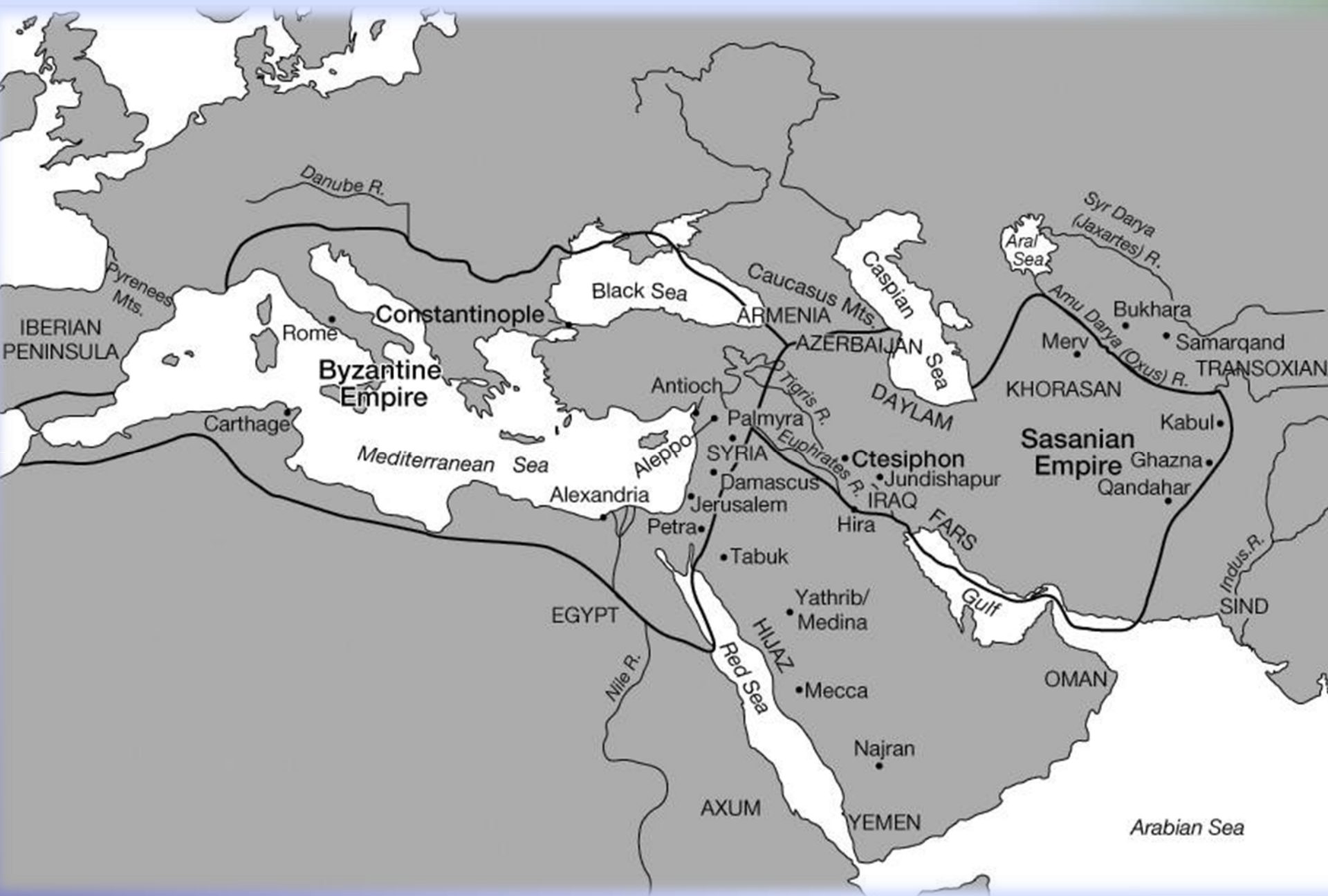


**Persecution is not
the Answer...
whatever the
question might be.**





In the Shadow of Two Empires

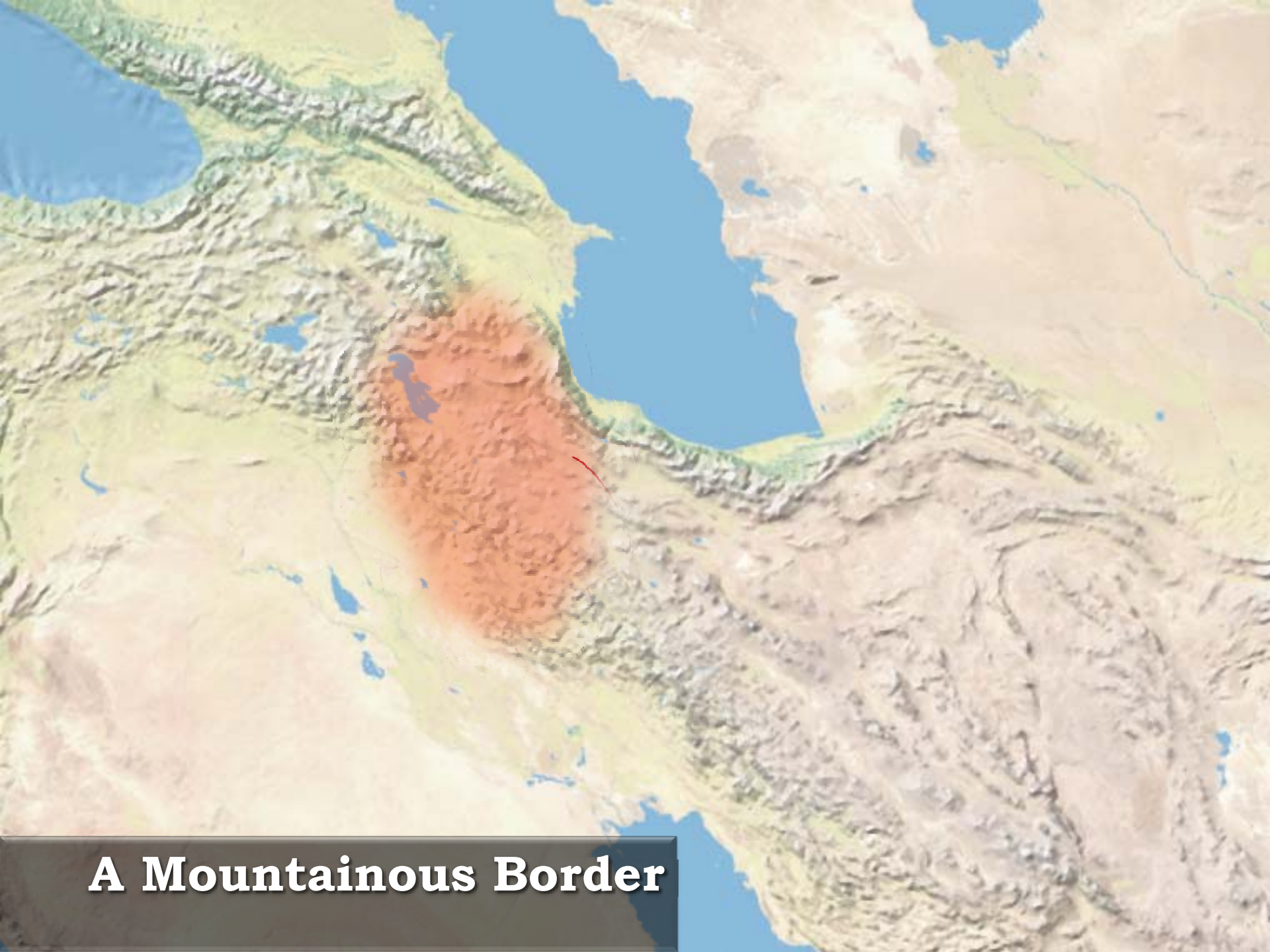
- **Byzantine Empire (330-1453)**

- **Sasanian Empire (226-651)**

- **Ghassanids and Lakhmids**

THIS WEEK

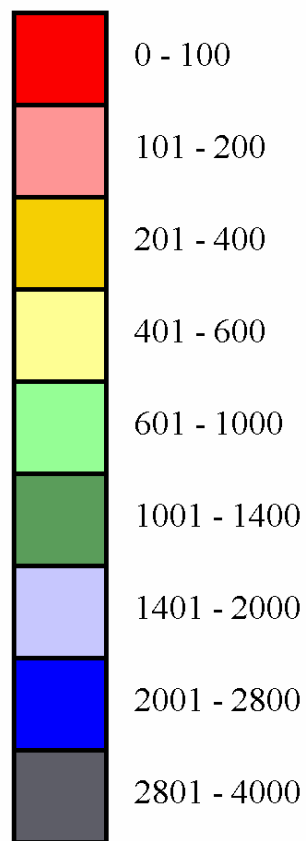
- **Political environment**
- **Religious environment**
- **Legitimacy**
- **Warfare**



