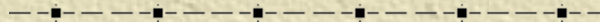




*World in Transition:
The Expansion of Civilization*

Belief Systems and Classical Empires



Essential Understanding

- ✦ How did the development of religious traditions provide a bond among the people and an ethical code to live by?
- ✦ How and why did belief systems and cultural traditions spread to new areas?
- ✦ How did the development of religious traditions affect social classes, gender roles, and artistic expression?

Axial Age (Around 500 BCE-500 CE)

- ✦ Universal religions and philosophical systems emerged (common phenomena)
- ✦ Focused on:
 - affairs of the world and human rationality
 - realm of the divine and its relationship to human life
 - sought alternative to an earlier polytheism (persuade to do human bidding)
 - sought to define a single source of order and meaning in universe
 - moral or spiritual transformation, aligning ourselves with higher order; compassion
 - defined distinctive cultures; posed great questions


Why emerge at same time?

- ✦ Tumultuous social changes accompanied emergence of new teachings
- ✦ Iron-age technology → productive economies → warfare
- ✦ Growing cities and increase in populations
- ✦ Increased trade and growing merchant class (hierarchy and power, scarcity of resources)
- ✦ New states and empires and new contacts
- ✦ Disruptions led to questioning and looking for new outlook and meaning of life (as it grew more complex)

Raised questions:

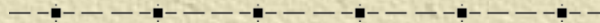
- ✦ What is the purpose of life?
- ✦ How should human society be ordered?
- ✦ What is the relationship between human life in this world and the moral or spiritual realms that lie beyond?

Each society developed own distinctive answers to these questions.



*What is the purpose of
religion?*

*Consider spiritual and
practical purposes.*



Confucianism

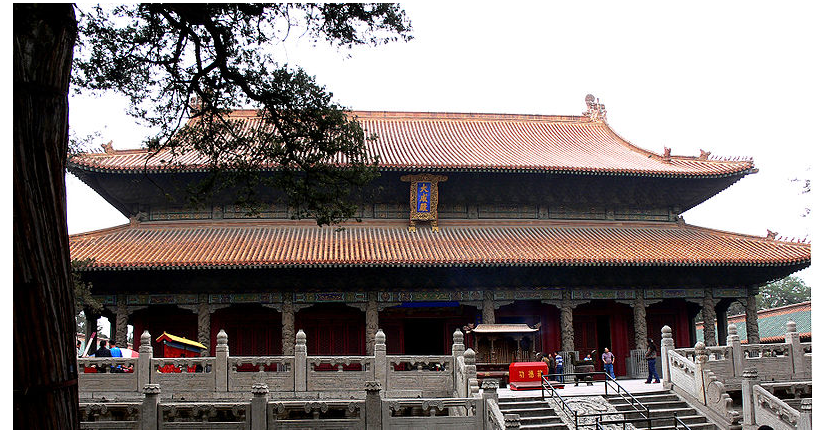


Drawing of Confucius

- ✦ Started by Confucius (551-479 BCE) during the Warring States Period in China
- ✦ Offers solutions to the problems plaguing China
 - Focus on life rather than the afterlife
- ✦ Does not advocate a specific deity
 - Emphasizes worship of ancestors

Basic Beliefs of Confucianism

- ✦ Emphasizes *li*
 - the “rituals” of everyday life
- ✦ Goal is to promote harmony on Earth through relationships
 - Five Relationships
- ✦ Filial Piety
- ✦ Education
- ✦ Cultivation of virtue



Dacheng Temple in Confucius' hometown of Qufu in China.



Social Impact of Confucianism

- ✦ Becomes foundation of Chinese government
- ✦ Reinforced importance of patriarchal relationships
- ✦ Reinforced family as the center of Chinese society
- ✦ Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore are influenced by Confucian ethic



Family altar in Malaysian Chinese home. Family is inviting ancestors to partake in the Hungary Ghost festival

Daoism (Taoism)



- ✦ Founded by Laozi (6th cent. BCE?) during the Warring States Period
- ✦ Everything revolves around the Dao
- ✦ Goal: Create societal harmony by living according to the natural laws of the universe
- ✦ Wu Wei “without action”; effortless

Impact of Daoism

- ✦ Encourages respect for nature
- ✦ Heavily influenced Chinese art and literature
 - Landscape paintings
- ✦ Yoga and meditation
- ✦ Hygiene and cleanliness
- ✦ Medicine



Balance between Yin
(feminine, dark) and Yang
(masculine, light)



Hinduism

- ✦ Began in India c.1500 BCE
- ✦ One god in many different forms
 - Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva
 - Krishna
- ✦ Sacred Texts
 - Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads



Shiva, the Destroyer

Basic Beliefs of Hinduism

✦ Atman

✦ Major Ideas

- Dharma (duty)
- Karma (action)
- Samsara (cycle of life)
- Moksha (liberation)

