The End of Mesopotamia:

* Mesopotamian society ended around 2000 BCE
* This was likely because, as result of drought, nomads (who still lived a largely hunter-gatherer lifestyle) invaded the city-states, took them over, and stayed
* Once the nomads arrived, they maintained some structures that were similar to Mesopotamia, such as organized religion
* However, the key difference was the “Mesopotamian proto-socialism” was replaced by a system that looked a great deal like private enterprise
* People could amass as much wealth as they could, provided that they gave a portion to the king. This system is the first form of taxation
* This taxation led kings to desire to extend their powers outward, thus extending their “tax bases”
* This wealth also lead to a desire by kings to pass on power, usually to their sons
* In the post-Mesopotamian world, which became the Neo-Assyrian Empire (911 BCE-612 BCE) the military was of great importance
* This Empire was massive, entering into Nineveh and all the way into Egypt
* The military in the Neo-Assyrian Empire was a very early *meritocracy*
* Neo-Assyrian society was dominated by the god Ashur
* The religious system around Ashur believed that if Neo-Assyrian conquest ever stopped or if they ever lost a military battle, the world would come to an end
* In addition to their empire failing due to the inevitably of losing a battle, the Neo-Assyrian Empire extended itself beyond its roads, which made it basically impossible to manage
* Although the Neo-Assyrian Empire had come to an end, the *idea* of empire was just getting started …