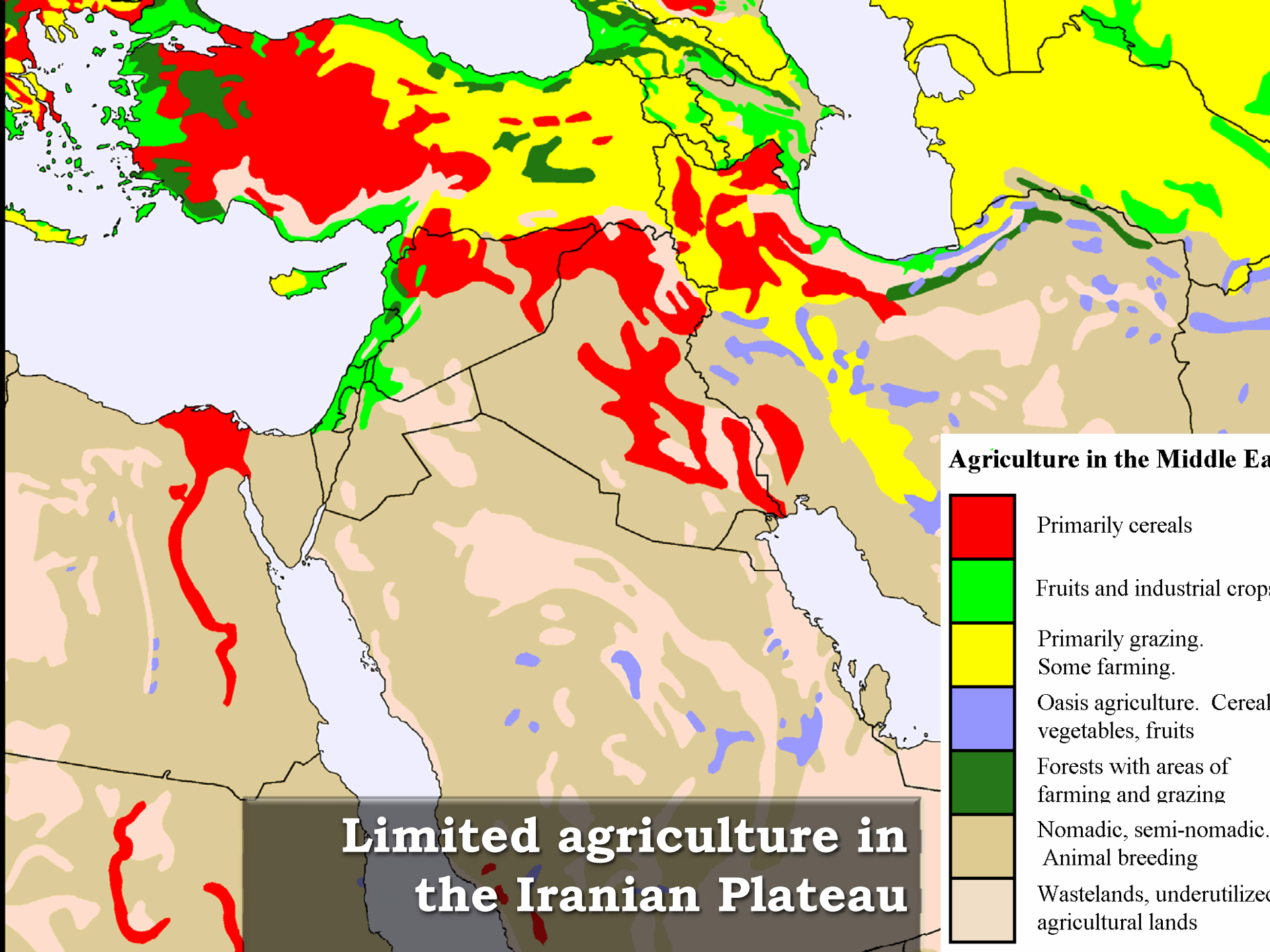
A Mountainous Border



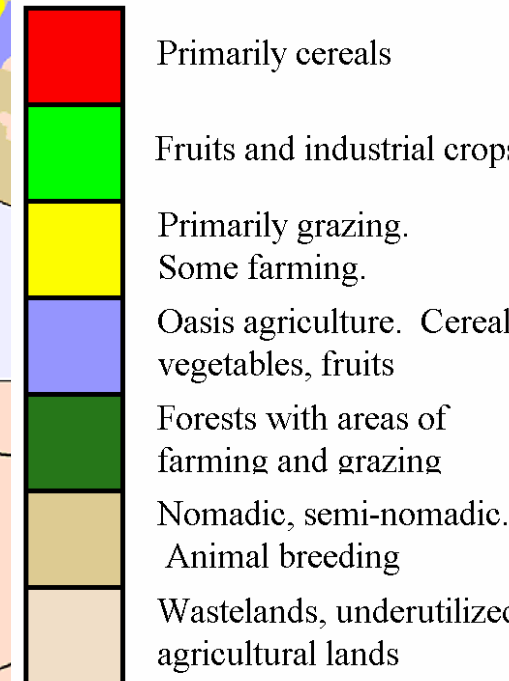
**Mean Annual
Precipitation
(mm.)**



Mostly arid in the south



Agriculture in the Middle East



**Limited agriculture in
the Iranian Plateau**





Some of the many possible uses of coins:

- Economic exchange
- Emperor's image
- Imperial message





Anastasius I (r. 491-518)



Justinianus I (r. 527-565)

**Gaius Flavius Valerius
Aurelius Constantinus**
(272–337 CE)



**Gaius Flavius Valerius
Aurelius Constantinus**
(272–337 CE)



... we thought—among other things which we saw would be for the good of many—those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred; whence any Divinity whatsoever in the seat of the heavens may be propitious and kindly disposed to us and all who are placed under our rule ...

Constantine Augustus, & Licinius Augustus *Edict of Milan* (313 CE)



First Council of Nicea 325.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father. By whom all things were made, both which be in heaven and in earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down [from heaven] and was incarnate and was made man. He suffered and the third day he rose again, and ascended into heaven. And he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost. **And whosoever shall say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, or that before he was begotten he was not, or that he was made of things that were not, or that he is of a different substance or essence [from the Father] or that he is a creature, or subject to change or conversion--all that so say, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them.**



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The Ecumenical Councils

First Council of Nicaea, (325); repudiated Arianism and Quartodecimanism, adopted the Nicene Creed. This and all subsequent councils are not recognized by nontrinitarian churches—e.g. Arians, Unitarians, Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

First Council of Constantinople, (381); revised the Nicene Creed into present form used in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches and **prohibited any further alteration of the Creed without the assent of an Ecumenical Council.**

Council of Ephesus, (431); Repudiated Nestorianism, proclaimed the Virgin Mary as the Theotokos (Greek Η Θεοτόκος, "One who gave birth to God"). This and all following councils are not recognized by the Assyrian Church of the East.

Council of Chalcedon, (451); repudiated the Eutychian doctrine of monophysitism, described and delineated the two natures of Christ, human and divine; adopted the Chalcedonian Creed. This and all following councils are not recognized by the Oriental Orthodox Communion.