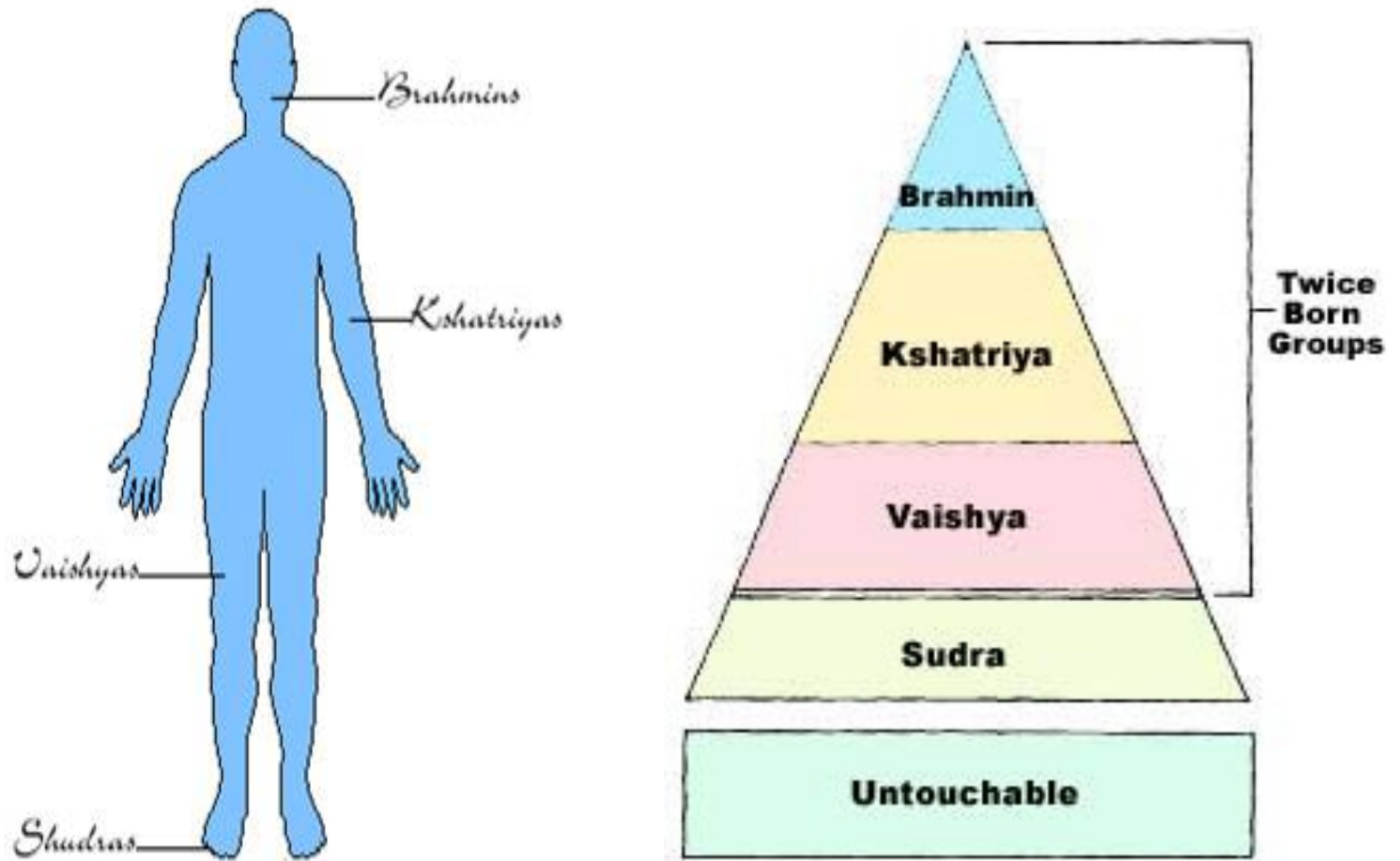
✦ Yogas

- Paths or practices
- Several different types



Kali, goddess of death and destruction

Social Impact of Hinduism



Modern Untouchables



Modern India has 160 million untouchables or approximately 15% of India's population.

