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
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| *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
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| *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 | PictographsCalligraphy - 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 warriorsNo currencyNegative 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 provincesDynasties:1. Xia
2. Shang
3. Zhou
4. Qin
5. Han
 | Warrior class ran the government, usually ruled by kingSmall kingdoms forced to unite. Dynasties:1. Mauryan Dynasty
2. Emperor Asoka
3. Gupta Empire
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|  | *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 respectedWomen 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 system1. 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 – loveAdad – storm god | Polytheism (many gods), catsRa – sun godOsiris – AfterlifeAnubisHorusFocus on afterlife | Monotheism (one God)Judaism | Polytheism Worship of ancestorsConfucianismDaoismBuddhism (not god-centered) | HinduismMany forms of BrahmanBuddhism(not god –centered)ceremonial baths |
| *Literature* | Epic of GilgameshCode of Hammurabi | Book of the Dead | Hebrew Bible) Old TestamentDead Sea Scrolls | Analects (Confucius)Dao De Ching (Lao-tzu) | 1. Upanishads
2. Vedos of India
3. Epic of Mahabharata
4. Epic of Ramayana
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| *Buildings* | ZigguratHanging Gardens of Babylon\* | Pyramids SphinxTemples | Holy TempleSynagogue | Great Wall of ChinaQin’s Terra Cotta Army | StupaMandir |
|  | *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
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| *Notes*  |  |  |  |  |  |