

# **Ancient Civilizations**

## **Volume One: Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Hebrews**



**The Key School  
2014-2015**

**STUDENT:**

# Ancient Civilizations Course Packet

## Volume One: Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Hebrews

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## Overview of Ancient Mesopotamia

From <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>



Mesopotamia- stone bowl with farmer

### The First Farmers

This fragment of an ancient stone bowl illustrates a theme often portrayed in early Mesopotamian art - cows, which have been out grazing all day, are shown returning to the cattle fold at night, where they are greeted by calves, eager to be fed. A herdsman, carrying an implement that may be a fly-whisk or goad, stands between two cows that are facing away from him. Above the central cow's back are two birds, standing back-to-back. The head of one of the calves coming out to greet its mother is visible at the

right edge of the fragment.

Domestication of animals such as cattle - as well as the domestication of plants - changed people's lives and the course of human history dramatically. The most significant change was the shift from a nomadic life-style to settled villages. In order to care for crops and herds of animals, people needed to live in one place. This change from hunting and gathering to planting and herding occurred independently in many parts of the world. In northern Mesopotamia, the process occurred over the period 10,000-6000 BC. Here, there was enough rainfall to grow crops, and the region was also home to wheat, barley, sheep, cattle, goats, and pigs, the wild plants and animals that eventually were domesticated.

By 5800 BC, people were living in the southern plains of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The land in this region was exceptionally fertile, but the rainfall was insufficient to grow crops. The rivers were undependable, drying up in the searing heat of the summer. Irrigation was the solution to these problems. Over time, ditches laced the fields near the rivers, making the land a maze of artificial waterways.

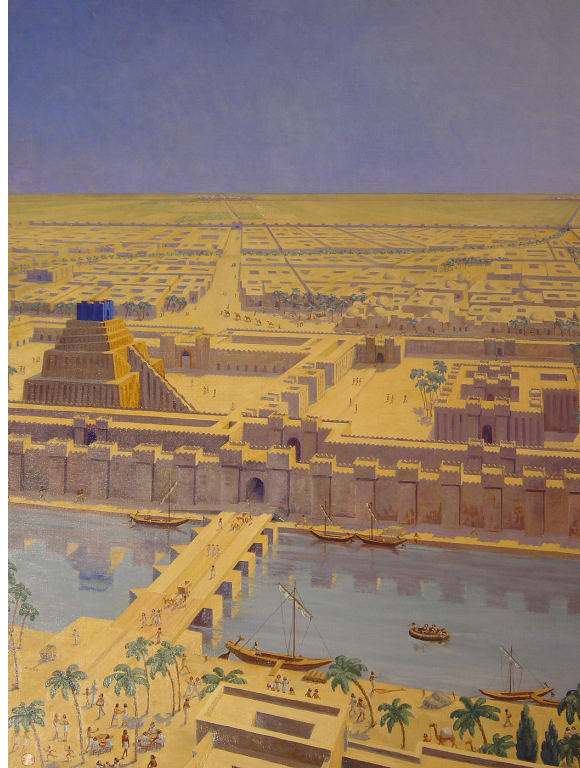
### The First Cities

In this painting of Babylon, the artist has recreated the view of the eastern portion of the city as it is thought to have looked during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC). In the foreground is the Euphrates River, which ran through the center of the city. Next to the Euphrates is the sacred temple complex of the god Marduk (the "Esagila") including the ziggurat, a stepped tower, which probably gave rise to the famed Biblical account of the Tower of Babel. Beyond the Esagila lies the rest of the eastern section of Babylon and its defensive walls. Beyond the walls are the open cultivated fields of

the Mesopotamian plains. The city of Babylon around 600 BC was considered a marvel of the ancient world, with a population of 200,000, and a system of defensive walls that ringed the city for ten miles.

For the ancient Mesopotamians, their cities were the centers of life. When they looked back to the beginning of time, they did not see a Garden of Eden, but rather an ancient site called Eridu, which they believed was the first city ever to be created. Ancient Mesopotamia is where the world's first cities appeared around 4000 - 3500 BC.

No one knows for sure why urbanization began in Mesopotamia. The development of cities could have occurred due to environmental conditions. Lack of rainfall might have been the inspiration for people to organize themselves in a common effort to build canals for the irrigation of farmland. Another reason may have been the need for protection on the open plain, which could have led people to gather together to create walled enclaves. Whatever the reasons, this was the first time in history that humankind channeled its energies towards addressing the needs of a community as a whole.



## Religion

These carved stone figures, their eyes wide with awe and their hands clasped in reverence, were placed in Mesopotamian temples by worshippers to stand in perpetual prayer on their behalf before the god or goddess to whom the sanctuary was dedicated. When the temples were renovated, those statues that had fallen into disrepair or outlived the terms of their dedication were carefully buried within the building.

The ancient Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of gods, each with his/her own name and sphere of activity. Every city had its own patron god or goddess, and there were also deities connected with various professions - such as scribes and builders. But only a few gods - those who controlled major realms of the universe, such as the sky, the sun, and air - received attention as

major deities. Anu was the father of the gods and the god of the sky; Enlil was the god of the air; Utu was the sun god and the lord of truth and justice; Nanna was the moon god; Inanna was the goddess of love and war; Ninhursag was the goddess of earth; and Enki was the god of fresh water as well as the lord of wisdom and magic. While they served and revered the great gods, most people felt little connection with these distant beings.

Ordinary people depended on a relationship with their own personal god - a kind of guardian angel - who protected individuals and interceded for them with the great deities.



### Writing

Writing emerged in many different cultures and in numerous locations throughout the ancient world. It was not the creation of any one people. However, the Sumerians of ancient Mesopotamia are credited with inventing the earliest form of writing, which appeared ca. 3500 BC. The clay tablets shown here date from around 3200 BC. They were unearthed by Oriental

Institute archaeologists at the site of Tell Asmar in Iraq.

The writings on these tablets are simple pictures, or pictograms, which represent an object or an idea. Because clay is a difficult material on which to draw lines and curves, the Mesopotamians eventually reduced pictograms into a series of wedge-shaped signs that they pressed into clay with a reed stylus. This wedge-shaped writing is called cuneiform.

The invention of writing was the dawn of the information revolution. This great technological advance allowed news and ideas to be carried to distant places without having to rely on a messenger's memory. Like all inventions, writing emerged because there was a need for it. In Mesopotamia, it was developed as a record-keeping vehicle for commercial transactions or

administrative procedures. There are also texts that served as "copy books" for the education of future scribes. Eventually, cuneiform script was used to produce some of the greatest literary works in recorded history.



### Laws and Government

The Laws of Hammurabi are the longest and best organized of the law collections that survive from ancient Mesopotamia. King Hammurabi, who ruled from 1792-1750 BC, had the laws inscribed on stone stelae which he placed in various temples throughout his realm. The stela from which this cast was made stands almost seven-and-a-half feet tall. At the top of the stela, King Hammurabi stands before the sun god Shamash, the Mesopotamian god of justice, who is seated on his throne. Shamash gives

Hammurabi the rod and ring, symbols of kingship and divine justice, thus reinforcing the ancient Mesopotamian belief that laws came from the gods.

Below this scene is the law collection itself, mainly comprised of a compilation of legal verdicts describing specific offenses and the penalties to be enforced in particular situations. Preceding the law collection is a lengthy prologue, stressing the gods' appointment of Hammurabi as the ruler of his people. Hammurabi's role was to act as guardian and protector of the weak and powerless, and to pay care and attention to the specific needs of the patron deities of the many cities incorporated into his realm. Following the laws is an epilogue describing the king as the military leader who brings peace to his subjects. It explicitly states that these laws were inscribed on a stela and publicly displayed in order to testify to Hammurabi's righteous and just rule, to bring consolation to anyone seeking justice, and to serve as an example for future rulers.

## The Sun God, Shamash

### QUESTIONS:

*In 2-4 sentences, summarize the reading, offering specific details and emphasizing the main points in the text:*

*What does this poem teach us about Mesopotamian society?*

*Shamash is called many things throughout this poem (e.g. keeper) – what is he called? What does this reveal about how he is viewed by his followers?*

*Why are there so many references to light and darkness in the poem?*

From (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/538274/Shamash>)

**Shamash**, (Akkadian), Sumerian Utu, in Mesopotamian religion, the god of the sun, who, with the moon god, Sin (Sumerian: Nanna), and Ishtar (Sumerian: Inanna), the goddess of Venus, was part of an astral triad of divinities. Shamash was the son of Sin.

Shamash, as the solar deity, exercised the power of light over darkness and evil. In this capacity he became known as the god of justice and equity and was the judge of both gods and men. (According to legend, the Babylonian king Hammurabi received his code of laws from Shamash.) At night, Shamash became judge of the underworld.

Shamash was not only the god of justice but also governor of the whole universe; in this aspect he was pictured seated on a throne, holding in his hand the symbols of justice and righteousness, a staff and a ring. Also associated with Shamash is the notched dagger. The god is often pictured with a disk that symbolized the Sun.

As the god of the sun, Shamash was the heroic conqueror of night and death who swept across the heavens on horseback or, in some representations, in a boat or chariot. He bestowed light and life. Because he was of a heroic and wholly ethical character, he only rarely figured in mythology, where the gods behaved all too often like mortals. The chief centres of his cult were at Larsa in Sumer and at Sippar in Akkad. Shamash's consort was Aya, who was later absorbed by Ishtar.

## The Hymn

Among the longest and most beautiful of the hymns that have come down to us in cuneiform, this ranks as one of the best products of Mesopotamian religious writing.

*21. You climb to the mountains surveying the earth,*

*22. You suspend from the heavens the circle of the lands.*

*23. You care for all the peoples of the lands,*

*24. And everything that Ea, king of the counsellors, had created is entrusted to you.*

*25. Whatever has breath you shepherd without exception,*

*26. You are their keeper in upper and lower regions.*

27. Regularly and without cease you traverse the heavens,

28. Every day you pass over the broad earth. . . .

33. Shepherd of that beneath, keeper of that above,

**QUESTION: Why would Shamash be called Shepherd here?**

34. You, Shamash, direct, you are the light of everything.

35. You never fail to cross the wide expanse of sea,

36. The depth of which the Igigi know not.

37. Shamash, your glare reaches down to the abyss

38. So that monsters of the deep behold your light. . . .

45. Among all the Igigi there is none who toils but you,

46. None who is supreme like you in the whole pantheon of gods.

47. At your rising the gods of the land assemble,

48. Your fierce glare covers the land.

49. Of all the lands of varied speech,

50.. You know their plans, you scan their way.

51.. The whole of mankind bows to you,

52. Shamash, the universe longs for your light. . . .

88. A man who covets his neighbour's wife

89. Will [ . . . ] before his appointed day.

90.. A -nasty snare is prepared for him. [ . . . ]

91. Your weapon will strike at him, and there will be none to save him.

92. [His] father will not stand for his defense,

93. And at the judge's command his brothers will not plead.

94. He will be caught in a copper trap that he did not foresee.

95. You destroy the horns of a scheming villain,

96. A zealous [ . . . ] his foundations are undermined.

97. You give the unscrupulous judge experience of fetters,

98. Him who accepts a present and yet lets justice miscarry you make bear his punishment.

99. As for him who declines a present but nevertheless takes the part of the weak,

100.. It is pleasing to Shamash, and he will prolong his life. . . .