Second Council of Constantinople, (553); reaffirmed decisions and doctrines explicated by previous Councils, **condemned new Arian, Nestorian, and Monophysite writings.**

Third Council of Constantinople, (680–681); repudiated Monothelitism, affirmed that Christ had both human and divine wills.

Selections from the laws of Justinian, (r 527-565 CE) affecting the Jews

- Orthodox children not to be disinherited by Jewish parents.
- Complete destruction of Samaritan synagogues ordered.
- No Jew can possess Christian slaves, or slaves desiring to become Christian.
- Jews may not give evidence against orthodox, but may do so against each other.
- To Salomon, Governor of Africa: Jews not to be allowed to attend church services; or to own Christian slaves. Their synagogues are to be turned into churches.
- Jews may not lease orthodox property; they may not build new synagogues.

If any among them seek to introduce impious vanities, denying the resurrection or the judgment, or the work of God, or that angels are part of creation, we require them everywhere to be expelled forthwith; that no backslider raise his impious voice to contradict the evident purpose of God. Those who utter such sentiments shall be put to death, and thereby the Jewish people shall be purged of the errors which they introduced. ... This is our sacred will and pleasure, and your Excellency and your present colleague and your staff shall see that it is carried out, and shall not allow the Hebrews to contravene it. Those who resist it or try to put any obstruction in its way, shall first suffer corporal punishment, and then be compelled to live in exile, forfeiting also their property, that they flaunt not their impudence against God and the empire.

Christianity and the Byzantine Empire:

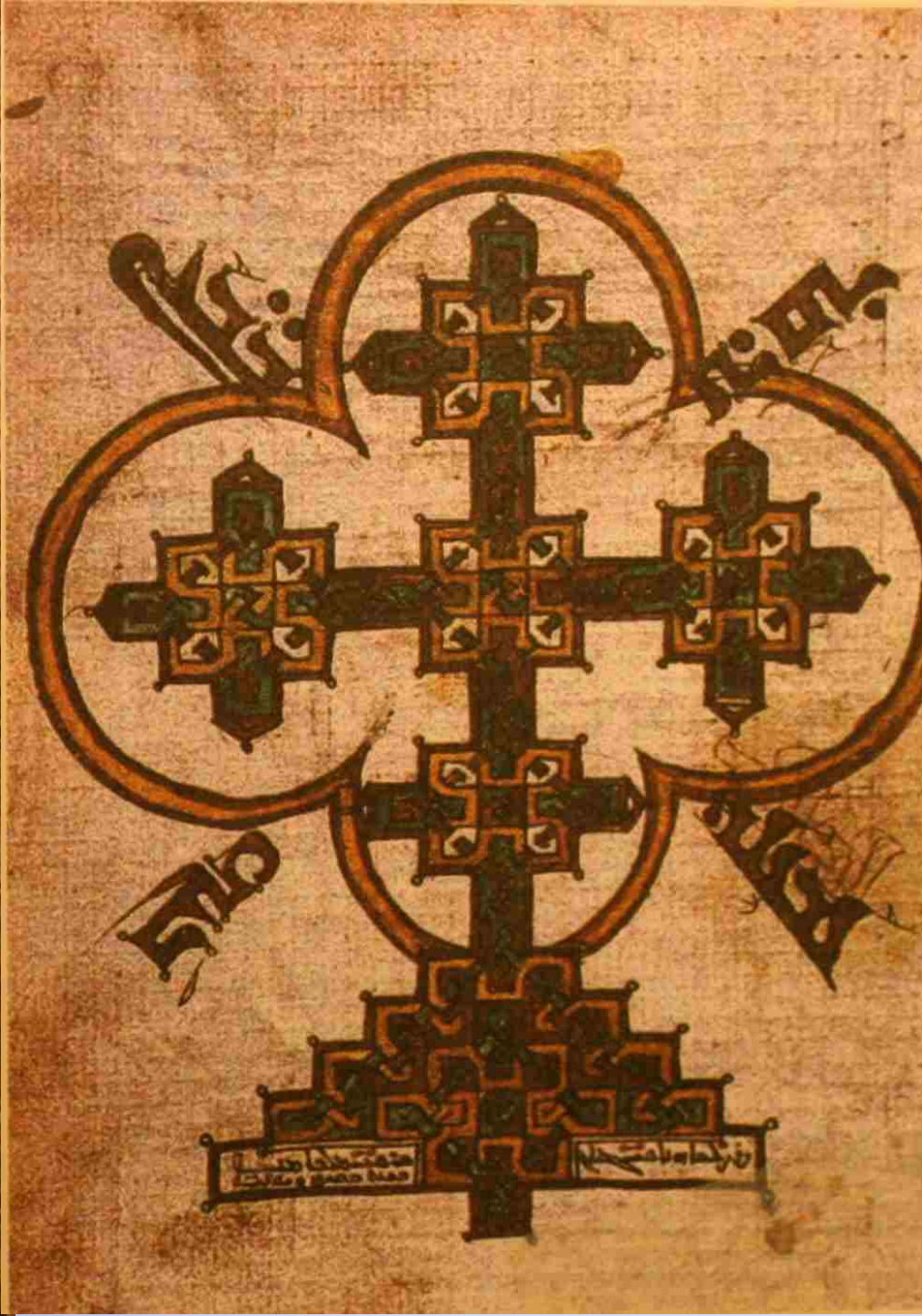
What it meant to be a Christian changed radically in time between the fourth and seventh centuries. This change was reflected in the coins and the laws of the Byzantine Empire. Byzantine definition of Christianity became increasingly exclusive as it left out several different religious groups—Christian and non-Christian alike.

