Chapter 7

Geography & the Early Settlement of Egypt, Kush, and Canaan
7.1 - Introduction

- Egyptians settled along the banks of the Nile River around 3100-350 B.C.E.
- The Kushites settled to the south of Egypt along the southern part of the Nile around 2000 B.C.E. until 350 B.C.E.
- The Israelites, later called the Jews were forces from their homeland in 70 B.C.E., but their civilization still flourishes today.
- There were many environmental factors that affected where people settled.
  - Water
  - Topography (The shape and elevation of the land)
  - Vegetation (Plant life)
- The three factors were determined by their physical geography, which included mountains, rivers, deserts, climate, and fertility of the soil.
- Exploring these features will help us understand why and where each group settled.
7.2 - Environmental Factors & Early Human Settlement

- **Water** was the most important environmental factor in early human settlement.
  - Water was important for crops, bathing, drinking.
- **Topography** was important because it affected where farmers settled to tend to and build their crops.
  - Farmers preferred large, flat spaces and rich soil in the coastal plains.
- **Vegetation** such as trees, bushes, grass, flowers and reeds were important because there were many uses.
  - Vegetation could be used for:
    - Sources of food.
    - Materials for making baskets.
    - Medicine, rope, and paper.
    - An area to protect settlers from the hot, dry sun.
    - Natural beauty for an area.
The Kush Empire (3 minutes)
7.3 - Environmental Factors & Early Human Settlement of Egypt and Kush

- The Egyptians lived along the northern Nile River while the Kushites lived to the south.
- The most important physical features in ancient Egypt and Kush was the Nile.
  - Created a long, fertile valley that ended in a marshy delta where the river emptied into the Mediterranean Sea.
  - It was bordered by the Libyan Desert to the west and Nubian Desert to the east.
    - These deserts were hot and dry and most people avoided these areas.
    - They also formed a natural barrier that protected people along the Nile River.
  - To the north was the Mediterranean Sea which provided settlers with fish and other kinds of seafood.
- To the east of Egypt and Kush was a long channel of very salty water called the Red Sea and the land around it was mostly desert.
7.3 - Environmental Factors & Human Settlement of Egypt and Kush

- The lack of water in the desert made it unfit for farming, but the Nile River provided natural irrigation and fertilization.
- Every summer the river would overflow its banks soaking the ground.
- The floods created rich, fertile soil along its banks.
- The abundant wildlife included fish, ducks, geese, hippos, crocodiles, giraffes, and ostriches.
- The Nile river valley also included a lot of vegetation which was scarce in most desert regions.
- Reeds & Papyrus were plentiful and were used for many things such as rope and paper.
The Gifts of the Nile (6 min)
7.4 - Environmental Factors & Human Settlement of Canaan

- The ancient Israelites settled in Canaan along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Canaan’s features included plains, valley, hills, mountains, deserts and bodies of water.
- The Jordan River flowed down from the Lebanon Mountains, which rose steeply from the coast of the Sea.
- Water was the key environmental factor providing farmers with rich soil and farmlands.
- The Sea of Galilee was a freshwater sea with plenty of fish and fertile land.
- The Dead Sea was so salty that nothing grew in it, not even plants and the area around it was so hot and dry it wasn’t good for farming and settlement.
7.4 - Environmental Factors & Human Settlement of Canaan

- The Jordan River did not flood regularly so its valley was not fertile.
- Canaan’s topography varied greatly across the region and farmers found it easiest to live on the Mediterranean’s coastal plains near the Jordan River.
- Most people in the region became herders rather than farmers.
  - Herders would tend to flocks of sheep, goats, cattle, donkeys and camels.
  - They would move from place to place wondering for good land for their animals to graze.
- Canaan’s land was too hot and dry for vegetation and plant life.
- Vegetation was most plentiful near the Jordan River.