124. The progeny of evil-doers will [fail.]

125. Those whose mouth says 'No'-their case is before you.

126. In a moment you discern what they say;

127. You hear and examine them; you determine the lawsuit of the wronged.



128. *Every single person is entrusted to your hands;*  
 129. *You manage their omens; that which is perplexing you make plain.*  
 130. *You observe, Shamash, prayer, supplication, and benediction,*  
 131. *Obeisance, kneeling, ritual murmurs, and prostration.*  
 132. *The feeble man calls you from the hollow of his mouth,*  
 133. *The humble, the weak, the afflicted, the poor,*  
 134. *She whose son is captive constantly and unceasingly confronts you.*  
 135. *He whose family is remote, whose city is distant,*  
 136. *The shepherd [amid] the terror of the steppe confronts you,*  
 137. *The herdsman in warfare, the keeper of sheep among enemies.*  
 138. *Shamash, there confronts you the caravan, those journeying in fear,*  
 139. *The travelling merchant, the agent who is carrying capital.*  
 140. *Shamash, there confronts you the fisherman with his net,*  
 141. *The hunter, the Bowman who drives the game,*  
 142. *With his bird net the Fowler confronts You.*  
 143. *The prowling thief, the enemy of Shamash,*  
 144. *The marauder along the tracks of the steppe confronts you.*  
 145. *The roving dead, the vagrant soul,*  
 146. *They confront you, Shamash, and you hear all.*  
 147. *You do not obstruct those that confront you. . . .*  
 148. *For my sake, Shamash, do not curse them!*  
 149. *You grant revelations, Shamash, to the families of men,*  
 150. *Your harsh face and fierce light you give to them. . . .*  
 154. *The heavens are not enough as the vessel into which you gaze,*  
 155. *The sum of the lands is inadequate as a seer's bowl.....*  
 159. *You deliver people surrounded by mighty waves,*  
 160. *In return you receive their pure, clear libations. . . .*  
 165. *They in their reverence laud the mention of you,*  
 166. *And worship your majesty for ever. . . .*  
 174. *Which are the mountains not clothed with your beams?*  
 175. *Which are the regions not warmed by the brightness of your light?*  
 176. *Brightener of gloom, illuminator of darkness,*  
 177. *Dispeller of darkness, illuminator of the broad earth.*

Translation by W. G. Lambert, in his *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Oxford, 1960), I, 127 ff

## The Advice of an Akkadian Father to His Son, c. 2200 BCE

### QUESTIONS:

*Is this good advice? Why?*

*What do you feel is the most valuable wisdom offered in this piece? Why?*

Do not set out to stand around in the assembly. Do not loiter where there is a dispute, for in the dispute they will have you as an observer. Then you will be made a witness for them, and they will involve you in a lawsuit to affirm something that does not concern you. In case of a dispute, get away from it, disregard it! If a dispute involving you should flare up, calm it down. A dispute is a covered pit, a wall which can cover over its foes; it brings to mind what one has forgotten and makes an accusation against a man. Do not return evil to your adversary; requite with kindness the one who does evil to you, maintain justice for your enemy, be friendly to your enemy.

Give food to eat, beer to drink, grant what is requested, provide for and treat with honor. At this one's god takes pleasure. It is pleasing to Shamash, who will repay him with favor. Do good things, be kind all your days.

Do not honor a slave girl in your house; she should not rule your bedroom like a wife, do not give yourself over to slave girls....Let this be said among your people: "The household which a slave girl rules, she disrupts." Do not marry a prostitute, whose husbands are legion, an Ishtar-woman who is dedicated to a god, a *kulmashitu*-woman. . . .When you have trouble, she will not support you, when you have a dispute she will be a mocker. There is no reverence or submissiveness in her. Even if she is powerful in the household, get rid of her, for she pricks up her ears for the footsteps of another.

My son, if it be the wish of a ruler that you belong to him, if you are entrusted with his closely guarded seal, open his treasure house and enter it, for no one but you may do it. Uncounted wealth you will find inside, but do not covet any of that, nor set your mind on a secret crime, for afterwards the matter will be investigated and the secret crime which you committed will be exposed.

Do not speak ill, speak only good. Do not say evil things, speak well of people. He who speaks ill and says evil---people will waylay him because of his debt to Shamash. Do not talk too freely, watch what you say. Do not express your innermost thoughts even when you are alone. What you say in haste you may regret later. Exert yourself to restrain your speech.

Worship your god every day. Sacrifice and pious utterance are the proper accompaniment of incense. Have a freewill offering for your god, for this is proper toward a god. Prayer, supplication, and prostration offer him daily, then your prayer will be granted, and you will be in harmony with god.

**Source:** Scanned by: J. S. Arkenberg, Dept. of History, Cal. State Fullerton. Prof. Arkenberg has modernized the text.

# The Babylonian Empire

*Adapted from : <http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/babylonia/a/aa031400aBabyln.htm>*

Babylonia (roughly, modern southern Iraq) is the name of an ancient Mesopotamian empire known for its math and astronomy, architecture, literature, cuneiform tablets, laws and administration, and beauty, as well as excess and evil of Biblical proportions.

## Control of Sumer-Akkad

Since the area of Mesopotamia near where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers emptied into the Persian Gulf had two dominant groups, the Sumerians and Akkadians, it is often referred to as Sumer-Akkad. As part of an almost endless pattern, other people kept trying to take control of the land, mineral resources, and trade routes.

Eventually they succeeded. Semitic Amorites from the Arabian Peninsula gained control over most of Mesopotamia by about 1900 B.C. They centralized their monarchical government over the city-states just north of Sumer, in Babylon, formerly Akkad (Agade). The three centuries of their domination is known as the Old Babylonian period.

## The Babylonian King-God

Babylonians believed the king held power because of the gods; moreover, they thought their king was a god. To maximize his power and control, a bureaucracy and centralized government were established along with the inevitable adjuncts, taxation and involuntary military service.

## Divine Laws

The Sumerians already had laws, but they were administered jointly by individuals and the state. With a divine monarch came divinely inspired laws, violation of which was an offense to the state as well as the gods. The Babylonian king (1728-1686 B.C.) Hammurabi codified the laws in which (as distinct from the Sumerian) the state could prosecute on its own behalf. The Code of Hammurabi is famous for demanding punishment to fit the crime (the *lex talionis*, or an eye for an eye) with different treatment for each social class. The Code is thought to be Sumerian in spirit but with a Babylonian inspired harshness.

## Babylonian Empire

Hammurabi also united the Assyrians to the north and the Akkadians and Sumerians to the south. Trade with Anatolia, Syria, and Palestine spread Babylonian influence further. He further consolidated his Mesopotamian empire by building a network of roads and a postal system.

## Babylonian Religion

In religion, there wasn't much change from Sumer/Akkad to Babylonia. Hammurabi added a Babylonian Marduk, as chief god, to the Sumerian pantheon. The Epic of Gilgamesh is a Babylonian compilation of Sumerian tales about a legendary king of the city-state of Uruk, with a flood story.

## Hammurabi's Code of Laws

### QUESTIONS:

*How would you describe a society living under Hammurabi's Code?*

*Is this Code of Laws an effective way of stopping criminal activity?*

*What prohibitions were you surprised to find?*

*How are women treated under Hammurabi's Code?*

*Translated by L. W. King*

When Anu the Sublime, King of the Anunaki, and Bel, the lord of Heaven and earth, who decreed the fate of the land, assigned to Marduk, the over-ruling son of Ea, God of righteousness, dominion over earthly man, and made him great among the Igigi, they called Babylon by his illustrious name, made it great on earth, and founded an everlasting kingdom in it, whose foundations are laid so solidly as those of heaven and earth; then Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak; so that I should rule over the black-headed people like Shamash, and enlighten the land, to further the well-being of mankind.

Hammurabi, the prince, called of Bel am I, making riches and increase, enriching Nippur and Dur-ilu beyond compare, sublime patron of E-kur; who reestablished Eridu and purified the worship of E-apsu; who conquered the four quarters of the world, made great the name of Babylon, rejoiced the heart of Marduk, his lord who daily pays his devotions in Saggil; the royal scion whom Sin made; who enriched Ur; the humble, the reverent, who brings wealth to Gish-shir-gal; the white king, heard of Shamash, the mighty, who again laid the foundations of Sippara; who clothed the gravestones of Malkat with green; who made E-babbar great, which is like the heavens, the warrior who guarded Larsa and renewed E-babbar, with Shamash as his helper; the lord who granted new life to Uruk, who brought plenteous water to its inhabitants, raised the head of E-anna, and perfected the beauty of Anu and Nana; shield of the land, who reunited the scattered inhabitants of Isin; who richly endowed E-gal-mach; the protecting king of the city, brother of the god Zamama; who firmly founded the farms of Kish, crowned E-me-te-ursag with glory, redoubled the great holy treasures of Nana, managed the temple of Harsag-kalama; the grave of the enemy, whose help brought about the victory; who increased the power of Cuthah; made all glorious in E-shidlam, the black steer, who gored the enemy; beloved of the god Nebo, who rejoiced the inhabitants of Borsippa, the Sublime; who is indefatigable for E-zida; the divine king of the city; the White, Wise; who broadened the fields of Dilbat, who heaped up the harvests for Urash; the Mighty, the lord to whom come scepter and crown, with which he clothes himself; the Elect of Ma-ma; who fixed the temple bounds of Kesh, who made rich the holy feasts of Nin-tu; the provident, solicitous, who provided food and drink for Lagash and Girsu, who provided large sacrificial offerings for the temple of Ningirsu; who captured the enemy, the Elect of the oracle who fulfilled the prediction of Hallab, who rejoiced the heart of Anunit; the pure prince, whose prayer is accepted by Adad; who satisfied the heart of Adad, the warrior, in Karkar, who restored the vessels for worship in E-ud-gal-gal; the king who granted life to the city of Adab; the guide of E-mach; the princely king of the city, the irresistible warrior, who granted life to the inhabitants of Mashkanshabri, and brought abundance to the temple of Shidlam; the White, Potent, who penetrated the secret cave of the bandits, saved the inhabitants of Malka from misfortune, and fixed their home fast in

wealth; who established pure sacrificial gifts for Ea and Dam-gal-nun-na, who made his kingdom everlastingly great; the princely king of the city, who subjected the districts on the Ud-kib-nun-na Canal to the sway of Dagon, his Creator; who spared the inhabitants of Mera and Tutul; the sublime prince, who makes the face of Ninni shine; who presents holy meals to the divinity of Nin-a-zu, who cared for its inhabitants in their need, provided a portion for them in Babylon in peace; the shepherd of the oppressed and of the slaves; whose deeds find favor before Anunit, who provided for Anunit in the temple of Dumash in the suburb of Agade; who recognizes the right, who rules by law; who gave back to the city of Ashur its protecting god; who let the name of Ishtar of Nineveh remain in E-mish-mish; the Sublime, who humbles himself before the great gods; successor of Sumula-il; the mighty son of Sin-muballit; the royal scion of Eternity; the mighty monarch, the sun of Babylon, whose rays shed light over the land of Sumer and Akkad; the king, obeyed by the four quarters of the world; Beloved of Ninni, am I.