Buddhism

- ✦ Founded by Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 BCE)
 - Born into kshatriya caste
- ✦ Reform movement of Hinduism
 - No specific deity?
 - Rejects the atman
 - Believes in spiritual equality
 - No caste system



Basic Beliefs of Buddhism

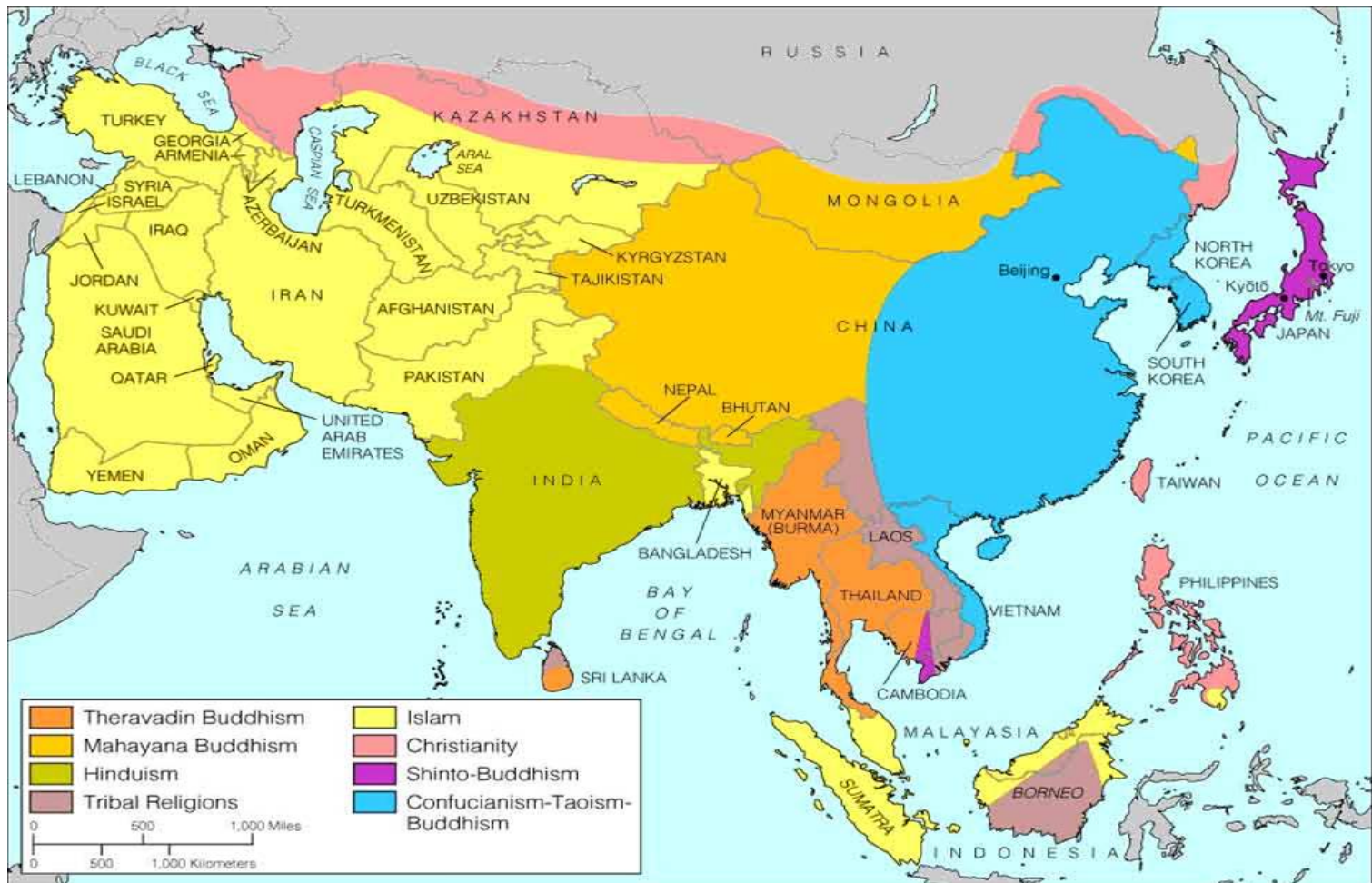
✦ Four Noble Truths

- Life is suffering
- Desire causes suffering
- End suffering by ending desire
- To end desire follow the Eightfold Path
 - Right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration



Buddhist Wheel of Life; the eight spokes represent the Eightfold Path

Spread of Buddhism



Social Impact of Buddhism

- ✦ Spread to Central Asia, East Asia, & SE Asia
 - Often blends with existing beliefs
- ✦ Built monasteries for men and women
 - Provides elite women an alternative to traditional living



Zoroastrianism

- ✦ Founded by Zarathustra (Zoroaster) c. 600 BCE
- ✦ God Ahura Mazda which produces only good
 - Evil is always trying to destroy the work of Ahura Mazda
- ✦ Became the state religion of the Persian Empire



