Ancient Civilizations Comparison Chart

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|  | ***Ancient Mesopotamia (Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, & Hittites)*** | ***Ancient Egypt*** | ***Ancient Israel*** | ***Ancient China*** | ***Ancient India***  ***(Meluhhaites)*** |
| *Duration* | 5,400 BCE to 539 BCE | 3000 BC to 30 BC | 1200 BC to 70 CE | 2100 BC to 221 BC | 3300 BC to 1700 BC |
| *Geography* | 1. Tigris River 2. Euphrates River 3. River valley 4. Persian Gulf 5. Flooding 6. 300 miles long and 150 miles wide 7. “Fertile crescent” 8. vulnerable to invasion | 1. Nile River 2. Sahara Desert 3. Red Sea 4. River delta 5. Predictable flooding 6. NE Africa 7. Arid climate | 1. Dead sea 2. Jordan River 3. Mediterranean Sea 4. Mount Sinai 5. Syrian Desert | 1. Yellow River (Huang He) 2. Chang Jiang River 3. South China Sea 4. Plateau of Tibet 5. Gobi Desert 6. Taklimakan Desert | 1. Indus River 2. Ganges River 3. Himalaya Mountains 4. Arabian Sea 5. Bay of Bengal 6. Indian Ocean 7. Currently NW India 8. 900 miles long 9. Mountains to the N, Indus river to the west 10. Khyber Pass main outlet |
| *Cities* | 1. Uruk (50k people) 2. Ur 3. Babylon 4. Nineveh | 1. Giza 2. Memphis 3. Thebes | 1. Jerusalem 2. Canaan 3. Jericho | 1. Anyang 2. Luoyang | 1. Harappa 2. Mohenjio-Daro |
| *Leaders / influential people* | 1. Sargon 2. Hammurabi 3. Nebuchadnezzar | 1. Narmer/Menus 2. Hatshepsut 3. Ramses II 4. Nefertiti 5. Tutankhamen | 1. Abraham 2. Moses 3. David 4. Solomon | 1. Confucius 2. Laozi 3. Hanfeizi 4. Qin Shihuangdi | 1. Siddhartha 2. Gautama 3. Cahndragupta Maurya |
|  | *Mesopotamia* | *Egypt* | *Israel* | *China* | *Indus River* |
| *Writing System* | Cuneiform (wedges) | Hieroglyphics | Hebrew | Pictographs  Calligraphy - complex, 3000 characters | Sanskrit – |
| *Military* | 1. Iron weapons 2. Composite bow 3. Draft 4. Chariots 5. Brutal warriors, trained armies 6. Hittites = “iron warriors” 7. Assyrians – terror 8. Frequently invaded | 1. Copper, stone 2. Composite bow, horses, chariots 3. Adapted enemy weapons | 1. Primitive weapons (stones, spears, fire) 2. Chariots 3. armour | 1. Bronze weapons 2. Chariots 3. Spears with jade blades 4. Oracle bone\* | 1. No trace of military activities or development 2. Power through commerce and trade 3. No trace of warfare found |
| *Laws or Moral Codes* | 1. Code of Ur-Nammu 2. Code of Hammurabi | 1. Pharaoh’s word is law | 1. Ten Commandments | 1. Confucius’ Golden Rule 2. Ancestors 3. Mandate of Heaven | 1. Buddha’s Eightfold Path |
| *Government* | Ruled by priests.  Later, kings ruled (divine approval)  Empires: First kings were priests, then warriors  No currency  Negative worldview | Theocracy  Pharaoh was ruler-priest and a god. Dynasties broken up into three times:   1. Old Kingdom 2. Middle Kingdom 3. New Kingdom | Early Israelites were ruled by judges.  Later, led by kings and prophets:   1. King Saul 2. King David 3. King Solomon | King or Emperor rules the country.  Aristocrats ran the provinces  Dynasties:   1. Xia 2. Shang 3. Zhou 4. Qin 5. Han | Warrior class ran the government, usually ruled by king  Small kingdoms forced to unite.  Dynasties:   1. Mauryan Dynasty 2. Emperor Asoka 3. Gupta Empire |
|  | *Mesopotamia* | *Egypt* | *Israel* | *China* | *Indus River* |