When Marduk sent me to rule over men, to give the protection of right to the land, I did right and righteousness in ..., and brought about the well-being of the oppressed.

**QUESTION: What might be the purpose of the prologue above?**

### **The Code of Laws**

1. If any one ensnare another, putting a ban upon him, but he can not prove it, then he that ensnared him shall be put to death.
2. If any one bring an accusation against a man, and the accused go to the river and leap into the river, if he sink in the river his accuser shall take possession of his house. But if the river prove that the accused is not guilty, and he escape unhurt, then he who had brought the accusation shall be put to death, while he who leaped into the river shall take possession of the house that had belonged to his accuser.
3. If any one bring an accusation of any crime before the elders, and does not prove what he has charged, he shall, if it be a capital offense charged, be put to death.
4. If he satisfy the elders to impose a fine of grain or money, he shall receive the fine that the action produces.
5. If a judge try a case, reach a decision, and present his judgment in writing; if later error shall appear in his decision, and it be through his own fault, then he shall pay twelve times the fine set by him in the case, and he shall be publicly removed from the judge's bench, and never again shall he sit there to render judgement.

**QUESTION: Why would he include rules about the legal process?**

6. If any one steal the property of a temple or of the court, he shall be put to death, and also the one who receives the stolen thing from him shall be put to death.

7. If any one buy from the son or the slave of another man, without witnesses or a contract, silver or gold, a male or female slave, an ox or a sheep, an ass or anything, or if he take it in charge, he is considered a thief and shall be put to death.
8. If any one steal cattle or sheep, or an ass, or a pig or a goat, if it belong to a god or to the court, the thief shall pay thirtyfold therefor; if they belonged to a freed man of the king he shall pay tenfold; if the thief has nothing with which to pay he shall be put to death.
9. If any one lose an article, and find it in the possession of another: if the person in whose possession the thing is found say "A merchant sold it to me, I paid for it before witnesses," and if the owner of the thing say, "I will bring witnesses who know my property," then shall the purchaser bring the merchant who sold it to him, and the witnesses before whom he bought it, and the owner shall bring witnesses who can identify his property. The judge shall examine their testimony -- both of the witnesses before whom the price was paid, and of the witnesses who identify the lost article on oath. The merchant is then proved to be a thief and shall be put to death. The owner of the lost article receives his property, and he who bought it receives the money he paid from the estate of the merchant.
10. If the purchaser does not bring the merchant and the witnesses before whom he bought the article, but its owner bring witnesses who identify it, then the buyer is the thief and shall be put to death, and the owner receives the lost article.
11. If the owner do not bring witnesses to identify the lost article, he is an evil-doer, he has traduced, and shall be put to death.
12. If the witnesses be not at hand, then shall the judge set a limit, at the expiration of six months. If his witnesses have not appeared within the six months, he is an evil-doer, and shall bear the fine of the pending case.
14. If any one steal the minor son of another, he shall be put to death.
15. If any one take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates, he shall be put to death.
16. If any one receive into his house a runaway male or female slave of the court, or of a freedman, and does not bring it out at the public proclamation of the major domus, the master of the house shall be put to death.
17. If any one find runaway male or female slaves in the open country and bring them to their masters, the master of the slaves shall pay him two shekels of silver.
18. If the slave will not give the name of the master, the finder shall bring him to the palace; a further investigation must follow, and the slave shall be returned to his master.
19. If he hold the slaves in his house, and they are caught there, he shall be put to death.
20. If the slave that he caught run away from him, then shall he swear to the owners of the slave, and he is free of all blame.
21. If any one break a hole into a house (break in to steal), he shall be put to death before that hole and be buried.
22. If any one is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.
23. If the robber is not caught, then shall he who was robbed claim under oath the amount of his loss; then shall the community, and ... on whose ground and territory and in whose domain it was compensate him for the goods stolen.
24. If persons are stolen, then shall the community and ... pay one mina of silver to their relatives.

25. If fire break out in a house, and some one who comes to put it out cast his eye upon the property of the owner of the house, and take the property of the master of the house, he shall be thrown into that self-same fire.

**QUESTION: What do these laws reveal about Babylonian ideas of private property?**

26. If a chieftain or a man (common soldier), who has been ordered to go upon the king's highway for war does not go, but hires a mercenary, if he withholds the compensation, then shall this officer or man be put to death, and he who represented him shall take possession of his house.

27. If a chieftain or man be caught in the misfortune of the king (captured in battle), and if his fields and garden be given to another and he take possession, if he return and reaches his place, his field and garden shall be returned to him, he shall take it over again.

28. If a chieftain or a man be caught in the misfortune of a king, if his son is able to enter into possession, then the field and garden shall be given to him, he shall take over the fee of his father.

29. If his son is still young, and can not take possession, a third of the field and garden shall be given to his mother, and she shall bring him up.

30. If a chieftain or a man leave his house, garden, and field and hires it out, and some one else takes possession of his house, garden, and field and uses it for three years: if the first owner return and claims his house, garden, and field, it shall not be given to him, but he who has taken possession of it and used it shall continue to use it.

31. If he hire it out for one year and then return, the house, garden, and field shall be given back to him, and he shall take it over again.

32. If a chieftain or a man is captured on the "Way of the King" (in war), and a merchant buy him free, and bring him back to his place; if he have the means in his house to buy his freedom, he shall buy himself free: if he have nothing in his house with which to buy himself free, he shall be bought free by the temple of his community; if there be nothing in the temple with which to buy him free, the court shall buy his freedom. His field, garden, and house shall not be given for the purchase of his freedom.

33. If a ... or a ... enter himself as withdrawn from the "Way of the King," and send a mercenary as substitute, but withdraw him, then the ... or ... shall be put to death.

**QUESTION: What do you think the 'Way of the King' refers to?**

34. If a ... or a ... harm the property of a captain, injure the captain, or take away from the captain a gift presented to him by the king, then the ... or ... shall be put to death.

35. If any one buy the cattle or sheep which the king has given to chieftains from him, he loses his money.

36. The field, garden, and house of a chieftain, of a man, or of one subject to quit-rent, can not be sold.

37. If any one buy the field, garden, and house of a chieftain, man, or one subject to quit-rent, his contract tablet of sale shall be broken (declared invalid) and he loses his money. The field, garden, and house return to their owners.
38. A chieftain, man, or one subject to quit-rent can not assign his tenure of field, house, and garden to his wife or daughter, nor can he assign it for a debt.
39. He may, however, assign a field, garden, or house which he has bought, and holds as property, to his wife or daughter or give it for debt.
40. He may sell field, garden, and house to a merchant (royal agents) or to any other public official, the buyer holding field, house, and garden for its usufruct.
41. If any one fence in the field, garden, and house of a chieftain, man, or one subject to quit-rent, furnishing the palings therefor; if the chieftain, man, or one subject to quit-rent return to field, garden, and house, the palings which were given to him become his property.
42. If any one take over a field to till it, and obtain no harvest therefrom, it must be proved that he did no work on the field, and he must deliver grain, just as his neighbor raised, to the owner of the field.
43. If he do not till the field, but let it lie fallow, he shall give grain like his neighbor's to the owner of the field, and the field which he let lie fallow he must plow and sow and return to its owner.
44. If any one take over a waste-lying field to make it arable, but is lazy, and does not make it arable, he shall plow the fallow field in the fourth year, harrow it and till it, and give it back to its owner, and for each ten gan (a measure of area) ten gur of grain shall be paid.
45. If a man rent his field for tillage for a fixed rental, and receive the rent of his field, but bad weather come and destroy the harvest, the injury falls upon the tiller of the soil.
46. If he do not receive a fixed rental for his field, but lets it on half or third shares of the harvest, the grain on the field shall be divided proportionately between the tiller and the owner.
47. If the tiller, because he did not succeed in the first year, has had the soil tilled by others, the owner may raise no objection; the field has been cultivated and he receives the harvest according to agreement.
48. If any one owe a debt for a loan, and a storm prostrates the grain, or the harvest fail, or the grain does not grow for lack of water; in that year he need not give his creditor any grain, he washes his debt-tablet in water and pays no rent for this year.
49. If any one take money from a merchant, and give the merchant a field tillable for corn or sesame and order him to plant corn or sesame in the field, and to harvest the crop; if the cultivator plant corn or sesame in the field, at the harvest the corn or sesame that is in the field shall belong to the owner of the field and he shall pay corn as rent, for the money he received from the merchant, and the livelihood of the cultivator shall he give to the merchant.
50. If he give a cultivated corn-field or a cultivated sesame-field, the corn or sesame in the field shall belong to the owner of the field, and he shall return the money to the merchant as rent.
51. If he have no money to repay, then he shall pay in corn or sesame in place of the money as rent for what he received from the merchant, according to the royal tariff.
52. If the cultivator do not plant corn or sesame in the field, the debtor's contract is not weakened.



53. If any one be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the break occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the corn which he has caused to be ruined.

54. If he be not able to replace the corn, then he and his possessions shall be divided among the farmers whose corn he has flooded.

55. If any one open his ditches to water his crop, but is careless, and the water flood the field of his neighbor, then he shall pay his neighbor corn for his loss.

56. If a man let in the water, and the water overflow the plantation of his neighbor, he shall pay ten gur of corn for every ten gan of land.

57. If a shepherd, without the permission of the owner of the field, and without the knowledge of the owner of the sheep, lets the sheep into a field to graze, then the owner of the field shall harvest his crop, and the shepherd, who had pastured his flock there without permission of the owner of the field, shall pay to the owner twenty gur of corn for every ten gan.

58. If after the flocks have left the pasture and been shut up in the common fold at the city gate, any shepherd let them into a field and they graze there, this shepherd shall take possession of the field which he has allowed to be grazed on, and at the harvest he must pay sixty gur of corn for every ten gan.

59. If any man, without the knowledge of the owner of a garden, fell a tree in a garden he shall pay half a mina in money.

60. If any one give over a field to a gardener, for him to plant it as a garden, if he work at it, and care for it for four years, in the fifth year the owner and the gardener shall divide it, the owner taking his part in charge.

61. If the gardener has not completed the planting of the field, leaving one part unused, this shall be assigned to him as his.

62. If he do not plant the field that was given over to him as a garden, if it be arable land (for corn or sesame) the gardener shall pay the owner the produce of the field for the years that he let it lie fallow, according to the product of neighboring fields, put the field in arable condition and return it to its owner.

63. If he transform waste land into arable fields and return it to its owner, the latter shall pay him for one year ten gur for ten gan.

64. If any one hand over his garden to a gardener to work, the gardener shall pay to its owner two-thirds of the produce of the garden, for so long as he has it in possession, and the other third shall he keep.

65. If the gardener do not work in the garden and the product fall off, the gardener shall pay in proportion to other neighboring gardens.

