period: Lagash Dynasty : powerful cities; <i>Stele of the Vultures</i> Ur I Dynasty : royal tombs, thousands of administrative and literary cuneiform texts Kish Dynasty Sumerian texts: <i>Instructions of Shuruppak</i> ; <i>Kesh Temple Hymn</i> c. 2600	Gutian invasions destroyed Akkadian Empire of N. and S. Mesopotamia c. 2250. Ur III Dynasty , 2112-2004: Sumerian renaissance; <i>Law Code of Ur-Nammu</i> ; extensive empire and hegemony <i>Lament for Ur</i> , 2004 Sumerian version of <i>Epic of Gilgamesh</i> <i>Sumerian King List</i> , 2170 Amorites infiltrate from Syria.	Elamites destroyed Ur , 2004. Rising soil salinity led to depopulation of the South from 2000, leading to collapse of Sumerian culture. Sumer conquered by Semitic Amorites invading from Syrian desert. Dynasty of Isin city-states: Isin and Larsa Akkadian <i>Enuma Elish</i> and <i>Atrahasis Epic</i>	Abandonment and de-urbanization began at end of 18 th C., lasting four centuries (due to change of course of Euphrates?). Hammurabi drove out Elamites c. 1760, but his 'Amorite' dynasty fell before Hittite and Elamite attacks c. 1595. <i>Eridu Genesis</i> , oldest copy c. 1700			
Northern Mesopotamia	Nineveh V pottery style, 3300-2500 Mari (Tel Hariri) first built.	First rise of Mari, 2900-2350	Walled towns, dry-farming, raising of sheep and goatherds. First Empire, Akkadian Dynasty : established by Semite Sargon of Akkad (2334-2279), ruled cities of Sumer , Lagash , Uruk , Elam , Mari . Semitic Akkadian language became the lingua franca. <i>Enheduanna Hymns</i> by priestess daughter of Sargon	Increased number of urban centers; large stone architecture, citadels Gutian Period , N. and S. Mesopotamia, c. 2250-2150 Hurrians appear c. 2200-2500, rulers of small N. Mesopotamian states until rise of Mitanni Kingdom.	City states in North Mari (Tell Hariri), center of Amorite culture; magnificent palace; 20,000 <i>Mari tablets</i> (1780-1760) revised ANE dating, adding 500 place names. Mari destroyed by Hammurabi, 1759. Assur , Assyrian capital, extended power and influence until c. 1780.	Terqa , a major Amorite center: temple complex, administrative complex, private houses First Amorite Dynasty established in Babylon , c. 1894-1595; <i>Law Code of Hammurabi</i> (1792-1750). Hittites from Turkey invade and end the dynasty.	Kingdom of Mitanni , confederation of Hurrian states with vassal kings; the most powerful in ANE (1450-1350); invaded Levant 17 th C. Emar on Euphrates, with significant religious texts, similar to those of Israel.	Nuzi (Yorghana Tepe) under Hurrian influence (15 th -14 th C.) <i>Nuzi tablets</i> : recorded ancient customs, covering five generations; on 4,000 clay tablets; both private and public documents.	14 th C., Hittite Empire at its height: included Anatolia, NW Syria, Upper Mesopotamia Pioneered iron age; famous for chariots <i>Akkadian version of Epic of Gilgamesh</i>
Syro-Mesopotamia and Coastal Syria	Early occupation of Ebla (Tell Mardikh) Uruk colonies in Syria	Continued occupation of Ebla	Many walled cities constructed, 2600-2400. Ebla (2600-2240): large royal palace, 2150; defensive ramparts, gates, richly furnished tombs Commercial rival of Mari: textiles, timber; wheat and barley agriculture; metalworking 17,000 clay cuneiform <i>Ebla tablets</i> in Sumerian	Period of upheaval and abandonment of major urban centers, c. 2100. Hurrians in northern Syria, city of Urkesh (Tell Mozan): city wall, thick-walled temple, <i>epigraphic tablets</i> (c. 2300-2200) Damascus , occupied since prehistoric times; on N-to-S caravan route.	Old Syrian Period : close cultural relations with Mesopotamian South, Isin and Larsa. Planned urban centers Rise of Hittites in Anatolia Ebla Amorites continued to flourish (1850-1600), in time of Patriarchs. Haran , center of moon cult; strategic position made it target of Amorites.	Syria under domination from Egypt, Hittites Nomadic pressure from Arameans	Mitanni Kingdom united Syria. Ugarit (Ras Shamra): coastal Syrian city, major trading post, tributary to Hatti; independent culturally.		<i>Ugarit tablets</i> , 1300-1200: important source regarding Canaanite religion; Ugaritic alphabetic cuneiform, an important bridge to Hebrew texts