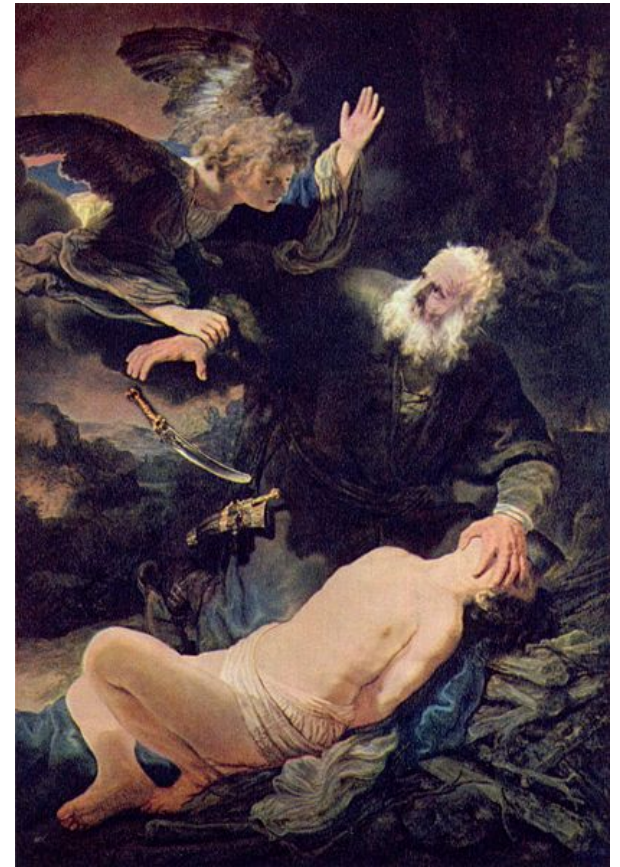
Impact of Zoroastrianism

- ✦ 200,000 worldwide
- ✦ Influence on other religions
 - God vs. Satan
 - the Soul
 - Heaven & Hell
 - Virgin birth of savior
 - Resurrection
 - Day of Judgment



Judaism

- ✦ Monotheistic
 - Yahweh (Yhwh)
- ✦ Abraham considered “father” of the Jews
- ✦ Hebrews are the chosen people of God & Canaan is the chosen land
- ✦ Messiah will create God’s kingdom on Earth



Abraham and Isaac by
Rembrandt

Basic Beliefs of Judaism

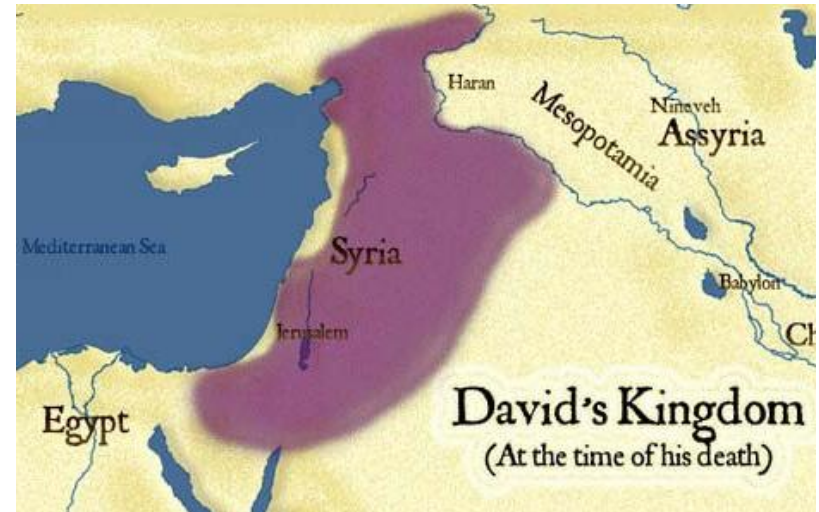


Moses by Rembrandt

- ✦ Death is not the end of human existence
 - Focus on life instead of afterlife
- ✦ Believe dead will be physically resurrected
- ✦ One is saved through commitment to being moral to God.
 - 614 Rabbinical laws