What would you do if you were persecuted in this fashion?











فَنُؤَا مُنَا سَمَا مُنَا جَا مَعِ وَهَمَا

144 = ♩



اَجَنَّا نَحْنَا مَحْنَا لَحْنَا نَمِ وَهَمَا مَلَقَبَا اَنَا



وَهَمَا جَبَدَا حَمَلَا حَمَلَا مَحَلَا وَهَمَا



وَهَمَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا مَحْنَا مَحْنَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا



وَهَمَا حَمَلَا وَهَمَا حَمَلَا وَهَمَا

اَجَنَّا نَحْنَا مَحْنَا لَحْنَا نَمِ وَهَمَا مَلَقَبَا اَنَا وَهَمَا
حَمَلَا حَمَلَا مَحَلَا وَهَمَا وَهَمَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا
وَهَمَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا مَحْنَا وَهَمَا

**Don't you wish
you were at the
right place at the
right time?**

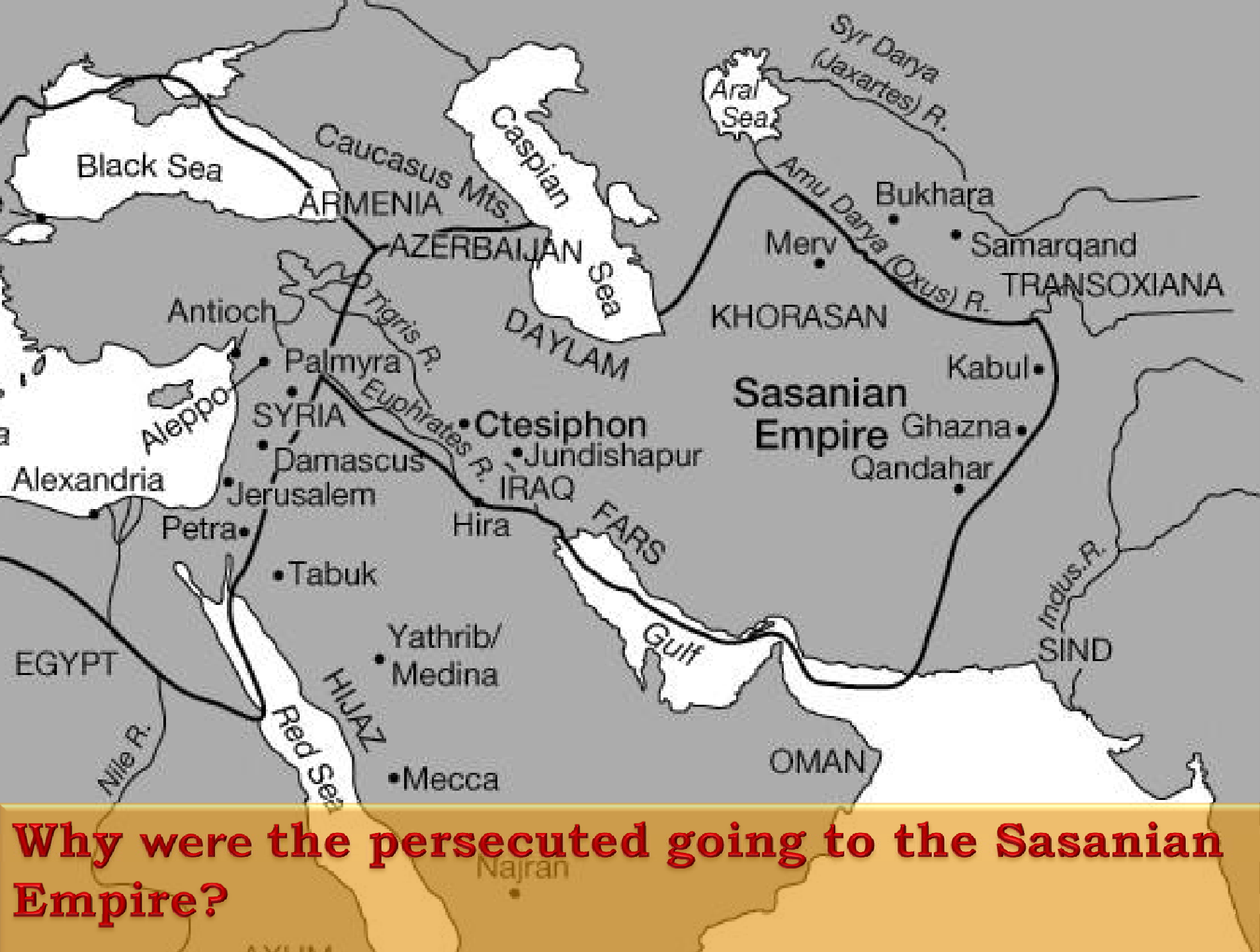


Judaism's response to persecution



- Originally Jewish scholarship was oral. Rabbis expounded and debated the law and discussed the Testament without the benefit of written works.