[The text for laws 66 through 99 is missing]

100. ... interest for the money, as much as he has received, he shall give a note therefor, and on the day, when they settle, pay to the merchant.

101. If there are no mercantile arrangements in the place whither he went, he shall leave the entire amount of money which he received with the broker to give to the merchant.

102. If a merchant entrust money to an agent (broker) for some investment, and the broker suffer a loss in the place to which he goes, he shall make good the capital to the merchant.

103. If, while on the journey, an enemy take away from him anything that he had, the broker shall swear by God and be free of obligation.

104. If a merchant give an agent corn, wool, oil, or any other goods to transport, the agent shall give a receipt for the amount, and compensate the merchant therefor. Then he shall obtain a receipt form the merchant for the money that he gives the merchant.
105. If the agent is careless, and does not take a receipt for the money which he gave the merchant, he can not consider the unreceipted money as his own.
106. If the agent accept money from the merchant, but have a quarrel with the merchant (denying the receipt), then shall the merchant swear before God and witnesses that he has given this money to the agent, and the agent shall pay him three times the sum.
107. If the merchant cheat the agent, in that as the latter has returned to him all that had been given him, but the merchant denies the receipt of what had been returned to him, then shall this agent convict the merchant before God and the judges, and if he still deny receiving what the agent had given him shall pay six times the sum to the agent.
108. If a tavern-keeper (feminine) does not accept corn according to gross weight in payment of drink, but takes money, and the price of the drink is less than that of the corn, she shall be convicted and thrown into the water.
109. If conspirators meet in the house of a tavern-keeper, and these conspirators are not captured and delivered to the court, the tavern-keeper shall be put to death.
110. If a "sister of a god" open a tavern, or enter a tavern to drink, then shall this woman be burned to death.
111. If an inn-keeper furnish sixty ka of usakani-drink to ... she shall receive fifty ka of corn at the harvest.
112. If any one be on a journey and entrust silver, gold, precious stones, or any movable property to another, and wish to recover it from him; if the latter do not bring all of the property to the appointed place, but appropriate it to his own use, then shall this man, who did not bring the property to hand it over, be convicted, and he shall pay fivefold for all that had been entrusted to him.
113. If any one have consignment of corn or money, and he take from the granary or box without the knowledge of the owner, then shall he who took corn without the knowledge of the owner out of the granary or money out of the box be legally convicted, and repay the corn he has taken. And he shall lose whatever commission was paid to him, or due him.
114. If a man have no claim on another for corn and money, and try to demand it by force, he shall pay one-third of a mina of silver in every case.
115. If any one have a claim for corn or money upon another and imprison him; if the prisoner die in prison a natural death, the case shall go no further.
116. If the prisoner die in prison from blows or maltreatment, the master of the prisoner shall convict the merchant before the judge. If he was a free-born man, the son of the merchant shall be put to death; if it was a slave, he shall pay one-third of a mina of gold, and all that the master of the prisoner gave he shall forfeit.
117. If any one fail to meet a claim for debt, and sell himself, his wife, his son, and daughter for money or give them away to forced labor: they shall work for three years in the house of the man who bought them, or the proprietor, and in the fourth year they shall be set free.
118. If he give a male or female slave away for forced labor, and the merchant sublease them, or sell them for money, no objection can be raised.
119. If any one fail to meet a claim for debt, and he sell the maid servant who has borne him children, for money, the money which the merchant has paid shall be repaid to him by the owner of the slave and she shall be freed.

120. If any one store corn for safe keeping in another person's house, and any harm happen to the corn in storage, or if the owner of the house open the granary and take some of the corn, or if especially he deny that the corn was stored in his house: then the owner of the corn shall claim his corn before God (on oath), and the owner of the house shall pay its owner for all of the corn that he took.

121. If any one store corn in another man's house he shall pay him storage at the rate of one gur for every five ka of corn per year.

122. If any one give another silver, gold, or anything else to keep, he shall show everything to some witness, draw up a contract, and then hand it over for safe keeping.

123. If he turn it over for safe keeping without witness or contract, and if he to whom it was given deny it, then he has no legitimate claim.

124. If any one deliver silver, gold, or anything else to another for safe keeping, before a witness, but he deny it, he shall be brought before a judge, and all that he has denied he shall pay in full.

125. If any one place his property with another for safe keeping, and there, either through thieves or robbers, his property and the property of the other man be lost, the owner of the house, through whose neglect the loss took place, shall compensate the owner for all that was given to him in charge. But the owner of the house shall try to follow up and recover his property, and take it away from the thief.

126. If any one who has not lost his goods state that they have been lost, and make false claims: if he claim his goods and amount of injury before God, even though he has not lost them, he shall be fully compensated for all his loss claimed. (I.e., the oath is all that is needed.)

**QUESTION: Why would so many laws be about commerce?**

127. If any one "point the finger" (slander) at a sister of a god or the wife of any one, and can not prove it, this man shall be taken before the judges and his brow shall be marked. (by cutting the skin, or perhaps hair.)

128. If a man take a woman to wife, but have no intercourse with her, this woman is no wife to him.

129. If a man's wife be surprised (in flagrante delicto) with another man, both shall be tied and thrown into the water, but the husband may pardon his wife and the king his slaves.

130. If a man violate the wife (betrothed or child-wife) of another man, who has never known a man, and still lives in her father's house, and sleep with her and be surprised, this man shall be put to death, but the wife is blameless.

131. If a man bring a charge against one's wife, but she is not surprised with another man, she must take an oath and then may return to her house.

132. If the "finger is pointed" at a man's wife about another man, but she is not caught sleeping with the other man, she shall jump into the river for her husband.

133. If a man is taken prisoner in war, and there is a sustenance in his house, but his wife leave house and court, and go to another house: because this wife did not keep her court, and went to another house, she shall be judicially condemned and thrown into the water.

134. If any one be captured in war and there is not sustenance in his house, if then his wife go to another house this woman shall be held blameless.

135. If a man be taken prisoner in war and there be no sustenance in his house and his wife go to another house and bear children; and if later her husband return and come to his home: then this wife shall return to her husband, but the children follow their father.

136. If any one leave his house, run away, and then his wife go to another house, if then he return, and wishes to take his wife back: because he fled from his home and ran away, the wife of this runaway shall not return to her husband.

137. If a man wish to separate from a woman who has borne him children, or from his wife who has borne him children: then he shall give that wife her dowry, and a part of the usufruct of field, garden, and property, so that she can rear her children. When she has brought up her children, a portion of all that is given to the children, equal as that of one son, shall be given to her. She may then marry the man of her heart.

138. If a man wishes to separate from his wife who has borne him no children, he shall give her the amount of her purchase money and the dowry which she brought from her father's house, and let her go.

139. If there was no purchase price he shall give her one mina of gold as a gift of release.

140. If he be a freed man he shall give her one-third of a mina of gold.

141. If a man's wife, who lives in his house, wishes to leave it, plunges into debt, tries to ruin her house, neglects her husband, and is judicially convicted: if her husband offer her release, she may go on her way, and he gives her nothing as a gift of release. If her husband does not wish to release her, and if he take another wife, she shall remain as servant in her husband's house.

142. If a woman quarrel with her husband, and say: "You are not congenial to me," the reasons for her prejudice must be presented. If she is guiltless, and there is no fault on her part, but he leaves and neglects her, then no guilt attaches to this woman, she shall take her dowry and go back to her father's house.

143. If she is not innocent, but leaves her husband, and ruins her house, neglecting her husband, this woman shall be cast into the water.

144. If a man take a wife and this woman give her husband a maid-servant, and she bear him children, but this man wishes to take another wife, this shall not be permitted to him; he shall not take a second wife.

145. If a man take a wife, and she bear him no children, and he intend to take another wife: if he take this second wife, and bring her into the house, this second wife shall not be allowed equality with his wife.

146. If a man take a wife and she give this man a maid-servant as wife and she bear him children, and then this maid assume equality with the wife: because she has borne him children her master shall not sell her for money, but he may keep her as a slave, reckoning her among the maid-servants.

147. If she have not borne him children, then her mistress may sell her for money.

148. If a man take a wife, and she be seized by disease, if he then desire to take a second wife he shall not put away his wife, who has been attacked by disease, but he shall keep her in the house which he has built and support her so long as she lives.

149. If this woman does not wish to remain in her husband's house, then he shall compensate her for the dowry that she brought with her from her father's house, and she may go.
150. If a man give his wife a field, garden, and house and a deed therefor, if then after the death of her husband the sons raise no claim, then the mother may bequeath all to one of her sons whom she prefers, and need leave nothing to his brothers.
151. If a woman who lived in a man's house made an agreement with her husband, that no creditor can arrest her, and has given a document therefor: if that man, before he married that woman, had a debt, the creditor can not hold the woman for it. But if the woman, before she entered the man's house, had contracted a debt, her creditor can not arrest her husband therefor.
152. If after the woman had entered the man's house, both contracted a debt, both must pay the merchant.
153. If the wife of one man on account of another man has their mates (her husband and the other man's wife) murdered, both of them shall be impaled.
154. If a man be guilty of incest with his daughter, he shall be driven from the place (exiled).
155. If a man betroth a girl to his son, and his son have intercourse with her, but he (the father) afterward defile her, and be surprised, then he shall be bound and cast into the water (drowned).
156. If a man betroth a girl to his son, but his son has not known her, and if then he defile her, he shall pay her half a gold mina, and compensate her for all that she brought out of her father's house. She may marry the man of her heart.
157. If any one be guilty of incest with his mother after his father, both shall be burned.
158. If any one be surprised after his father with his chief wife, who has borne children, he shall be driven out of his father's house.
159. If any one, who has brought chattels into his father-in-law's house, and has paid the purchase-money, looks for another wife, and says to his father-in-law: "I do not want your daughter," the girl's father may keep all that he had brought.
160. If a man bring chattels into the house of his father-in-law, and pay the "purchase price" (for his wife): if then the father of the girl say: "I will not give you my daughter," he shall give him back all that he brought with him.
161. If a man bring chattels into his father-in-law's house and pay the "purchase price," if then his friend slander him, and his father-in-law say to the young husband: "You shall not marry my daughter," the he shall give back to him undiminished all that he had brought with him; but his wife shall not be married to the friend.
162. If a man marry a woman, and she bear sons to him; if then this woman die, then shall her father have no claim on her dowry; this belongs to her sons.
163. If a man marry a woman and she bear him no sons; if then this woman die, if the "purchase price" which he had paid into the house of his father-in-law is repaid to him, her husband shall have no claim upon the dowry of this woman; it belongs to her father's house.
164. If his father-in-law do not pay back to him the amount of the "purchase price" he may subtract the amount of the "Purchase price" from the dowry, and then pay the remainder to her father's house.
165. If a man give to one of his sons whom he prefers a field, garden, and house, and a deed therefor: if later the father die, and the brothers divide the estate, then they shall first give

him the present of his father, and he shall accept it; and the rest of the paternal property shall they divide.

166. If a man take wives for his son, but take no wife for his minor son, and if then he die: if the sons divide the estate, they shall set aside besides his portion the money for the "purchase price" for the minor brother who had taken no wife as yet, and secure a wife for him.