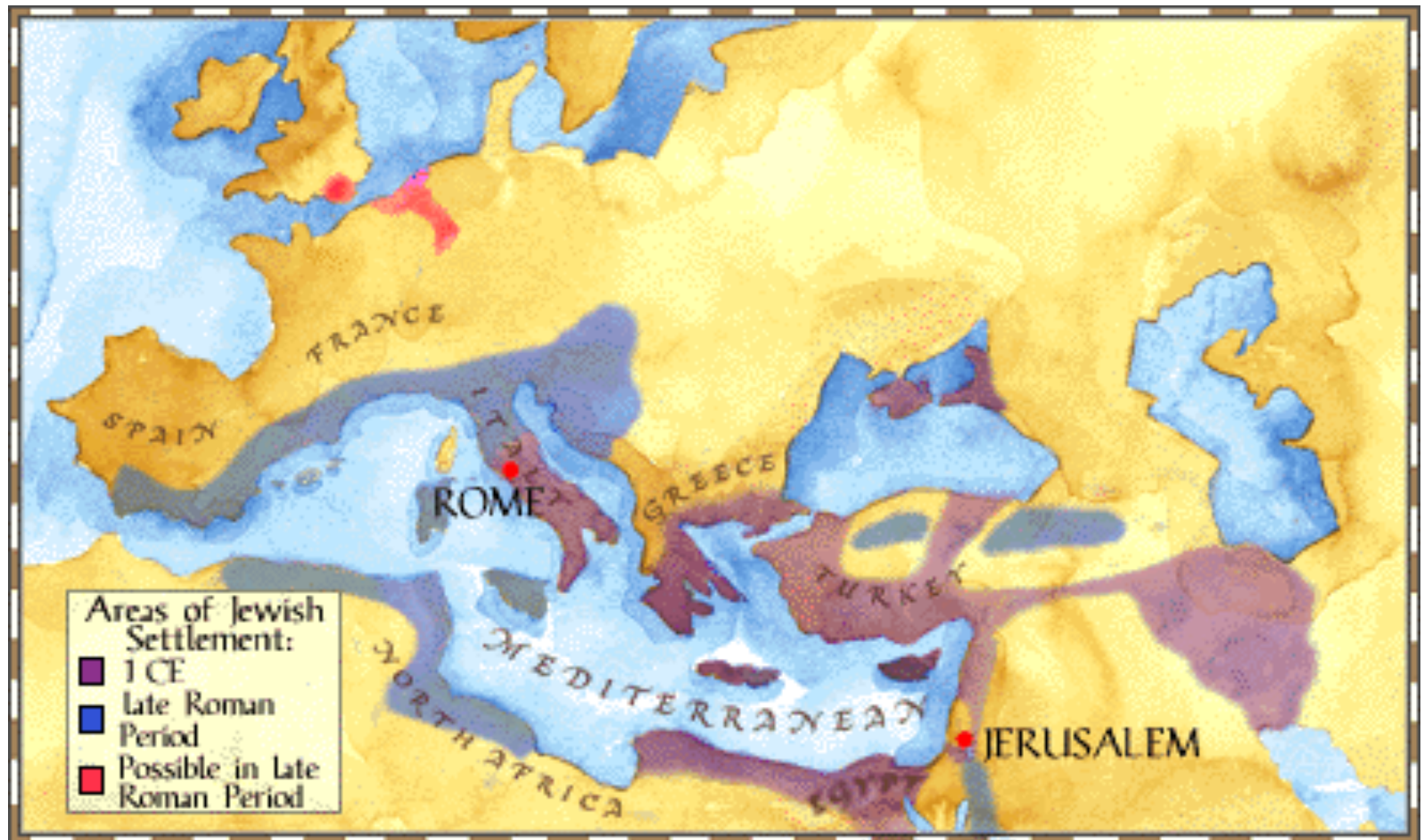
Social Impact of Judaism

- ✦ Short lived kingdom in the Middle East
- ✦ Jewish Diaspora
- ✦ Heavy emphasis on tradition & culture
 - Language, diet, holidays, etc.
- ✦ Patriarchal community
 - Matrilineal descent

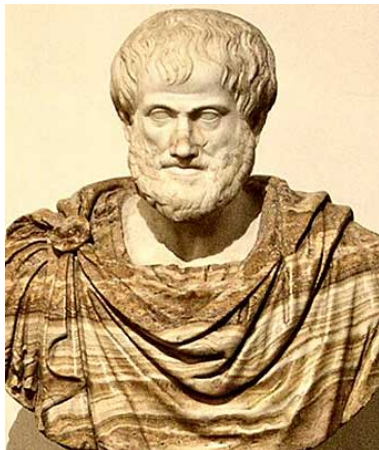
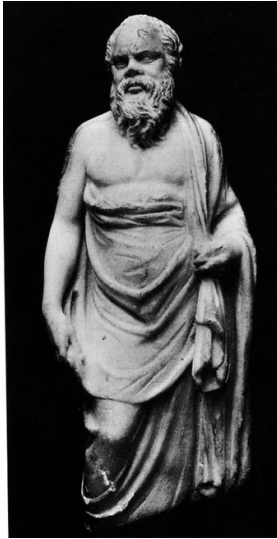


Israel as a united monarchy lasted from 1050-930 BCE. Eventually it was divided into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom of Israel would last until 720 BCE. The southern kingdom of Judah would last until 586. The fall of the two kingdoms led to Jewish Diaspora.

