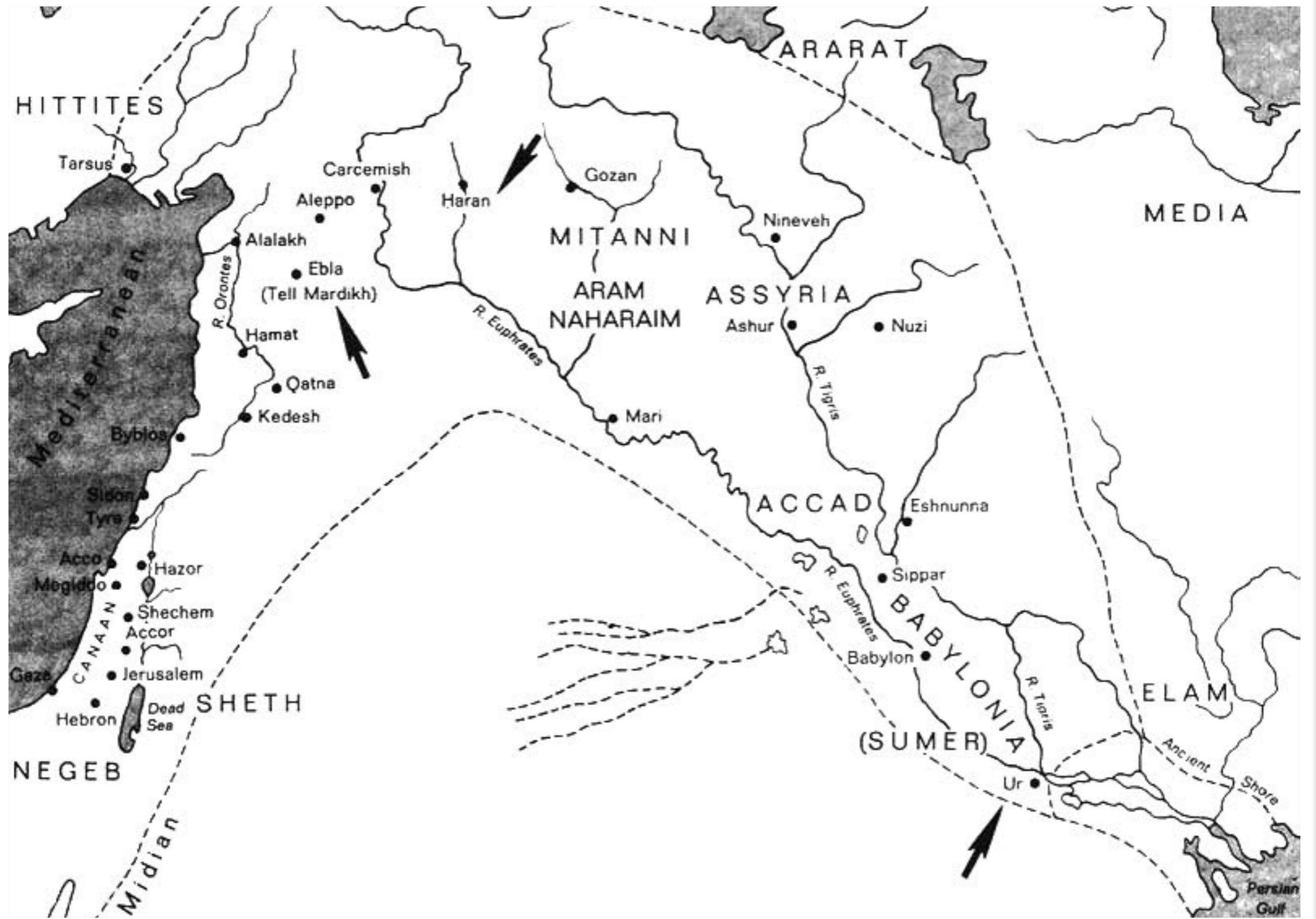


Ur of the Chaldees

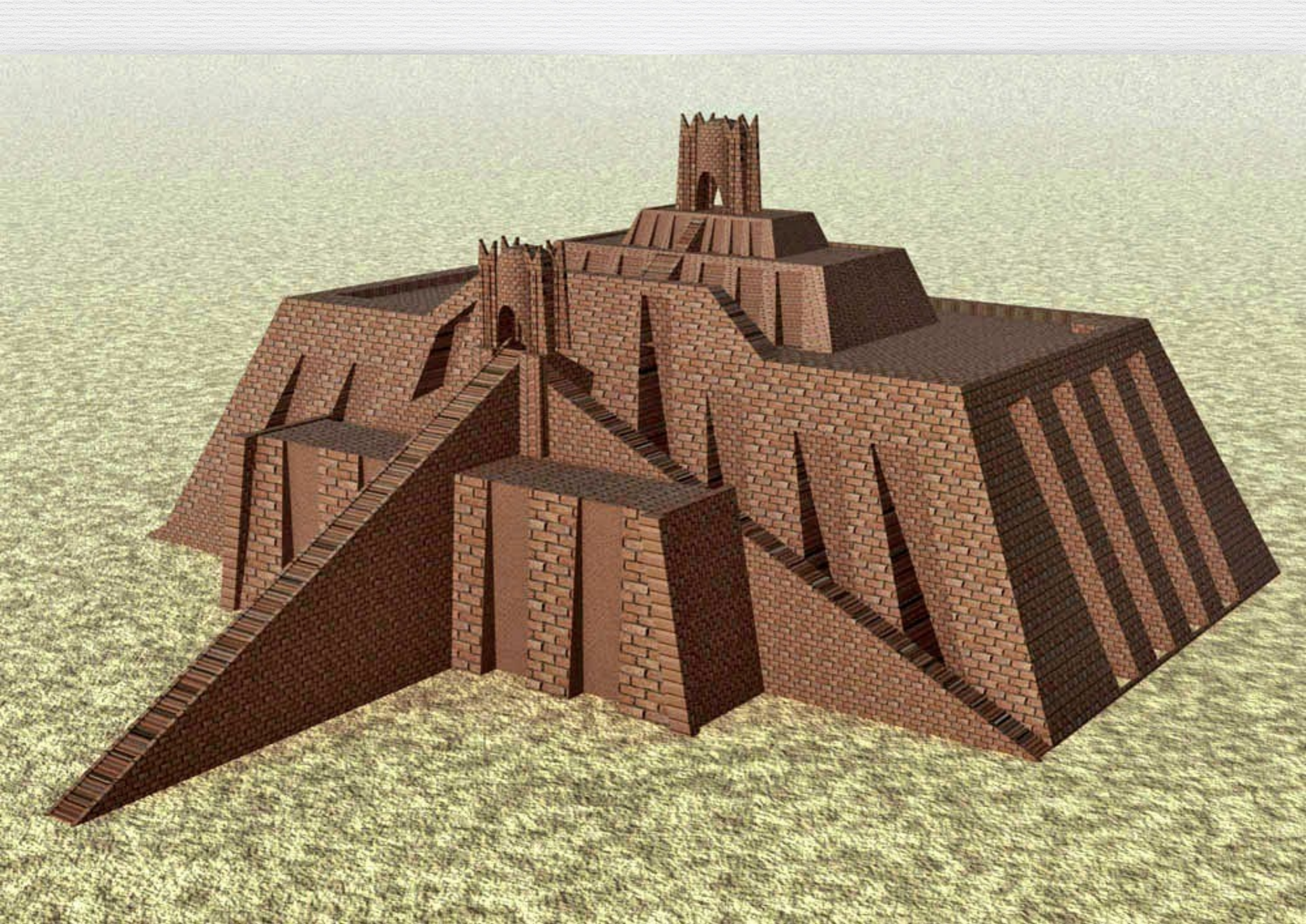




The Ziggurat of Ur, one of the largest and best preserved Babylonian structures to be discovered, is located within the perimeter of the Ali Air Base, now abandoned.

Ziggurats and Temples

- The word ziggurat means raised area. Broad at the bottom, these pyramid-shaped buildings had two to seven tiers, with each ascending tier smaller than the one under it. The top of the building was flat, and on it was a shrine or temple to the god where only priests could go. The entire building was made of sun-dried bricks in all the interior areas, with glazed fire-dried bricks facing outward. The facing bricks on each successive tier were glazed a different color. A series of staircases led to the top of the ziggurat for the priests to use.



- Ziggurats were part of a temple complex, a set of buildings devoted to the care of the gods and to all the businesses of the temple. The temple complex was one of the economic centers of the city. Large temples employed hundreds or even thousands of people, from priests and priestesses to humble shepherds, carpenters and weavers. The ziggurat, however, was dedicated to the city's patron god or goddess; it was sacred ground, off limits to any but the hierarchy of priests.

- A series of chambers and rooms within the ziggurat were used for priests to care for the god or goddess. Special priests prepared sacred meals for the god. Each ziggurat contained an altar to the god and a statue of the deity as well. Mesopotamians believed that if the people cared sufficiently for the god, and if the sacred meals pleased them, the god would inhabit the temple or shrine prepared for them.
- In the 1980s, Saddam Hussein had the façade of the lower level restored, and rebuilt the three huge staircases leading to the first terrace level.



Partially reconstructed facade and the access staircase of the ziggurat. The actual remains of the Neo-Babylonian structure can be seen at the top.







