Chapter 2- Section #3

Empires of the Fertile Crescent

* ***1st Empire Builders:***
* Akkadians/Babylonians:
* Sargon, the leader of the Akkadians, created the first empire that stretched from the Persian Gulf through Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean Sea.
* Hammurabi ruled the Babylonian Empire. In order to control the land, he developed a single code of law that applied to all people in the empire. The goal was to bring *justice* or fair treatment to everyone.
* Assyrians:
* The Assyrians conquered the entire Fertile Crescent as well as Egypt and Palestine.
* They had a powerful military with iron weapons.
* Conquered lands were ruled by a governor, chosen from its own people. Governors were forced to make tribute payments to the empire. Those who refused were killed or exiled. Assyrian’s greatest achievement as a library built by Ahubanipal.
* Chaldeans:
* After the Assyrians, Chaldeans came to power and restored Babylon as their capital.
* During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, they conquered the Hebrews, enslaved them, and destroyed their temple.
* Nebuchadnezzar is famous for building the Hanging Gardens, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
* Persians:
* Cyrus the Great created a huge empire that included Anatolia, Assyria, and Chaldean lands.
* Cyrus set up a policy of **toleration.**  He collected tribute, but he allowed conquered peoples to retain their own customs, religion, and language. As a result, his empire had fewer revolts.
* When Darius came to power, the empire was further expanded from the Indus River in India to the Mediterranean Sea (2,800 miles). He then divided the empire into 20 provinces headed by a governor. To unite the empire he built the Royal Road, established official coinage, and set up a code of law based on Hammurabi’s model.