| *Social Classes* | 1. Upper Class (Land, wealth, birth)   * Kings and Priests * Govt officials   2. Middle Class   * Artisans * Merchants * Farmers, Fisherman   3. Lower class   * slaves | 1. Pharaoh 2. Priests and nobles 3. Traders, artisans, shopkeepers, scribes 4. Farmers and herders 5. Unskilled workers 6. Slaves | No real social class but judges and prophets were the most respected  Women did not have as many rights as men but they could own, sell and inherit property | 1. Upper class  * Emperor and court * Landowning aristocrats,  1. Middle class  * Peasant farmers  1. Lower class  * merchants | Caste system   1. Brahmins: priests 2. Kshatriyas: rulers and warriors 3. Vaisyas: common people 4. Sudras: unskilled laborers, servants 5. Untouchables: collecting trash, skinning animals, or handling dead bodies |
| *Religion* | Polytheism (many gods)  Marduk (king of the gods)  Ishtar – love  Adad – storm god | Polytheism (many gods), cats  Ra – sun god  Osiris – Afterlife  Anubis  Horus  Focus on afterlife | Monotheism (one God)  Judaism | Polytheism  Worship of ancestors  Confucianism  Daoism  Buddhism (not god-centered) | Hinduism  Many forms of Brahman  Buddhism  (not god –centered)  ceremonial baths |
| *Literature* | Epic of Gilgamesh  Code of Hammurabi | Book of the Dead | Hebrew Bible) Old Testament  Dead Sea Scrolls | Analects (Confucius)  Dao De Ching (Lao-tzu) | 1. Upanishads 2. Vedos of India 3. Epic of Mahabharata 4. Epic of Ramayana |
| *Buildings* | Ziggurat  Hanging Gardens of Babylon\* | Pyramids  Sphinx  Temples | Holy Temple  Synagogue | Great Wall of China  Qin’s Terra Cotta Army | Stupa  Mandir |
|  | *Mesopotamia* | *Egypt* | *Israel* | *China* | *Indus River* |
| *Art* | 1. Small scaled 2. People and animals 3. Elaborate tombs 4. pottery | 1. precious metals and stones 2. extreme wealth 3. gold, limestone 4. sculpture and stone 5. colorful artwork 6. gender equality | 1. pottery 2. seal-engraving 3. no bronze or brass, gold overleaf 4. sculpture 5. ivory and wood carving | 1. Bronze 2. Calligraphy, poetry, painting (“3 perfections”) 3. Cloisonné 4. Silk 5. Lacquer 6. Porcelain 7. Seals | 1. pottery 2. stone 3. precious stones 4. no temples, palaces or paintings ever found |
| *Accomplish-ments / Legacy* | 1. Number system based on 60 2. 12 month calendar 3. wagon wheel 4. sailboat 5. plow 6. irrigation system 7. glass 8. lamp making 9. textile weaving 10. weapons | 1. 365 day calendar 2. number system based on 10 3. medicine 4. papyrus paper 5. machines to move water to crops 6. irrigation system 7. Phoenician alphabet 8. engineering 9. makeup 10. perfume 11. iron work 12. sails shipping 13. stern-rudders 14. agriculture 15. Basis for Greek culture | 1. Monotheism 2. Influenced Judaism, Christianity, and Islam 3. Justice, fairness, compassion in society and government | 1. abacus 2. acupuncture 3. cannon 4. cast iron 5. clocks 6. coins 7. compass 8. decimal system 9. fireworks 10. gunpowder 11. kites 12. martial arts 13. matches 14. paper 15. paper money 16. porcelain 17. printing and ink 18. silk 19. tea 20. umbrella 21. wheelbarrow | 1. Two major religions (Hinduism and Buddhism) 2. concept of zero 3. symbols for #1-9 4. algorithms 5. astronomy – heliocentric 6. gold coins 7. metal mirrors 8. plastic surgery 9. chess 10. plumbing/sewage 11. stamps/seals 12. standard weights and measures 13. sciences 14. elaborate planned cities |
| *Notes* |  |  |  |  |  |