167. If a man marry a wife and she bear him children: if this wife die and he then take another wife and she bear him children: if then the father die, the sons must not partition the estate according to the mothers, they shall divide the dowries of their mothers only in this way; the paternal estate they shall divide equally with one another.

168. If a man wish to put his son out of his house, and declare before the judge: "I want to put my son out," then the judge shall examine into his reasons. If the son be guilty of no great fault, for which he can be rightfully put out, the father shall not put him out.

169. If he be guilty of a grave fault, which should rightfully deprive him of the filial relationship, the father shall forgive him the first time; but if he be guilty of a grave fault a second time the father may deprive his son of all filial relation.

170. If his wife bear sons to a man, or his maid-servant have borne sons, and the father while still living says to the children whom his maid-servant has borne: "My sons," and he count them with the sons of his wife; if then the father die, then the sons of the wife and of the maid-servant shall divide the paternal property in common. The son of the wife is to partition and choose.

171. If, however, the father while still living did not say to the sons of the maid-servant: "My sons," and then the father dies, then the sons of the maid-servant shall not share with the sons of the wife, but the freedom of the maid and her sons shall be granted. The sons of the wife shall have no right to enslave the sons of the maid; the wife shall take her dowry (from her father), and the gift that her husband gave her and deeded to her (separate from dowry, or the purchase-money paid her father), and live in the home of her husband: so long as she lives she shall use it, it shall not be sold for money. Whatever she leaves shall belong to her children.

172. If her husband made her no gift, she shall be compensated for her gift, and she shall receive a portion from the estate of her husband, equal to that of one child. If her sons oppress her, to force her out of the house, the judge shall examine into the matter, and if the sons are at fault the woman shall not leave her husband's house. If the woman desire to leave the house, she must leave to her sons the gift which her husband gave her, but she may take the dowry of her father's house. Then she may marry the man of her heart.

173. If this woman bear sons to her second husband, in the place to which she went, and then die, her earlier and later sons shall divide the dowry between them.

174. If she bear no sons to her second husband, the sons of her first husband shall have the dowry.

175. If a State slave or the slave of a freed man marry the daughter of a free man, and children are born, the master of the slave shall have no right to enslave the children of the free.

176. If, however, a State slave or the slave of a freed man marry a man's daughter, and after he marries her she bring a dowry from a father's house, if then they both enjoy it and found a household, and accumulate means, if then the slave die, then she who was free born may take her dowry, and all that her husband and she had earned; she shall divide them into two parts, one-half the master for the slave shall take, and the other half shall the free-born

woman take for her children. If the free-born woman had no gift she shall take all that her husband and she had earned and divide it into two parts; and the master of the slave shall take one-half and she shall take the other for her children.

177. If a widow, whose children are not grown, wishes to enter another house (remarry), she shall not enter it without the knowledge of the judge. If she enter another house the judge shall examine the state of the house of her first husband. Then the house of her first husband shall be entrusted to the second husband and the woman herself as managers. And a record must be made thereof. She shall keep the house in order, bring up the children, and not sell the house-hold utensils. He who buys the utensils of the children of a widow shall lose his money, and the goods shall return to their owners.

178. If a "devoted woman" or a prostitute to whom her father has given a dowry and a deed therefor, but if in this deed it is not stated that she may bequeath it as she pleases, and has not explicitly stated that she has the right of disposal; if then her father die, then her brothers shall hold her field and garden, and give her corn, oil, and milk according to her portion, and satisfy her. If her brothers do not give her corn, oil, and milk according to her share, then her field and garden shall support her. She shall have the usufruct of field and garden and all that her father gave her so long as she lives, but she can not sell or assign it to others. Her position of inheritance belongs to her brothers.

179. If a "sister of a god," or a prostitute, receive a gift from her father, and a deed in which it has been explicitly stated that she may dispose of it as she pleases, and give her complete disposition thereof: if then her father die, then she may leave her property to whomsoever she pleases. Her brothers can raise no claim thereto.

180. If a father give a present to his daughter -- either marriageable or a prostitute (unmarriageable) -- and then die, then she is to receive a portion as a child from the paternal estate, and enjoy its usufruct so long as she lives. Her estate belongs to her brothers.

181. If a father devote a temple-maid or temple-virgin to God and give her no present: if then the father die, she shall receive the third of a child's portion from the inheritance of her father's house, and enjoy its usufruct so long as she lives. Her estate belongs to her brothers.

182. If a father devote his daughter as a wife of Mardi of Babylon (as in 181), and give her no present, nor a deed; if then her father die, then shall she receive one-third of her portion as a child of her father's house from her brothers, but Marduk may leave her estate to whomsoever she wishes.

183. If a man give his daughter by a concubine a dowry, and a husband, and a deed; if then her father die, she shall receive no portion from the paternal estate.

184. If a man do not give a dowry to his daughter by a concubine, and no husband; if then her father die, her brother shall give her a dowry according to her father's wealth and secure a husband for her.

185. If a man adopt a child and to his name as son, and rear him, this grown son can not be demanded back again.

186. If a man adopt a son, and if after he has taken him he injure his foster father and mother, then this adopted son shall return to his father's house.

187. The son of a paramour in the palace service, or of a prostitute, can not be demanded back.

188. If an artizan has undertaken to rear a child and teaches him his craft, he can not be demanded back.

189. If he has not taught him his craft, this adopted son may return to his father's house.

190. If a man does not maintain a child that he has adopted as a son and reared with his other children, then his adopted son may return to his father's house.
191. If a man, who had adopted a son and reared him, founded a household, and had children, wish to put this adopted son out, then this son shall not simply go his way. His adoptive father shall give him of his wealth one-third of a child's portion, and then he may go. He shall not give him of the field, garden, and house.
192. If a son of a paramour or a prostitute say to his adoptive father or mother: "You are not my father, or my mother," his tongue shall be cut off.
193. If the son of a paramour or a prostitute desire his father's house, and desert his adoptive father and adoptive mother, and goes to his father's house, then shall his eye be put out.
194. If a man give his child to a nurse and the child die in her hands, but the nurse unbeknown to the father and mother nurse another child, then they shall convict her of having nursed another child without the knowledge of the father and mother and her breasts shall be cut off.
195. If a son strike his father, his hands shall be hewn off.
196. If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out.
197. If he break another man's bone, his bone shall be broken.
198. If he put out the eye of a freed man, or break the bone of a freed man, he shall pay one gold mina.
199. If he put out the eye of a man's slave, or break the bone of a man's slave, he shall pay one-half of its value.
200. If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.
201. If he knock out the teeth of a freed man, he shall pay one-third of a gold mina.
202. If any one strike the body of a man higher in rank than he, he shall receive sixty blows with an ox-whip in public.
203. If a free-born man strike the body of another free-born man or equal rank, he shall pay one gold mina.
204. If a freed man strike the body of another freed man, he shall pay ten shekels in money.
205. If the slave of a freed man strike the body of a freed man, his ear shall be cut off.
206. If during a quarrel one man strike another and wound him, then he shall swear, "I did not injure him wittingly," and pay the physicians.
207. If the man die of his wound, he shall swear similarly, and if he (the deceased) was a free-born man, he shall pay half a mina in money.
208. If he was a freed man, he shall pay one-third of a mina.
209. If a man strike a free-born woman so that she lose her unborn child, he shall pay ten shekels for her loss.
210. If the woman die, his daughter shall be put to death.
211. If a woman of the free class lose her child by a blow, he shall pay five shekels in money.
212. If this woman die, he shall pay half a mina.
213. If he strike the maid-servant of a man, and she lose her child, he shall pay two shekels in money.
214. If this maid-servant die, he shall pay one-third of a mina.



**QUESTION: Are these punishments unnecessarily cruel? Why or why not (try to make both arguments if you can)?**

215. If a physician make a large incision with an operating knife and cure it, or if he open a tumor (over the eye) with an operating knife, and saves the eye, he shall receive ten shekels in money.

216. If the patient be a freed man, he receives five shekels.

217. If he be the slave of some one, his owner shall give the physician two shekels.

218. If a physician make a large incision with the operating knife, and kill him, or open a tumor with the operating knife, and cut out the eye, his hands shall be cut off.

219. If a physician make a large incision in the slave of a freed man, and kill him, he shall replace the slave with another slave.

220. If he had opened a tumor with the operating knife, and put out his eye, he shall pay half his value.

221. If a physician heal the broken bone or diseased soft part of a man, the patient shall pay the physician five shekels in money.

222. If he were a freed man he shall pay three shekels.

223. If he were a slave his owner shall pay the physician two shekels.

224. If a veterinary surgeon perform a serious operation on an ass or an ox, and cure it, the owner shall pay the surgeon one-sixth of a shekel as a fee.

225. If he perform a serious operation on an ass or ox, and kill it, he shall pay the owner one-fourth of its value.

226. If a barber, without the knowledge of his master, cut the sign of a slave on a slave not to be sold, the hands of this barber shall be cut off.

227. If any one deceive a barber, and have him mark a slave not for sale with the sign of a slave, he shall be put to death, and buried in his house. The barber shall swear: "I did not mark him wittingly," and shall be guiltless.

228. If a builder build a house for some one and complete it, he shall give him a fee of two shekels in money for each sar of surface.

229. If a builder build a house for some one, and does not construct it properly, and the house which he built fall in and kill its owner, then that builder shall be put to death.

230. If it kill the son of the owner the son of that builder shall be put to death.

231. If it kill a slave of the owner, then he shall pay slave for slave to the owner of the house.

232. If it ruin goods, he shall make compensation for all that has been ruined, and inasmuch as he did not construct properly this house which he built and it fell, he shall re-erect the house from his own means.

233. If a builder build a house for some one, even though he has not yet completed it; if then the walls seem toppling, the builder must make the walls solid from his own means.

234. If a shipbuilder build a boat of sixty gur for a man, he shall pay him a fee of two shekels in money.

235. If a shipbuilder build a boat for some one, and do not make it tight, if during that same year that boat is sent away and suffers injury, the shipbuilder shall take the boat apart and put it together tight at his own expense. The tight boat he shall give to the boat owner.

236. If a man rent his boat to a sailor, and the sailor is careless, and the boat is wrecked or goes aground, the sailor shall give the owner of the boat another boat as compensation.

237. If a man hire a sailor and his boat, and provide it with corn, clothing, oil and dates, and other things of the kind needed for fitting it: if the sailor is careless, the boat is wrecked, and its contents ruined, then the sailor shall compensate for the boat which was wrecked and all in it that he ruined.

238. If a sailor wreck any one's ship, but saves it, he shall pay the half of its value in money.

239. If a man hire a sailor, he shall pay him six gur of corn per year.

240. If a merchantman run against a ferryboat, and wreck it, the master of the ship that was wrecked shall seek justice before God; the master of the merchantman, which wrecked the ferryboat, must compensate the owner for the boat and all that he ruined.

