

# History of Ancient Civilizations

## By Jessica Lopez

Week 1  
Day 1

### Introduction to This Course

Ever wondered how history began or where Noah and his sons migrated to? Or where language and writing came from? Why did the Egyptians build the great pyramids, and were they really the first advanced civilization in the world? What about the other regions of the world? How did so many cultures take shape? Who were the Hyksos? When was the Bronze Age, and was it an age as we understand that word to mean?

Welcome to the Ancient Civilizations middle school course! In this course, you will learn about the history of the ancient world and how civilization began. You will discover the cultures, legends, and agricultural and societal developments of several major civilizations, as well as those seldom mentioned. You will learn how we study history, how we know what we know, and why history is so important.

### Layout of the Course

This course is broken down into lessons. A lesson consists of text, links to applicable videos and websites, questions, and the weekly activity. The activities are broken down into two lists: Activity A and Activity B. If you wish to make this a one-semester course, you only need to complete Activity A. If you wish to extend this into a full-year course, complete both Activity A and Activity B.

An occasional test (Test A) will be presented, by which you will be able to see what material you have mastered and where you need to improve. You are encouraged to review all areas where improvement is necessary and retake the test (Test B) a day or so after studying the material.

### Materials

For this course, we are going to put together a notebook so you can keep all your material in one place. You will need a **2-inch binder** and some **stick-on tabs**. Or you can use notebook divider sheets with tabs already on them and simply label the tabs as follows:

- |                  |                |              |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 - Lesson Text  | 4 - Vocabulary | 7 - Articles |
| 2 - Activities   | 5 - Maps       |              |
| 3 - Written Work | 6 - Timeline   |              |

**Day 1 Assignment:** Go ahead and put your notebook together.

# History of Ancient Civilizations

## Chapter 1: Studying the Past

Day 1

Day 2

### What Is History?

History is the record of how people have lived throughout the time God has given them. It is the record of events and ideas and the impact of decisions made in the lives of individuals, families, communities, and nations. Through the events recorded by the people of the time, we see how God interacts with them and how they interact with God. It is God's story with man. It is *His Story* with us.

The word "history" comes from a Greek word that means "to learn by inspection or inquiry." To study history means to inquire—ask questions—about the ways people lived and what caused certain things to happen. It is to follow the human story of the past as well as the present.

### Why Is History Important?

By following the human story, we learn how certain ideas affect the world. We learn where people came from, what caused cultures and civilizations to develop, and what caused empires to fall and vanish. The decisions of the past, and their recorded consequences, can help us make wiser decisions today. You can learn a better way of handling a situation without having to make terrible mistakes, by simply letting the story of others teach you. History answers the question of why things are the way they are today and shows us what things change and what things stay the same.

### How We Know What We Know

Throughout the story of mankind, people have always strived to learn about the past. This deep desire for understanding has cultivated several types of science by which we can discover facts about past civilizations. One of these sciences is archaeology.

**Archaeology:** Archaeology is the study of material remains left from the past. Pieces of pottery, farm tools, weapons, buried buildings, and jewelry all tell a part of the story of the people who made them. The idea of digging up the treasures of people long gone is not new. Grave robbers would unseal tombs to loot all the valuables accompanying the body and sell them.

Archaeologists have been able to unbury list-bearing clay tablets, protected sheets of papyrus, statues, cities, and much more. Material remains from the past have also been found along the ocean floor by oceanographers—scientists who explore and study the ocean.

**Anthropology:** Anthropology is the study of the origin and the physical and cultural development of people. Anthropologists study the remains of humans to find both physical similarities and differences of the people in an area. Through their study, they can surmise migrations, intermarriages, and even health issues of the people of the past. While archaeology helps us understand how the people of the past lived, anthropology helps us understand where the people of an area came from and/or migrated to.

**Geography:** Another important science is that of the earth and its features, or the science of geography. The presence of rivers, lakes, mountains, plains, and valleys helps us understand how the people in an area supplied for their food and water needs. You must have water and food in order to live, and the ease of access or lack of these essentials affects how people live.