The Diaspora



Greco-Roman Philosophy



- ✦ Started 600 BCE
- ✦ Most important philosophers were Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle
- ✦ Goal: understanding the universe & human behavior
- ✦ Socratic method
 - Argument & Reason
- ✦ Spread throughout Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa

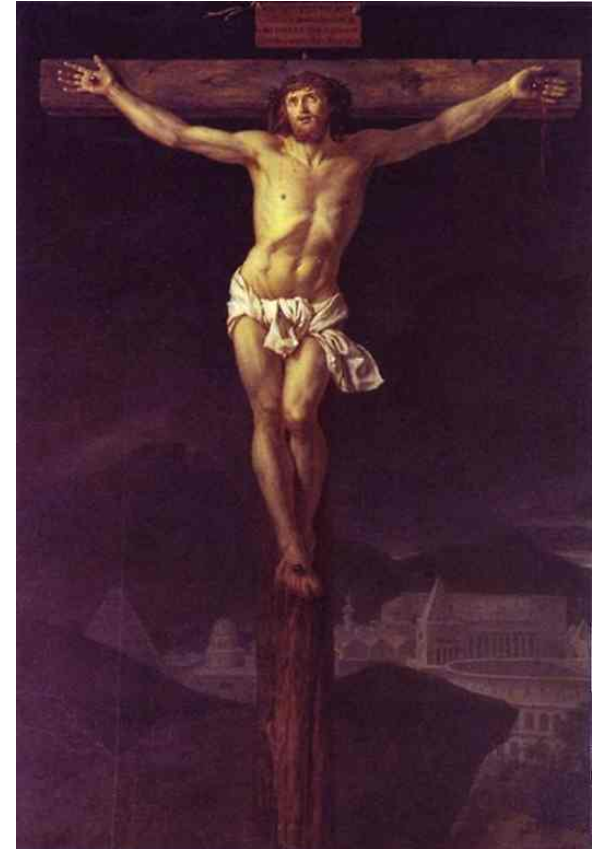
Basic Beliefs of Christianity



- ✦ Founded by Jesus of Nazareth (c.6 BCE – c.30 CE)
 - Believed to be Son of God
- ✦ Reform movement of Judaism
 - New covenant downplayed “the law”
- ✦ Holy Trinity

Basic Beliefs of Christianity

- ✦ Resurrection of the body and eternal life
 - Jesus crucifixion redeemed humans of their sins
- ✦ Faith in Jesus allows one to enter heaven
- ✦ Sacraments
- ✦ Holidays