241. If any one impresses an ox for forced labor, he shall pay one-third of a mina in money.

242. If any one hire oxen for a year, he shall pay four gur of corn for plow-oxen.

243. As rent of herd cattle he shall pay three gur of corn to the owner.

244. If any one hire an ox or an ass, and a lion kill it in the field, the loss is upon its owner.

245. If any one hire oxen, and kill them by bad treatment or blows, he shall compensate the owner, oxen for oxen.

246. If a man hire an ox, and he break its leg or cut the ligament of its neck, he shall compensate the owner with ox for ox.

247. If any one hire an ox, and put out its eye, he shall pay the owner one-half of its value.

248. If any one hire an ox, and break off a horn, or cut off its tail, or hurt its muzzle, he shall pay one-fourth of its value in money.

249. If any one hire an ox, and God strike it that it die, the man who hired it shall swear by God and be considered guiltless.

250. If while an ox is passing on the street (market) some one push it, and kill it, the owner can set up no claim in the suit (against the hirer).

251. If an ox be a goring ox, and it shown that he is a gorier, and he do not bind his horns, or fasten the ox up, and the ox gore a free-born man and kill him, the owner shall pay one-half a mina in money.

252. If he kill a man's slave, he shall pay one-third of a mina.

253. If any one agree with another to tend his field, give him seed, entrust a yoke of oxen to him, and bind him to cultivate the field, if he steal the corn or plants, and take them for himself, his hands shall be hewn off.

254. If he take the seed-corn for himself, and do not use the yoke of oxen, he shall compensate him for the amount of the seed-corn.

255. If he sublet the man's yoke of oxen or steal the seed-corn, planting nothing in the field, he shall be convicted, and for each one hundred gan he shall pay sixty gur of corn.

256. If his community will not pay for him, then he shall be placed in that field with the cattle (at work).

257. If any one hire a field laborer, he shall pay him eight gur of corn per year.

258. If any one hire an ox-driver, he shall pay him six gur of corn per year.

259. If any one steal a water-wheel from the field, he shall pay five shekels in money to its owner.
260. If any one steal a shadduf (used to draw water from the river or canal) or a plow, he shall pay three shekels in money.
261. If any one hire a herdsman for cattle or sheep, he shall pay him eight gur of corn per annum.
262. If any one, a cow or a sheep ...
263. If he kill the cattle or sheep that were given to him, he shall compensate the owner with cattle for cattle and sheep for sheep.
264. If a herdsman, to whom cattle or sheep have been entrusted for watching over, and who has received his wages as agreed upon, and is satisfied, diminish the number of the cattle or sheep, or make the increase by birth less, he shall make good the increase or profit which was lost in the terms of settlement.
265. If a herdsman, to whose care cattle or sheep have been entrusted, be guilty of fraud and make false returns of the natural increase, or sell them for money, then shall he be convicted and pay the owner ten times the loss.
266. If the animal be killed in the stable by God (an accident), or if a lion kill it, the herdsman shall declare his innocence before God, and the owner bears the accident in the stable.
267. If the herdsman overlook something, and an accident happen in the stable, then the herdsman is at fault for the accident which he has caused in the stable, and he must compensate the owner for the cattle or sheep.
268. If any one hire an ox for threshing, the amount of the hire is twenty ka of corn.
269. If he hire an ass for threshing, the hire is twenty ka of corn.
270. If he hire a young animal for threshing, the hire is ten ka of corn.
271. If any one hire oxen, cart and driver, he shall pay one hundred and eighty ka of corn per day.
272. If any one hire a cart alone, he shall pay forty ka of corn per day.
273. If any one hire a day laborer, he shall pay him from the New Year until the fifth month (April to August, when days are long and the work hard) six gerahs in money per day; from the sixth month to the end of the year he shall give him five gerahs per day.
274. If any one hire a skilled artizan, he shall pay as wages of the ... five gerahs, as wages of the potter five gerahs, of a tailor five gerahs, of ... gerahs, ... of a ropemaker four gerahs, of ... gerahs, of a mason ... gerahs per day.
275. If any one hire a ferryboat, he shall pay three gerahs in money per day.
276. If he hire a freight-boat, he shall pay two and one-half gerahs per day.
277. If any one hire a ship of sixty gur, he shall pay one-sixth of a shekel in money as its hire per day.
278. If any one buy a male or female slave, and before a month has elapsed the benu-disease be developed, he shall return the slave to the seller, and receive the money which he had paid.
279. If any one by a male or female slave, and a third party claim it, the seller is liable for the claim.
280. If while in a foreign country a man buy a male or female slave belonging to another of his own country; if when he return home the owner of the male or female slave recognize it:

if the male or female slave be a native of the country, he shall give them back without any money.

281. If they are from another country, the buyer shall declare the amount of money paid therefor to the merchant, and keep the male or female slave.

282. If a slave say to his master: "You are not my master," if they convict him his master shall cut off his ear.

### **The Epilogue**

Laws of justice which Hammurabi, the wise king, established. A righteous law, and pious statute did he teach the land. Hammurabi, the protecting king am I. I have not withdrawn myself from the men, whom Bel gave to me, the rule over whom Marduk gave to me, I was not negligent, but I made them a peaceful abiding-place. I expounded all great difficulties, I made the light shine upon them. With the mighty weapons which Zamama and Ishtar entrusted to me, with the keen vision with which Ea endowed me, with the wisdom that Marduk gave me, I have uprooted the enemy above and below (in north and south), subdued the earth, brought prosperity to the land, guaranteed security to the inhabitants in their homes; a disturber was not permitted. The great gods have called me, I am the salvation-bearing shepherd, whose staff is straight, the good shadow that is spread over my city; on my breast I cherish the inhabitants of the land of Sumer and Akkad; in my shelter I have let them repose in peace; in my deep wisdom have I enclosed them. That the strong might not injure the weak, in order to protect the widows and orphans, I have in Babylon the city where Anu and Bel raise high their head, in E-Sagil, the Temple, whose foundations stand firm as heaven and earth, in order to bespeak justice in the land, to settle all disputes, and heal all injuries, set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me, as king of righteousness.

The king who ruleth among the kings of the cities am I. My words are well considered; there is no wisdom like unto mine. By the command of Shamash, the great judge of heaven and earth, let righteousness go forth in the land: by the order of Marduk, my lord, let no destruction befall my monument. In E-Sagil, which I love, let my name be ever repeated; let the oppressed, who has a case at law, come and stand before this my image as king of righteousness; let him read the inscription, and understand my precious words: the inscription will explain his case to him; he will find out what is just, and his heart will be glad, so that he will say:

"Hammurabi is a ruler, who is as a father to his subjects, who holds the words of Marduk in reverence, who has achieved conquest for Marduk over the north and south, who rejoices the heart of Marduk, his lord, who has bestowed benefits for ever and ever on his subjects, and has established order in the land."

When he reads the record, let him pray with full heart to Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady; and then shall the protecting deities and the gods, who frequent E-Sagil, graciously grant the desires daily presented before Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady.

In future time, through all coming generations, let the king, who may be in the land, observe the words of righteousness which I have written on my monument; let him not alter the law of the land which I have given, the edicts which I have enacted; my monument let him not mar. If such a ruler have wisdom, and be able to keep his land in order, he shall observe the words which I have written in this inscription; the rule, statute, and law of the land which I

have given; the decisions which I have made will this inscription show him; let him rule his subjects accordingly, speak justice to them, give right decisions, root out the miscreants and criminals from this land, and grant prosperity to his subjects.

Hammurabi, the king of righteousness, on whom Shamash has conferred right (or law) am I. My words are well considered; my deeds are not equaled; to bring low those that were high; to humble the proud, to expel insolence. If a succeeding ruler considers my words, which I have written in this my inscription, if he do not annul my law, nor corrupt my words, nor change my monument, then may Shamash lengthen that king's reign, as he has that of me, the king of righteousness, that he may reign in righteousness over his subjects. If this ruler do not esteem my words, which I have written in my inscription, if he despise my curses, and fear not the curse of God, if he destroy the law which I have given, corrupt my words, change my monument, efface my name, write his name there, or on account of the curses commission another so to do, that man, whether king or ruler, patesi, or commoner, no matter what he be, may the great God (Anu), the Father of the gods, who has ordered my rule, withdraw from him the glory of royalty, break his scepter, curse his destiny. May Bel, the lord, who fixeth destiny, whose command can not be altered, who has made my kingdom great, order a rebellion which his hand can not control; may he let the wind of the overthrow of his habitation blow, may he ordain the years of his rule in groaning, years of scarcity, years of famine, darkness without light, death with seeing eyes be fated to him; may he (Bel) order with his potent mouth the destruction of his city, the dispersion of his subjects, the cutting off of his rule, the removal of his name and memory from the land. May Belit, the great Mother, whose command is potent in E-Kur (the Babylonian Olympus), the Mistress, who harkens graciously to my petitions, in the seat of judgment and decision (where Bel fixes destiny), turn his affairs evil before Bel, and put the devastation of his land, the destruction of his subjects, the pouring out of his life like water into the mouth of King Bel. May Ea, the great ruler, whose fated decrees come to pass, the thinker of the gods, the omniscient, who maketh long the days of my life, withdraw understanding and wisdom from him, lead him to forgetfulness, shut up his rivers at their sources, and not allow corn or sustenance for man to grow in his land. May Shamash, the great Judge of heaven and earth, who supporteth all means of livelihood, Lord of life-courage, shatter his dominion, annul his law, destroy his way, make vain the march of his troops, send him in his visions forecasts of the uprooting of the foundations of his throne and of the destruction of his land. May the condemnation of Shamash overtake him forthwith; may he be deprived of water above among the living, and his spirit below in the earth. May Sin (the Moon-god), the Lord of Heaven, the divine father, whose crescent gives light among the gods, take away the crown and regal throne from him; may he put upon him heavy guilt, great decay, that nothing may be lower than he. May he destine him as fated, days, months and years of dominion filled with sighing and tears, increase of the burden of dominion, a life that is like unto death. May Adad, the lord of fruitfulness, ruler of heaven and earth, my helper, withhold from him rain from heaven, and the flood of water from the springs, destroying his land by famine and want; may he rage mightily over his city, and make his land into flood-hills (heaps of ruined cities). May Zamama, the great warrior, the first-born son of E-Kur, who goeth at my right hand, shatter his weapons on the field of battle, turn day into night for him, and let his foe triumph over him. May Ishtar, the goddess of fighting and war, who unfetters my weapons, my gracious protecting spirit, who loveth my dominion, curse his kingdom in her angry heart; in her great wrath, change his grace into evil, and shatter his weapons on the place of fighting and war. May she create disorder and sedition for him, strike down his warriors, that the earth may drink their blood, and throw down the piles of corpses of his warriors on the field; may she not grant him a life of mercy, deliver him into the hands of his enemies,

and imprison him in the land of his enemies. May Nergal, the might among the gods, whose contest is irresistible, who grants me victory, in his great might burn up his subjects like a slender reedstalk, cut off his limbs with his mighty weapons, and shatter him like an earthen image. May Nin-tu, the sublime mistress of the lands, the fruitful mother, deny him a son, vouchsafe him no name, give him no successor among men. May Nin-karak, the daughter of Anu, who adjudges grace to me, cause to come upon his members in E-kur high fever, severe wounds, that can not be healed, whose nature the physician does not understand, which he can not treat with dressing, which, like the bite of death, can not be removed, until they have sapped away his life. May he lament the loss of his life-power, and may the great gods of heaven and earth, the Anunaki, altogether inflict a curse and evil upon the confines of the temple, the walls of this E-barra (the Sun temple of Sippara), upon his dominion, his land, his warriors, his subjects, and his troops. May Bel curse him with the potent curses of his mouth that can not be altered, and may they come upon him forthwith.