**Geology:** The study of rocks and the earth's structure is also important. By this, we can identify cataclysmic events (such as volcanoes and floods) and the metals and minerals present in an area.

## Evidence Versus Interpretation

Archaeologists, anthropologists, and other scientists do their best to make sense of the artifacts they find. Sometimes, the artifacts and records found shed enough light on a part of history for us to have a very good understanding of what happened when. However, when artifacts and records are scarce for a certain time in history, scientists make hypotheses—guesses based on what they already know—in order to explain their findings. Sometimes their hypotheses turn out to be accurate, while at other times they prove to be very wrong. The key to knowing whether or not information is fact or theory is to weigh it by what we already know is accurate. You have to have something solid and trustworthy in order to know if what you are being told is hard fact or someone's idea of how something might have happened.

*Fact: Something proven*

*Hypothesis: Someone's idea of what might be*

## Reliable Records: Historical Documents and the Holy Bible

There have been many ancient records found for different historical time periods. These records have been made by kings, merchants, and general people who could read and write. The records contain pictures, money exchange rates, names, years, and even laws. Many of the records are reliable sources to learn from and help scientists understand the artifacts they find. Occasionally, the same historical person will appear with a different name, or a bad ruler will be left out of the record, thus making the puzzle a bit more complicated. But there is one record that has never been wrong. In fact, scientists and scholars who set out to disprove the accuracy of this record have found it to be more accurate than some of the others! This honest and true record is the Holy Bible.

The Bible claims to be the inerrant (without error) Word of God. God revealed things to different people who then wrote down the words of God in books. These books were kept and preserved by men and women who believed the Creator God was real and later were put into a single volume. The Bible has been a great help to the science world. It records the details of the earliest

time of history that other records do not have. It tells us how the world began and where all life came from. Many well-educated people have tried to disprove the Bible by every way they know, to no avail. Some have turned to Jesus Christ, testifying that the Bible was the most accurate historical document and most powerful story they had ever encountered. Even people who did not believe in a god at all have come to accept the Creator and His Son, Jesus, because of the Bible. Others still refuse to admit that the Bible is accurate in all its accounts and teach against it.

This course is based upon the solid belief that the Bible is the infallible Word of God the Creator, who created everything we see as well as things we have yet to discover; who created Man in His image and loved all people enough to send Jesus Christ to die for our sins and reconcile us back to God. This course accepts the Bible as a true and solid historical record, by which we can prove all other documents and theories as either true or false.



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## Day 2: Study Questions

1. What does the word *history* mean?

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2. Why is history important?

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3. What does archaeology help us discover and understand?

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4. What does anthropology help us discover and understand?

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5. What sources can we trust for a reliable account of history?

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6. How are artifacts and evidence different from the interpretation of them?

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# History of Ancient Civilizations

## Chapter 1: Studying the Past

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### The Dispute about the Age of History

You have probably noticed that in different history books there are dates that accompany the recorded events. You may have noticed how some sources conflict in their dating of the same events and people. That is because scientists and historians from all corners of the globe have long disputed one of their most plaguing questions: “When did history begin?”

The question arises when one does not know how the earth came to exist. To many scientists and scholars, the origin of the earth remains a mystery and matter of conflict. Some believe a great explosion made all that we see today, though what caused the explosion they cannot answer. Some think it was a thing of chance, with certain chemicals coming together randomly to create new life. But the Bible tells us something different. The Bible records the earth as being created by God’s word. To those who believe this, the creation of the world and the universe puts a starting date to our history. Day one of Creation becomes day one of history. The next question, then, would be “When was day one?”

### Heresy!

For centuries, Christians and secularists alike believed that the beginning of time could never be known. Some Christian leaders called it heresy to think that we could ever put a year to when the earth was created. But others believed that God had given us records for a reason. They believed that by studying the genealogies (lists of families and generations) in the Bible; the cycles of the sun, moon, and planets; as well as other sciences of time, we could come very close to day one. Some of these searchers of truth include the Apostles of Jesus—even Paul—and a man named James Ussher.