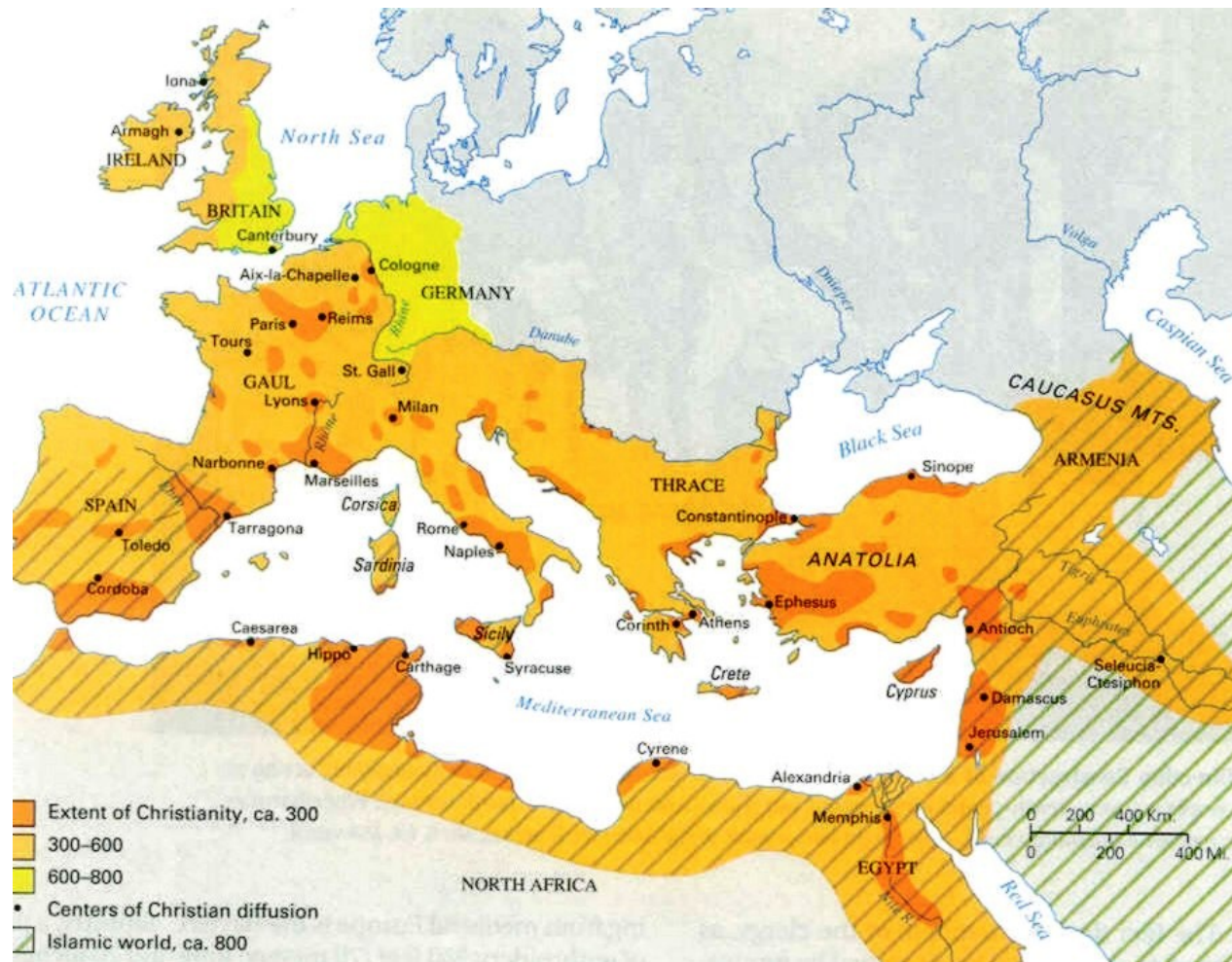


Social Impact of Christianity



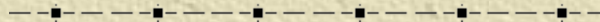
- ✦ Appealed to lower classes of Roman Empire
- ✦ Created a new system of ethics
- ✦ Formal church organization emerged in 1st/2nd century CE