**Question: What importance does this part after the laws serve? Is it necessary for Hammurabi to include it?**

# Ancient Egyptian Timeline

By Dr John Baines

Years	Periods/Dynasties	Main Events
3100-2950 BCE	Late Dynastic Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earliest known hieroglyphic writing</li> <li>• Foundation of the Egyptian state</li> </ul>
2950-2575 BCE	Early Dynastic Period (1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> centuries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of the capital city of Memphis</li> <li>• Intensive contact with Palestine</li> <li>• The first pyramid is built – the Step Pyramid at Saqqara</li> </ul>
2575-2150 BCE	Old Kingdom (4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Great Pyramids are built at Dahshur and Giza</li> <li>• Pyramids and elite tombs include the first extensive inscriptions</li> </ul>
2125-1975 BCE	1 <sup>st</sup> Intermediate Period (9 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egypt splits into two smaller states, ruled from Memphis in the north and Thebes in the south</li> </ul>
1975-1640 BCE	Middle Kingdom (11 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentuhotep reunites Egypt</li> <li>• Amenemhat I founds a new royal residence near Memphis</li> <li>• Egypt conquers Lower Nubia under Senwosret I and III</li> <li>• Classical period of art and literature</li> </ul>
1630-1520 BCE	2 <sup>nd</sup> Intermediate Period (15 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyksos kings seize power in the north</li> <li>• Theban 17<sup>th</sup> dynasty in the south</li> </ul>
1539-1075 BCE	New Kingdom (18 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egyptian Empire in Near East and Nubia</li> <li>• Elaborate Tombs of the Valley of Kings</li> <li>• Rule of female pharaoh Hatshepsut</li> <li>• Brief reign of Tutankhamun</li> <li>• Ramses II rules for 67 years</li> </ul>
1075-715 BCE	3 <sup>rd</sup> Intermediate Period (21 <sup>st</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disunity and Libyan settlement in Egypt</li> <li>• Nubians conquer Egypt (late 8<sup>th</sup> century)</li> </ul>
715-332 BCE	Late Period (26 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup> Dynasties, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Persian Period)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egypt conquered briefly by Assyrians</li> <li>• Cultural Revival under kings from Sais</li> <li>• Persian conquest of Egypt (525 BCE)</li> <li>• Egypt independent again (404-343 BCE)</li> </ul>
332 BCE-395 ACE	Greco-Roman Period (Macedonians, Ptolemies and Romans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexander the Great occupies Egypt</li> <li>• Alexander's general, Ptolemy, becomes king and founds a dynasty</li> <li>• The Rosetta Stone is carved (196 BCE)</li> <li>• Cleopatra VII reigns (51-30 BCE)</li> <li>• Egypt becomes a province of the Roman Empire (30 BCE)</li> </ul>

## **Overview of Ancient Egypt**

From (<http://ehistory.osu.edu/ancient/egypt/overview.cfm>)

Around 3100 BCE, two kingdoms that had grown up along the Nile River were united when the ruler of Upper Egypt conquered the kingdom in Lower Egypt. Thus began what is now generally accepted as the first of at least 30 Egyptian dynasties. Ancient Egyptian dynasties are grouped into periods of stability referred to as 'kingdoms' and periods of fragmentation and chaos referred to as 'intermediate periods'.

### **The Early Dynastic Period (c. 2925 - c. 2575 BCE)**

The Early Dynastic Period includes the 1st, 2nd and 3rd dynasties. The first king of the 1st dynasty is considered by some experts to be called Menes. Others believe Narmer was the unifier of the two Egyptian kingdoms. Still others consider Menes and Narmer to be the same person.

### **The Old Kingdom (c. 2600 - c. 2150 BCE)**

The Old Kingdom lasted approximately 500 years and is sometimes called the "Age of Pyramids." Great achievements in art and architecture were realized including the completion of 20 major pyramids. During this time, the kings of Egypt were totalitarian dictators owning all land, minerals and water. The kings shared these resources with the people in return for taxes and obedience.

The strong centralized government of the king was broken down into provinces with appointed officials. Gradually these positions became hereditary and a class of nobles was created. The Old Kingdom ended in confusion as the centralized government lost power to provincial nobles who began to struggle against one another.

### **First Intermediate Period (c. 2150 - 1938 BCE)**

The chaotic period between the Old and New Kingdom are known as the First Intermediate Period. It was a time of great upheaval in political, religious and cultural structures. The 9th, 10th and 11th dynasties are included in this time period.

### **The Middle Kingdom (1938 - c. 1600 BCE)**

After a century and a half of conflict, Theban nobles reunited Egypt. During this time period the king had less absolute power and more emphasis was placed on concepts of justice. Unlike the Old Kingdom the Egyptian religion began to accept the idea that the afterlife was for the common people as well as the king. The Middle Kingdom includes the 12th and 13th dynasties.

During this period, under King Amenemhet III (c. 1770 BCE), Egypt began to greatly expand its trade and developed colonies below the third cataract.

### **The Second Intermediate Period (c. 1600 - c. 1540 BCE)**

A series of weak rulers causes a new breakdown in centralized authority during the Second Intermediate Period (dynasties 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th.) The Hyksos from Asia took advantage of Egypt's internal conflicts. The Hyksos army used horses, chariots, body armor and new types of bronze weapons - none of which the Egyptians had. The Hyksos advanced military weaponry and the internal turmoil in Egypt allowed the Hyksos to conquer and rule Egypt for 160 years.



### **The Early New Kingdom (c. 1540 - 1300 BCE)**

The Egyptians learn to use the same weapons and warfare as their captors and eventually drive the Hyksos from the kingdom. Queen Hatshepsut again increases trade and begins building new temples and palaces. She rules jointly with her husband King Thutmose III for a while and there is relative peace in the land. When King Thutmose III becomes sole ruler he begins a series of military campaigns. Thutmose conquers land as far as the fourth cataract takes Egypt's borders to its largest size.

### **The Armana Revolution (1370 - 1300 BCE)**

When Amenhotep IV becomes king he tries to drastically change Egypt's religion from a polytheistic worship of many gods to a monotheistic worship of Aton the Sun. He outlaws all other religions and forces the people to worship him as a God-king. For the first time, Egyptians begin to call their king, Pharaoh. During Amenhotep's reign the outlying control of Egypt's far borders is lost and the Hittites take over portions of Asia. When Tutankhamen becomes king at an early age, the priests force him to return the country to the worship of many gods.

### **The Later New Kingdom (1300 - 1090 BCE)**

The Later New Kingdom is also known as "Egypt's Golden Age". Egypt regains its lands in Asia and although Ramses II begins with a very strong reign by 1150 the country again begins to lose control of its outlying areas. This time it isn't bronze weapons but new iron weapons that help others to encroach on Egypt's borders.

### **Period of Invasions**

Sheshonq I of Libya seizes Egypt's throne in 945 BC. During this time period the Sudanese, Assyrians, Persians and then the Greeks take turns ruling Egypt. Alexander the Great's conquest leaves a new dynasty the Ptolemies in control until finally Rome takes Egypt and the death of Cleopatra ends the reign of the Pharaohs.

## The Precepts of Ptah-Hotep, c. 2200 BCE

### QUESTIONS:

*What seems to be the purpose of these precepts?*

*Are these valuable lessons?*

*What is revealed about Egyptian society in this document?*

### **Precepts of the prefect, the lord Ptah-hotep, under the Majesty of the King of the South and North, Assa, living eternally forever.**

The prefect, the feudal lord Ptah-hotep, says: O Ptah with the two crocodiles, my lord, the progress of age changes into senility. Decay falls upon man and decline takes the place of youth. A vexation weighs upon him every day; sight fails, the ear becomes deaf; his strength dissolves without ceasing. The mouth is silent, speech fails him; the mind decays, remembering not the day before. The whole body suffers. That which is good becomes evil; taste completely disappears. Old age makes a man altogether miserable; the nose is stopped up, breathing no more from exhaustion. Standing or sitting there is here a condition of . . . Who will cause me to have authority to speak, that I may declare to him the words of those who have heard the counsels of former days? And the counsels heard of the gods, who will give me authority to declare them? Cause that it be so and that evil be removed from those that are enlightened; send the double . . . The majesty of this god says: Instruct him in the sayings of former days. It is this which constitutes the merit of the children of the great. All that which makes the soul equal penetrates him who hears it, and that which it says produces no satiety.

### **QUESTION: Who is Ptah-hotep? Why is he writing this?**

Beginning of the arrangement of the good sayings, spoken by the noble lord, the divine father, beloved of Ptah, the son of the king, the first-born of his race, the prefect and feudal lord Ptah-hotep, so as to instruct the ignorant in the knowledge of the arguments of the good sayings. It is profitable for him who hears them, it is a loss to him who shall transgress them. He says to his son:

Be not arrogant because of that which you know; deal with the ignorant as with the learned; for the barriers of art are not closed, no artist being in possession of the perfection to which he should aspire. But good words are more difficult to find than the emerald, for it is by slaves that that is discovered among the rocks of pegmatite.

If you find a disputant while he is hot, and if he is superior to you in ability, lower the hands, bend the back, do not get into a passion with him. As he will not let you destroy his words, it is utterly wrong to interrupt him; that proclaims that you are incapable of keeping yourself calm, when you are contradicted. If then you have to do with a disputant while he is hot, imitate one who does not stir. You have the advantage over him if you keep silence when he is uttering evil words. "The better of the two is he who is impassive," say the bystanders, and you are right in the opinion of the great.

If you find a disputant while he is hot, do not despise him because you are not of the same opinion. Be not angry against him when he is wrong; away with such a thing. He fights against himself; require him not further to flatter your feelings. Do not amuse yourself with the spectacle which you have before you; it is odious, it is mean, it is the part of a despicable soul so to do. As soon as you let yourself be moved by your feelings, combat this desire as a thing that is reproved by the great.

**QUESTION: Why is avoiding public disputes so important in your opinion?**

If you have, as leader, to decide on the conduct of a great number of men, seek the most perfect manner of doing so that your own conduct may be without reproach. Justice is great, invariable, and assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Ptah. To throw obstacles in the way of the laws is to open the way before violence. Shall that which is below gain the upper hand, if the unjust does not attain to the place of justice? Even he who says: I take for myself, of my own free-will; but says not: I take by virtue of my authority. The limitations of justice are invariable; such is the instruction which every man receives from his father.

