

TRADING AND CONQUERING

Trade with the Mediterranean world was vitally important to the peoples of Mesopotamia, so they tried to keep good relations with the city-states along the trade route to the west. But some rulers had other ideas - and wanted to conquer them instead.

TRADING WEALTH

City-states, such as Mari, Ugarit, and Carchemish, along the Mediterranean trade routes were rich and powerful. Thanks to trade, their cities had huge walls, lavish palaces and towering temples. But this also meant that rival states wanted to conquer them.

A bronze statue of Baal, one of the most important of the Canaanite gods

This gold bowl from Ugarit is decorated with a hunting scene.



Map showing where the peoples mentioned here lived.

THE CANAANITES

Along the east coast of the Mediterranean, people known as Canaanites lived in small kingdoms. They were rich traders, and sold huge amounts of timber, as well as wine and olive oil. They were also skilled craftsmen, who were famous for their exquisitely carved ivory and a purple dye for cloth, which was incredibly expensive and treasured by foreign kings.

Because they were so wealthy, and lived at the crossroads between Africa and Asia, the Canaanites were often under threat from people who wanted their riches and their land. Eventually, around 1550BC, the Egyptians conquered them and ruled them for about 300 years.