- Destruction of the Second Temple in the year 70 CE
- Massacre at Masada 73 CE
- Reconstruction attempts and Bar Kochba Revolt
- Re-destruction by Hadrian
- c200 CE: Rabbi Judah haNasi and the Mishnah (redaction)
- Gemara (completion)
- Talmud Yerushalmi (4th century)
- Talmud Bavli (c. 500 CE)



Why were the persecuted going to the Sasanian Empire?





“Religion and kingship are two brothers, and neither can dispense with the other. Religion is the foundation of kingship and kingship protects religion.”

10th century Muslim historian Mas'udi quotes Ardashir, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty.

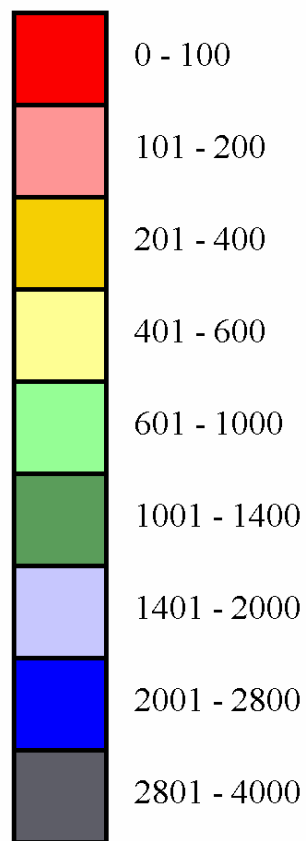


zoroastrianism

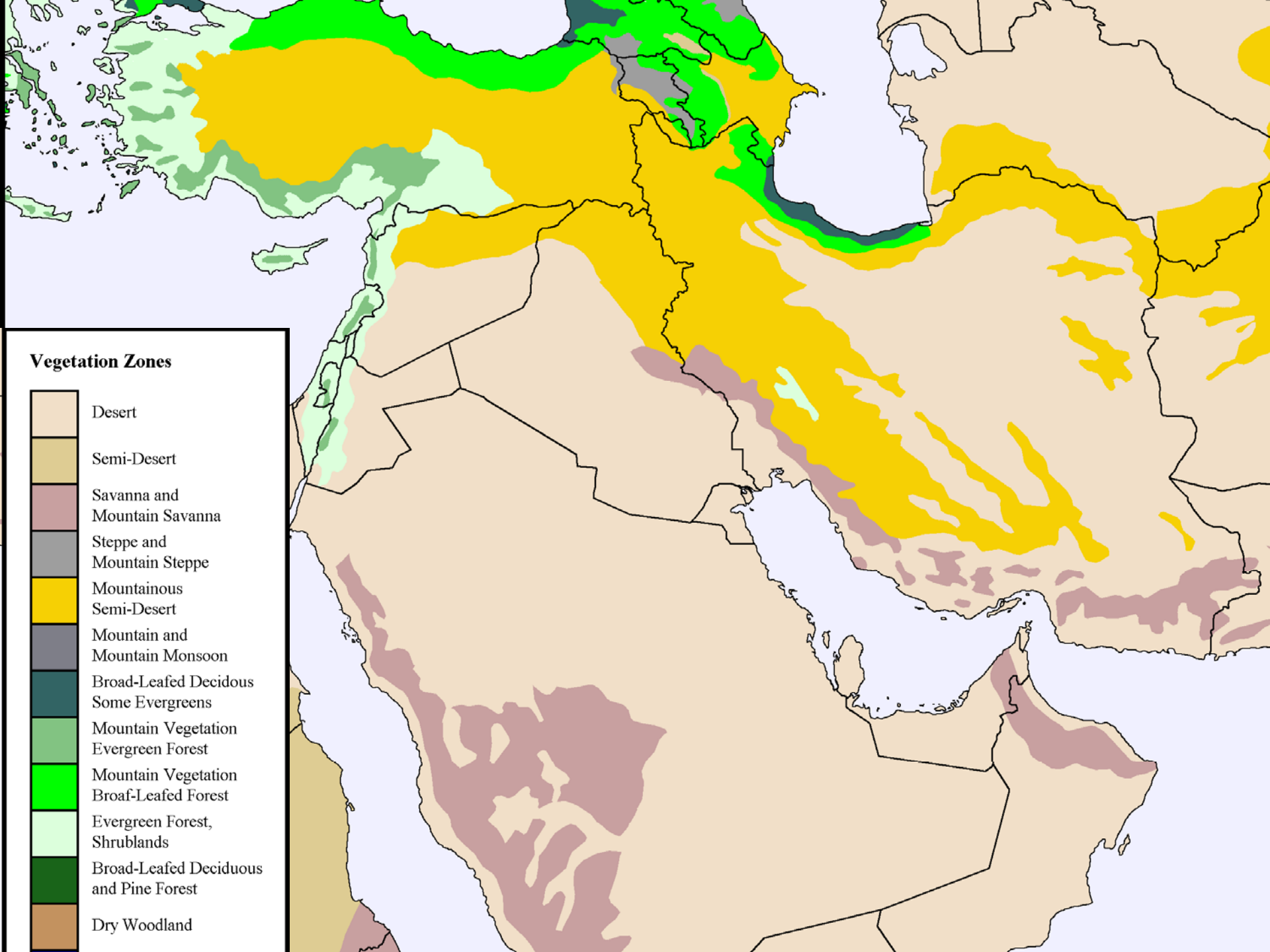
- Zarathustra and the spirit Good Thought
- Good Thought and Ahura-Mazda, (Wise Lord).
- Creation, Holy Spirit (Spenta Mainyu) and the Hostile Spirit (Angra Mainyu, or Ahriman).
- Help Ahura-Mazda by avoiding lies, supporting the poor, sacrifices, and praying
- Last Judgment.
 - Angels and the narrow bridge,
 - Judgment by a “beautiful maiden,”
 - Worst Existence, and House of Best Purpose.
- Avesta, Khusrow II (r. 591-628)