Spread of Christianity





*The Expansion of
Civilization*



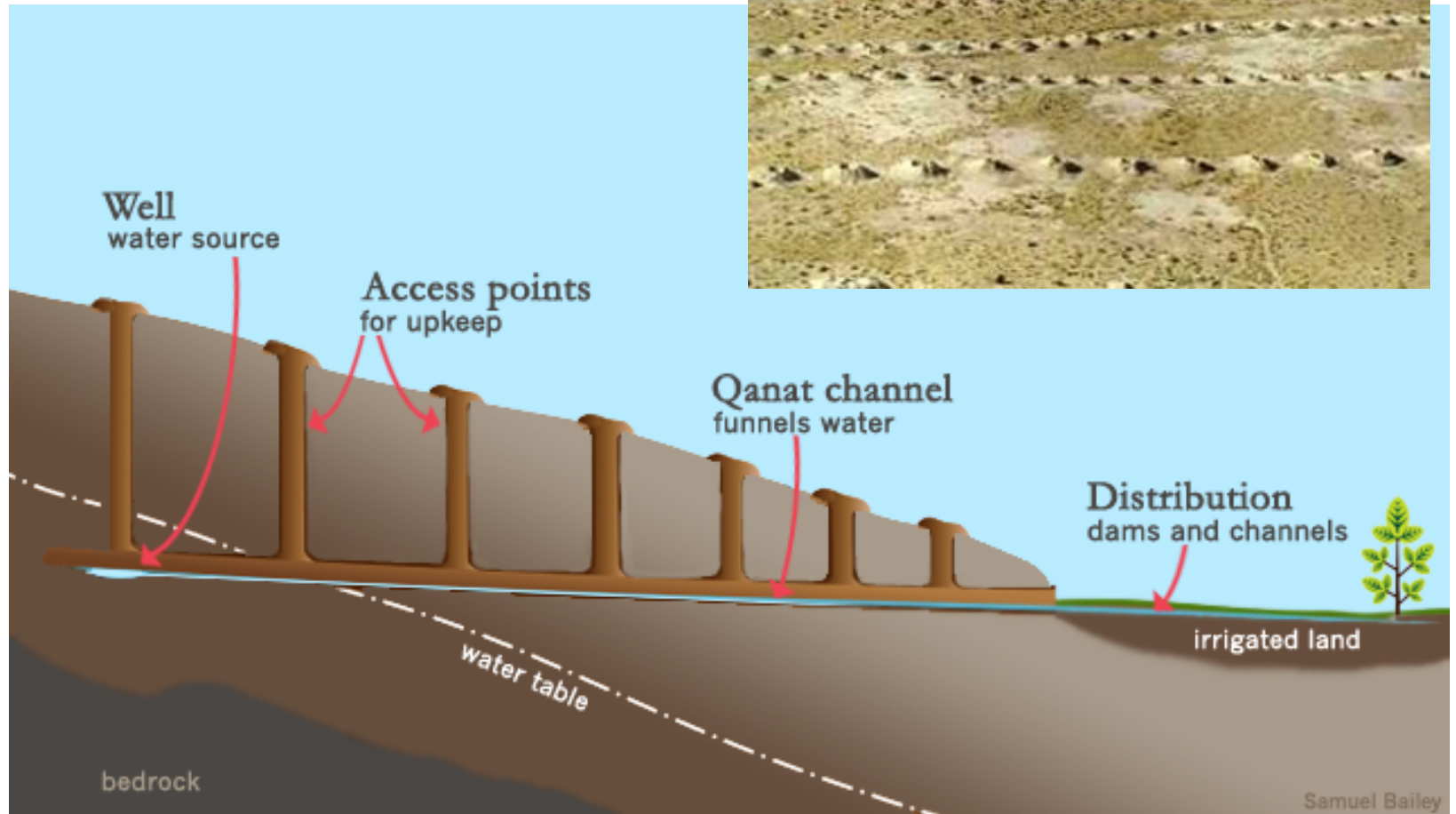
Model of Empire

- ✦ According to historian Conrad Demarest, empires have four stages...
 - **Preconditions** for the rise of an empire
 - The **building** of the empire
 - **Rewards** of the empire
 - **Fall** of the empire

What is needed to build an empire?

- ✦ State level government
- ✦ High agricultural potential of area
- ✦ An environmental mosaic
- ✦ Several small states with no clear dominant state (power vacuum)
- ✦ Mutual antagonism between local states
- ✦ Adequate military resources

Qanats



The World: 600 B.C.E.



How do you build an empire?

- ✦ The primary reason a state succeeded in empire building was an ideology supporting personal identification with the state, empire, conquest, and militarism

Cyrus the Great



- ✦ Created the Persian Empire (550-539 BCE)
 - Conquered Babylon
- ✦ Used kindness and tolerance to rule conquered peoples
 - Viewed by Jews as a liberator
 - Allowed Jews to return to their homeland

Persian Empire in 525 BCE

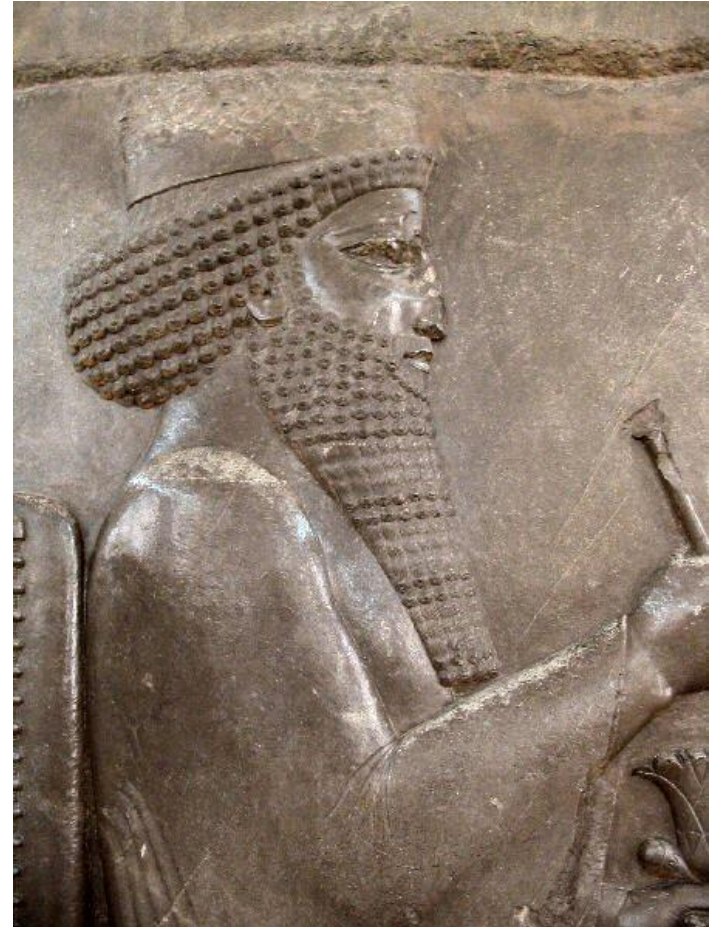


What are the rewards of empire?

- ✦ Stable government with a bureaucracy
- ✦ Large military
 - Creates peace for citizens near the core
- ✦ Infrastructure
 - Roads, bridges, irrigation, etc.
- ✦ Cultural Development
 - Architecture, literature, science, etc.

Darius the Great

- ✦ Ruled 522-486 BCE
- ✦ Administrative Genius
 - Provinces & Satraps
- ✦ Built the Royal Road
- ✦ Used metal coins
 - 1st government to use standard currency
- ✦ Zoroastrianism
 - Idea of Heaven & Hell



Persepolis



Why do empires collapse?

✦ Two Reasons!

– Internal Weakness

- Rising economy = costly rewards
- Declining economy = costly rewards
- What rewards do you cut?

– External Pressure

- Empire was built at expense of its neighbors
- Neighbors take advantage of internal weakness

✦ Empires collapse from internal rebellion or external conquest

Alexander the Great