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Palestine	<p>Many cities; settlements in Negev and Sinai; towns with mud-brick walls.</p> <p>Jerusalem, Gezer, Ai, Jericho (VI-VIII)</p>	<p>Towns in North, e.g., Megiddo, Beth-shan, continue to flourish.</p> <p>Egyptian influence in South.</p> <p>Lower city of Arad had well-developed affinities with North Canaanite town of Ai.</p> <p>Khirbet Kerak pottery shows gradual improvement in techniques.</p> <p>EB2 sites near Kadesh-Barnea</p>	<p>Post-urban phase, 2400-2000: numerous small settlements and isolated cemeteries in Jordan Valley and Negev-Sinai</p> <p>Large cities of Jericho and Ai fell at end of EB3. Hazor destroyed. Dan occupied.</p>	<p>Period of upheaval and abandonment of major urban centers, c. 2100. Pastoral; contact with Syria but not Egypt.</p> <p>Local nomadic groups, possibly Amorites, settle Jericho, Megiddo.</p> <p>Distinctive burial customs, pottery and weapons, c. 2200.</p> <p>Other types of pottery, weapons, burial customs connected with city-states of Syria and Phoenicia.</p> <p>Canaanite city-states begin to appear; a time of wealth, inter-city warfare. Major cities had a citadel, lower town enclosed by high ramparts.</p> <p>Dan, wealthy city through EB and MB.</p> <p>Mamre, near Hebron, a sacred place</p>	<p>Several major sophisticated urban city-states: Hazor, Dan, Gezer, Shechem, Megiddo, Salem, Jericho, and Ashdod. Extensive fortifications utilized Cyclopean Masonry; enclosed temples, palaces, government buildings; high levels of crafts: Egyptian, Cypriot, and Mesopotamian imports. Exports of grain, olive oil, wine; possibly timber and cattle.</p> <p>Semi-nomadic groups including Habiru, possibly including patriarchs, infiltrated between defended towns.</p> <p>Towns and houses remained small in Megiddo, Jericho; distinctive tombs at Jericho.</p> <p>Little change until violently destroyed in LB.</p> <p>Bethel (Tell Beitin) established and prospered in MBA.</p> <p>Patriarchal Age: 2100-1640 (or 1850-1570)</p>	<p>New heavily fortified sites, e.g., Gezer (c. 1650-1500). Older refurbished sites, with embankments, outer walls, dry moats, large towers, citadels and large gates.</p> <p>Hebron (Tel Rumeida) founded c. 1720, linked with Cave of Machpelah.</p>	<p>Settlements in hill country begin to decline. By c. 1550 every major urban center was destroyed (due to removal of Hyksos from Egypt?).</p> <p>Evidence of literacy: Proto-Sinaitic script, fragments of cuneiform texts at Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, and Hebron</p> <p>Fortified cities fell at end of MB2C: Dan, Hazor, Bethel, Jericho, and Hebron.</p>	<p>Towns violently destroyed c.1450, the time of Thutmosis III.</p> <p>Mycenaean pottery shows trade contacts, but hill towns poor.</p> <p>Six different types of writing, including cuneiform, hieroglyphics, Canaanite linear alphabet related to Ugarit script of Byblos.</p> <p>Canaanite religious practices show remains of temples, shrines, figurines at Hazor, Lachish, and Megiddo.</p> <p>Bethel now marked by well-built houses.</p>	<p><i>Amarna letters</i> describe Palestine as tributary to Egyptian empire.</p> <p>Reuse of MB fortifications and unwalled cities; Egyptian-type buildings at Gezer, Apeh, and Ashdod; rich tombs at Dan, Shechem, Gezer, and Jerusalem.</p> <p>Evidence of destruction at end of period, c.1250-1150 at Hazor and Lachish.</p> <p>Megiddo, Beth-shan, Shechem, and Gezer show little evidence of destruction.</p>
Egypt	<p>Predynastic Period</p> <p>Earliest written records</p>	<p>Egyptian Old Kingdom, c. 2700-2190.</p> <p>Age of Pyramids, 2650-2150</p> <p>Dynasties: I and II in EB II III-V in EBIII</p> <p><i>Pyramid Texts</i>, as early as 3000</p> <p><i>Maxims of Ptahhotep</i>, a vizier in 5th dynasty; assembled c. 2350</p>	<p>First Intermediate Period, 2200-1989</p> <p>Dynasties: VI-X in EB IV XI in MBI</p> <p><i>Execration texts</i>, listing enemies of Egypt</p>	<p>Middle Kingdom, 2116-1795</p> <p>Second Intermediate Period, 1780-1550</p> <p>Hyksos Period, c. 1648-1540: ruled in Lower Egypt; expelled 1540.</p> <p>Rock-cut tombs at Beni Hasan, show Semite merchants, 12th dynasty.</p> <p>Evidence for Semitic settlement in NE Delta (Israelites c. 1800-1446)</p> <p>Dynasties: XII in MBIIA XIII-XIV in MBIIIB</p> <p><i>Coffin Texts</i>, inscriptions, c. 2000</p> <p><i>Tale of Sinuhe</i>, c. 1950, describes Palestine</p>	<p>Egyptian New Kingdom, 1540-1100</p> <p>Renewed Egyptian dominance and political control, especially from 1400-1200.</p> <p>Thousands of Asiatic prisoners, laborers making bricks.</p> <p>Large Semitic population.</p> <p>Dynasties: XV-XVII in MBIIIC XVIII in LBI XIX in LBII</p> <p><i>Amarna Letters</i>, in Hurrian and Ugaritic, most c. 1353-1336, from Gezer, Jerusalem, Lachish, and Ashdod.</p> <p><i>Merneptah's stele</i>, c. 1220, mentions Israel.</p> <p><i>Egyptian Book of the Dead</i>, 1550</p>				