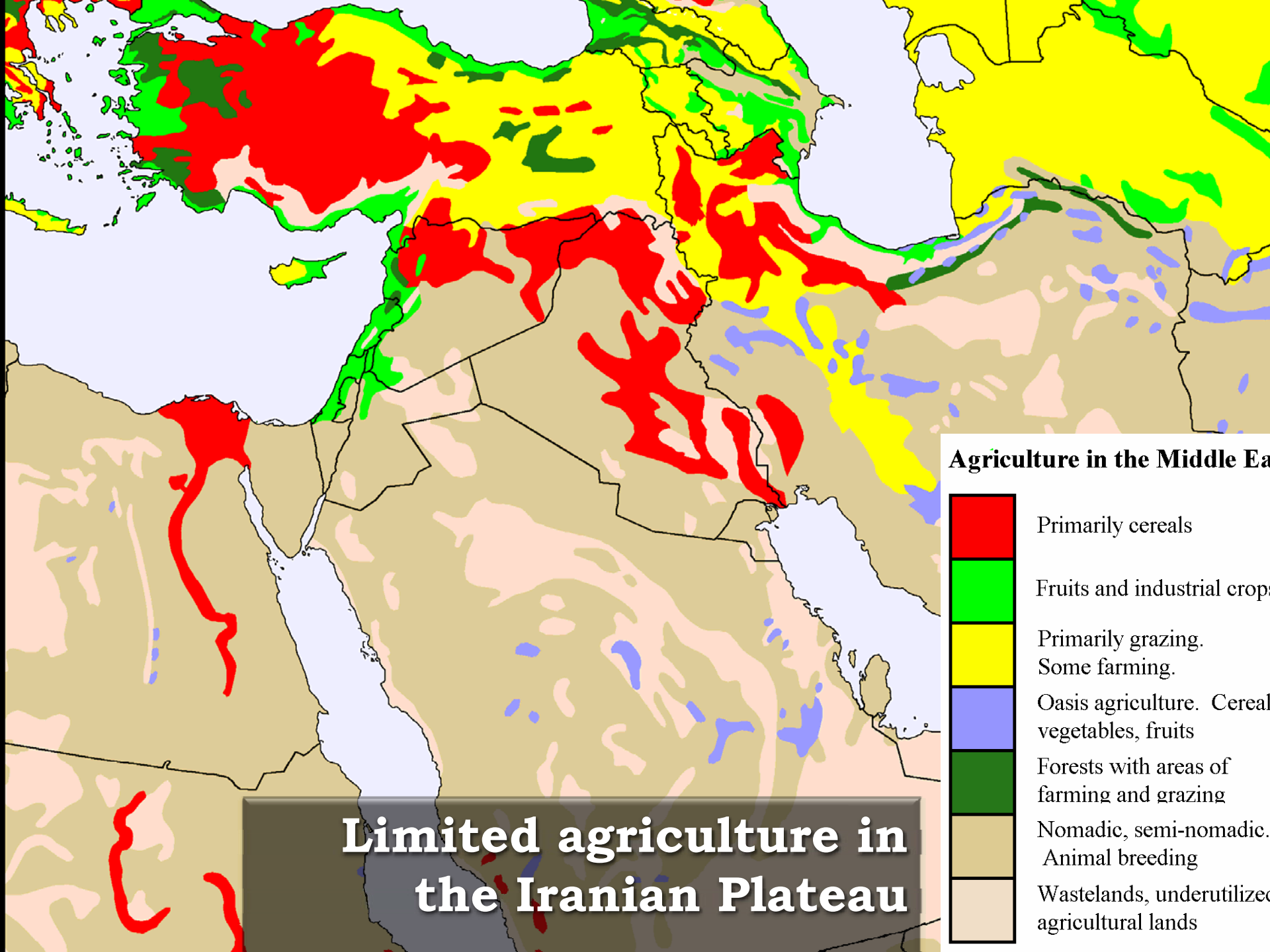


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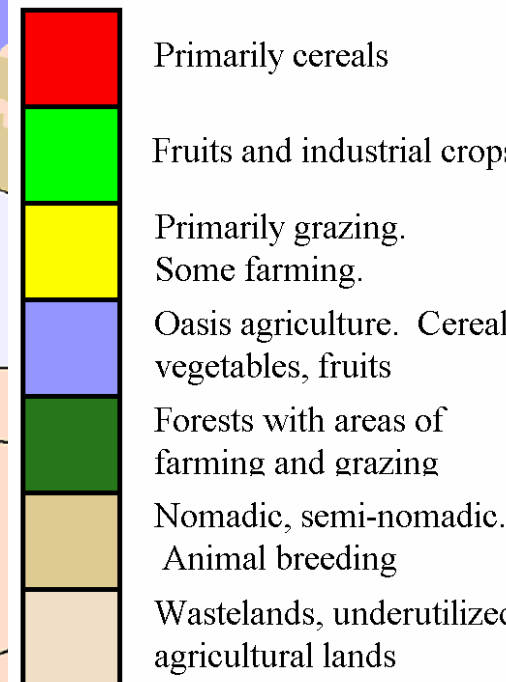