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Temple of Ur



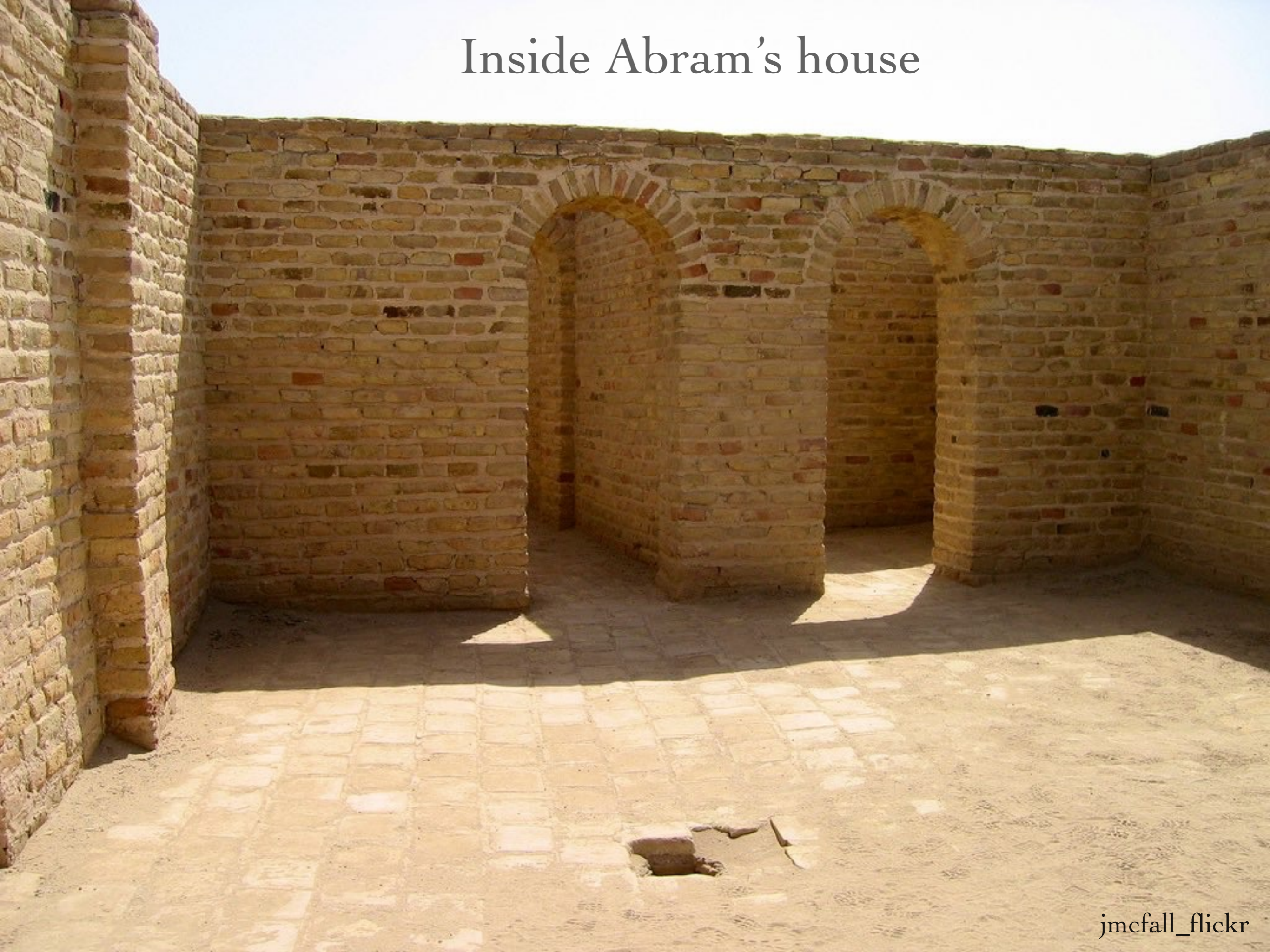
Abram's house under reconstruction



Reconstruction of the house of Abram



Inside Abram's house





Main hallway Abram's house



Corner of the kitchen



Royal Tombs

A photograph of the Royal Tombs of Ur, showing several large, circular tombs constructed from mud-brick. The tombs are partially buried in the earth, with some showing their characteristic stepped, conical shapes. The surrounding area is a dry, sandy landscape with other archaeological remains visible in the background.

Royal Tombs of Ur



Tomb of the King

Standing
goat, one
of a pair,
from
Royal
Cemetery
of Ur



Anne-Marie Bouche_flickr





Anne-Marie Bouche



Anne-Marie Bouche



Carved stone, Royal Cemetery of Ur about 2600 BC



Spouted vessel, Royal Cemetery Ur



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Euphrates River, Iraq
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