### James Ussher

James Ussher was born January 4, 1581, in Ireland. In his 75 years of life, James Ussher witnessed the Spanish Armada, William Shakespeare’s plays, and the English Civil War. He was alive when the first King James Bible was allowed to be printed in English, and held the seat of an archbishop in the Church. Kings and nobles respected him, and great men sought out his wisdom. Ussher believed that we could follow history backward and forward to find day one. He used the study of the heavens, seasons, knowledge of different calendars, genealogies, and historical records to trace history to its beginning. He was very careful in his work and paid close attention to the smallest of details. His work was so thorough that for a while Bibles were printed with his dates next to the recorded events. Very few have come close to his complete timeline of history, and many have argued that he is wrong.

Today, several Christian scientists have looked into his chronology of time and found it to be very accurate. Because of the accuracy of James Ussher's work, we are going to use his timeline to date the historical peoples and places we encounter on our journey.

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### **The Homework Corner**

To understand the timeline issue more thoroughly and why we will be using James Ussher's chronology, visit the following links. Yes, you should read them! The study questions will require the information found in these articles. Note: You will need these articles for Day Four as well. You can either save them or print them out so you have them. If you print them out, put them in your notebook under the "Articles" tab.

Answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth:

<https://answersingenesis.org/age-of-the-earth/it-all-adds/>

Institute for Creation Research

<http://www.icr.org/article/517/391/>

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## Day 3: Study Questions

1. How is the age of the earth an issue of authority?

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2. Why are the genealogies in the Bible important?

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3. What does the word *chronogenealogies* mean?

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4. How many years are there approximately between Adam and Abraham? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many years are there approximately between Abraham and Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why is the age of the earth so important?

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7. Who was James Ussher, and when did he live?

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8. Can we come close to knowing what year day one occurred?

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9. Why is your view of the earth's age so important?

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# History of Ancient Civilizations

## Chapter 1: Studying the Past

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Day 4

### Vocabulary

Option 1 – Write the following vocabulary words and definitions on index cards.

Option 2 – Write the following vocabulary words and definitions on a sheet of paper. Head the paper with the course name, chapter title, and subject (vocabulary words). Write the words on one side and the definitions on the other side of the paper. Place this paper in your notebook under the “Vocabulary” tab.

Option 3 – E-vocabulary! Click the link to study the vocabulary on quizlet.com.

Link: <https://quizlet.com/38g83s>

### Vocabulary Words:

<b>Anthropology:</b>	the study of the physical, cultural, and societal development of people
<b>Archaeology:</b>	the study of material remains (artifacts) from earlier time periods
<b>Artifact:</b>	any object made by human work
<b>Cataclysm:</b>	any great upheaval that causes sudden and violent changes, as an earthquake, war, etc.
<b>Chronology:</b>	the science of time to learn events in their proper order of date
<b>Fact:</b>	a proved reality or truth
<b>Genealogy:</b>	the science or study of family descent
<b>Geography:</b>	the study of the surface structure of the earth
<b>Geology:</b>	the study of the structure of the earth below the surface
<b>Heresy:</b>	an error against the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; unsound opinion
<b>History:</b>	(1) an account or narration of events in the order in which they happened (2) the study and knowledge of these events and facts
<b>Hypothesis:</b>	an idea imagined or assumed to explain what is not understood; something not proved, but assumed for the purpose of argument
<b>Inerrant:</b>	without error, mistake, or falsehood
<b>Secularists:</b>	people who reject the idea and practice of religious faith and worship of God
<b>Theory:</b>	a set of ideas believed to be true with some principles or evidence to support it

# History of Ancient Civilizations

## Chapter 1: Studying the Past

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Day 5

### Activity A: The Sciences of History

Make a table of the different sciences and their purpose in the study of history.

1. Print out the following template.
2. Write the definition of each science.
3. Write what each science helps us learn about history.

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<u>Science</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>What We Learn</u>
<b>Anthropology</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Archaeology</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Chronology</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Geography</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Geology</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Genealogy</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>