Mostly arid in the south



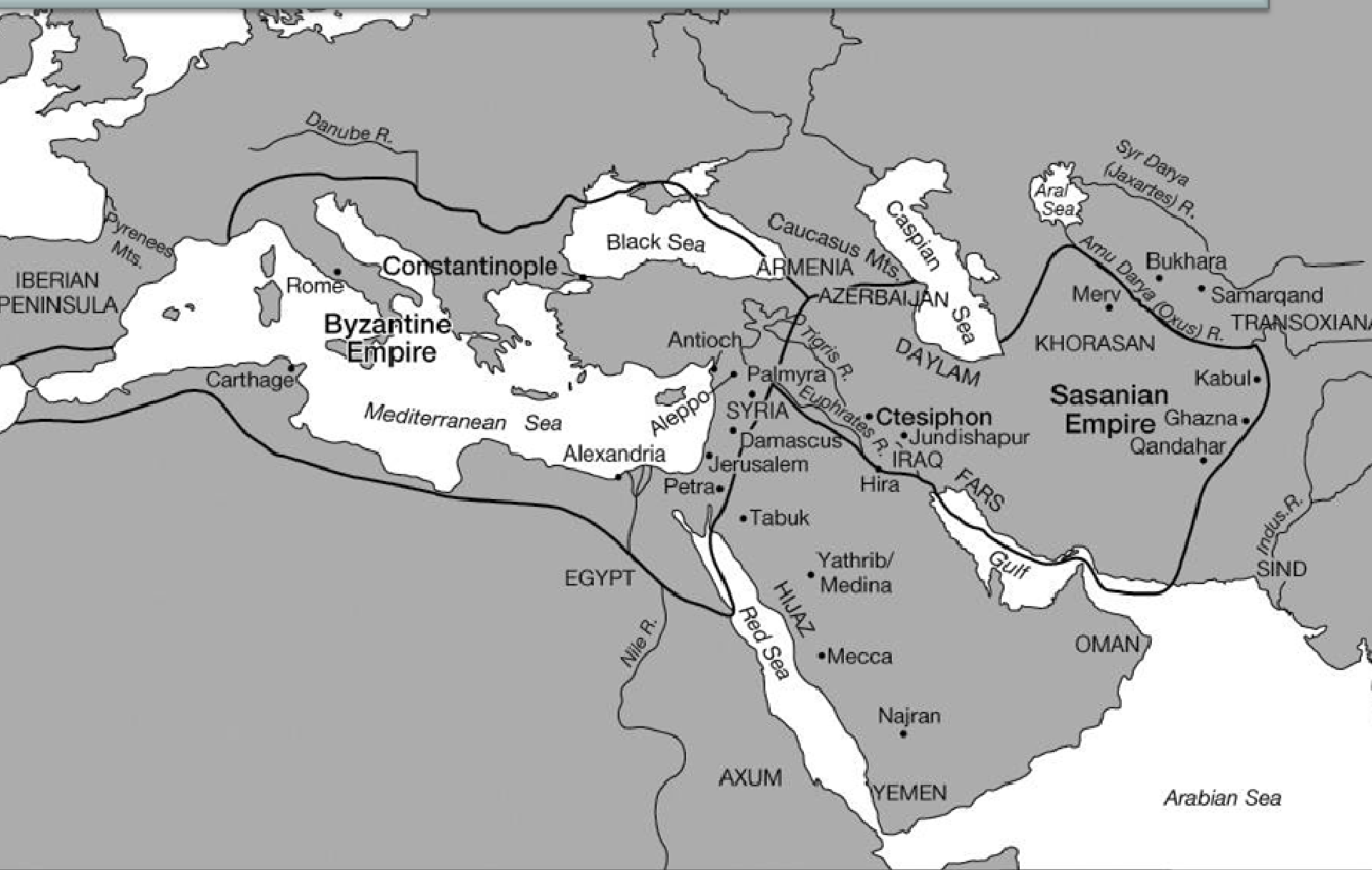


Agriculture in the Middle East



**Limited agriculture in
the Iranian Plateau**

Byzantine and Sasanian Wars 540-628



Byzantine and Sasanian Wars 540-628

- Loss of urban autonomy in Byzantine Empire
- Anastasius I (r. 491-518), Second Council of Constantinople, (553), and increased religious oppression
- Khusrow I (r.531-579) and Ctesiphon
- Talmud Bavli (c. 500 CE), Jewish prominence in the Sasanian Empire
- Ghassanids and Lakhmids
- Arab migrations to Syria and Lebanon: Draught?
- 540 Sacking of Antioch by Khusrow I
- 541 CE bubonic plague and the Arabian peninsula
- Devastating earthquakes in the Levant in mid-sixth century
- c. 570 Muhammad was born

Shapur I vs. Valerian (260)





Khusrow II vs. Heraclius (628)

conclusions

conclusions

- Empires: Legitimacy & Religions
- Legitimacy: Persecution & Tolerance
- Persecutions: Migrations & Millenarian Expectations
- Disasters & War: Legitimacy & Religions
- Consequences: Communications & Discordance