Inspire not men with fear, else Ptah will fight against you in the same manner. If any one asserts that he lives by such means, Ptah will take away the bread from his mouth; if any one asserts that he enriches himself thereby, Ptah says: I may take those riches to myself. If any one asserts that he beats others, Ptah will end by reducing him to impotence. Let no one inspire men with fear; this is the will of Ptah. Let one provide sustenance for them in the lap of peace; it will then be that they will freely give what has been torn from them by terror.

If you are among the persons seated at meat in the house of a greater man than yourself, take that which he gives you, bowing to the ground. Regard that which is placed before you, but point not at it; regard it not frequently; he is a blameworthy person who departs from this rule. Speak not to the great man more than he requires, for one knows not what may be displeasing to him. Speak when he invites you and your worth will be pleasing. As for the great man who has plenty of means of existence, his conduct is as he himself wishes. He does that which pleases him; if he desires to repose, he realizes his intention. The great man stretching forth his hand does that to which other men do not attain. But as the means of existence are under the will of Ptah, one can not rebel against it.

If you are one of those who bring the messages of one great man to another, conform yourself exactly to that wherewith he has charged you; perform for him the commission as he has enjoined you. Beware of altering in speaking the offensive words which one great person addresses to another; he who perverts the trustfulness of his way, in order to repeat only what produces pleasure in the words of every man, great or small, is a detestable person.

If you are a farmer, gather the crops in the field which the great Ptah has given you, do not boast in the house of your neighbors; it is better to make oneself dreaded by one's deeds. As for him who, master of his own way of acting, being all-powerful, seizes the goods of others

like a crocodile in the midst even of watchment, his children are an object of malediction, of scorn, and of hatred on account of it, while his father is grievously distressed, and as for the mother who has borne him, happy is another rather than herself. But a man becomes a god when he is chief of a tribe which has confidence in following him.

If you abase yourself in obeying a superior, your conduct is entirely good before Ptah. Knowing who you ought to obey and who you ought to command, do not lift up your heart against him. As you know that in him is authority, be respectful toward him as belonging to him. Wealth comes only at Ptah's own good-will, and his caprice only is the law; as for him who . . . Ptah, who has created his superiority, turns himself from him and he is overthrown.

Be active during the time of your existence, do no more than is commanded. Do not spoil the time of your activity; he is a blameworthy person who makes a bad use of his moments. Do not lose the daily opportunity of increasing that which your house possesses. Activity produces riches, and riches do not endure when it slackens.

If you are a wise man, bring up a son who shall be pleasing to Ptah. If he conforms his conduct to your way and occupies himself with your affairs as is right, do to him all the good you can; he is your son, a person attached to you whom your own self has begotten. Separate not your heart from him.... But if he conducts himself ill and transgresses your wish, if he rejects all counsel, if his mouth goes according to the evil word, strike him on the mouth in return. Give orders without hesitation to those who do wrong, to him whose temper is turbulent; and he will not deviate from the straight path, and there will be no obstacle to interrupt the way.

If you desire that your conduct should be good and preserved from all evil, keep yourself from every attack of bad humor. It is a fatal malady which leads to discord, and there is no longer any existence for him who gives way to it. For it introduces discord between fathers and mothers, as well as between brothers and sisters; it causes the wife and the husband to hate each other; it contains all kinds of wickedness, it embodies all kinds of wrong. When a man has established his just equilibrium and walks in this path, there where he makes his dwelling, there is no room for bad humor.

Be not of an irritable temper as regards that which happens at your side; grumble not over your own affairs. Be not of an irritable temper in regard to your neighbors; better is a compliment to that which displeases than rudeness. It is wrong to get into a passion with one's neighbors, to be no longer master of one's words. When there is only a little irritation, one creates for oneself an affliction for the time when one will again be cool.

If you are wise, look after your house; love your wife without alloy. Fill her stomach, clothe her back; these are the cares to be bestowed on her person. Caress her, fulfil her desires during the time of her existence; it is a kindness which does honor to its possessor. Be not brutal; tact will influence her better than violence; her . . . behold to what she aspires, at what she aims, what she regards. It is that which fixes her in your house; if you repel her, it is an abyss. Open your arms for her, respond to her arms; call her, display to her your love.

Treat your dependents well, in so far as it belongs to you to do so; and it belongs to those whom Ptah has favored. If any one fails in treating his dependents well it is said: "He is a person . . ." As we do not know the events which may happen tomorrow, he is a wise person

by whom one is well treated. When there comes the necessity of showing zeal, it will then be the dependents themselves who say: "Come on, come on," if good treatment has not quitted the place; if it has quitted it, the dependents are defaulters.

Do not repeat any extravagance of language; do not listen to it; it is a thing which has escaped from a hasty mouth. If it is repeated, look, without hearing it, toward the earth; say nothing in regard to it. Cause him who speaks to you to know what is just, even him who provokes to injustice; cause that which is just to be done, cause it to triumph. As for that which is hateful according to the law, condemn it by unveiling it.

If you are a wise man, sitting in the council of your lord, direct your thought toward that which is wise. Be silent rather than scatter your words. When you speak, know that which can be brought against you. To speak in the council is an art, and speech is criticized more than any other labor; it is contradiction which puts it to the proof.

If you are powerful, respect knowledge and calmness of language. Command only to direct; to be absolute is to run into evil. Let not your heart be haughty, neither let it be mean. Do not let your orders remain unsaid and cause your answers to penetrate; but speak without heat, assume a serious countenance. As for the vivacity of an ardent heart, temper it; the gentle man penetrates all obstacles. He who agitates himself all the day long has not a good moment; and he who amuses himself all the day long keeps not his fortune. Aim at fulness like pilots; once one is seated another works, and seeks to obey one's orders.

If you are annoyed at a thing, if you are tormented by someone who is acting within his right, get out of his sight, and remember him no more when he has ceased to address you.

If you have become great after having been little, if you have become rich after having been poor, when you are at the head of the city, know how not to take advantage of the fact that you have reached the first rank, harden not your heart because of your elevation; you are become only the administrator, the prefect, of the provisions which belong to Ptah. Put not behind you the neighbor who is like you; be unto him as a companion.

Bend your back before your superior. You are attached to the palace of the king; your house is established in its fortune, and your profits are as is fitting. Yet a man is annoyed at having an authority above himself, and passes the period of life in being vexed thereat. Although that hurts not your . . . Do not plunder the house of your neighbors, seize not by force the goods which are beside you. Exclaim not then against that which you hear, and do not feel humiliated. It is necessary to reflect when one is hindered by it that the pressure of authority is felt also by one's neighbor.

**QUESTION: How important is social standing in Egypt at this time? How is this reflected in the text?**

Do not make . . . you know that there are obstacles to the water which comes to its hinder part, and that there is no trickling of that which is in its bosom. Let it not . . . after having corrupted his heart.

If you aim at polished manners, call not him whom you accost. Converse with him especially in such a way as not to annoy him. Enter on a discussion with him only after having left him time to saturate his mind with the subject of the conversation. If he lets his ignorance display itself, and if he gives you all opportunity to disgrace him, treat him with courtesy rather; proceed not to drive him into a corner; do not . . . the word to him; answer not in a crushing manner; crush him not; worry him not; in order that in his turn he may not return to the subject, but depart to the profit of your conversation.

Let your countenance be cheerful during the time of your existence. When we see one departing from the storehouse who has entered in order to bring his share of provision, with his face contracted, it shows that his stomach is empty and that authority is offensive to him. Let not that happen to you; it is . . .

If you take a wife, do not . . . Let her be more contented than any of her fellow-citizens. She will be attached to you doubly, if her chain is pleasant. Do not repel her; grant that which pleases her; it is to her contentment that she appreciates your work.

If you hear those things which I have said to you, your wisdom will be fully advanced. Although they are the means which are suitable for arriving at the maat, and it is that which makes them precious, their memory would recede from the mouth of men. But thanks to the beauty of their arrangement in rhythm all their words will now be carried without alteration over this earth eternally. That will create a canvass to be embellished, whereof the great will speak, in order to instruct men in its sayings. After having listened to them the pupil will become a master, even he who shall have properly listened to the sayings because he shall have heard them. Let him win success by placing himself in the first rank; that is for him a position perfect and durable, and he has nothing further to desire forever. By knowledge his path is assured, and he is made happy by it on the earth. The wise man is satiated by knowledge; he is a great man through his own merits. His tongue is in accord with his mind; just are his lips when he speaks, his eyes when he gazes, his ears when he hears. The advantage of his son is to do that which is just without deceiving himself.

To attend therefore profits the son of him who has attended. To attend is the result of the fact that one has attended. A teachable auditor is formed, because I have attended. Good when he has attended, good when he speaks, he who has attended has profited, and it is profitable to attend to him who has attended. To attend is worth more than anything else, for it produces love, the good thing that is twice good. The son who accepts the instruction of his father will grow old on that account. What Ptah loves is that one should attend; if one attends not, it is abhorrent to Ptah. The heart makes itself its own master when it attends and when it does not attend; but if it attends, then his heart is a beneficent master to a man. In attending to instruction, a man loves what he attends to, and to do that which is prescribed is pleasant. When a son attends to his father, it is a twofold joy for both; when wise things are prescribed to him, the son is gentle toward his master. Attending to him who has attended when such things have been prescribed to him, he engraves upon his heart that which is approved by his father; and the recollection of it is preserved in the mouth of the living who exist upon this earth.

When a son receives the instruction of his father there is no error in all his plans. Train your son to be a teachable man whose wisdom is agreeable to the great. Let him direct his mouth according to that which has been said to him; in the docility of a son is discovered his wisdom. His conduct is perfect while error carries away the unteachable. Tomorrow knowledge will support him, while the ignorant will be destroyed.

As for the man without experience who listens not, he effects nothing whatsoever. He sees knowledge in ignorance, profit in loss; he commits all kinds of error, always accordingly choosing the contrary of what is praiseworthy. He lives on that which is mortal, in this fashion. His food is evil words, whereat he is filled with astonishment. That which the great know to be mortal he lives upon every day, flying from that which would be profitable to him, because of the multitude of errors which present themselves before him every day.

Do that which your master bids you. Twice good is the precept of his father, from whom he has issued, from his flesh. What he tells us, let it be fixed in our heart; to satisfy him greatly let us do for him more than he has prescribed. Verily a good son is one of the gifts of Ptah, a son who does even better than he has been told to do. For his master he does what is satisfactory, putting himself with all his heart on the part of right. So I shall bring it about that your body shall be healthful, that the Pharaoh shall be satisfied with you in all circumstances and that you shall obtain years of life without default. It has caused me on earth to obtain one hundred and ten years of life, along with the gift of the favor of the Pharaoh among the first of those whom their works have ennobled, satisfying the Pharaoh in a place of dignity.

It is finished, from its beginning to its end, according to that which is found in writing.

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**Source:**

From: Charles F. Horne, *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East* (New York: Parke, Austin, & Lipscomb, 1917), Vol. II: Egypt, pp. 62-78.

Scanned by: J. S. Arkenberg, Dept. of History, Cal. State Fullerton

## The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant, c. 1800 BCE

### QUESTIONS:

*In 3-4 sentences, write a summary of the story indicating the key components and themes.*

*What do we learn about the Egyptian view of commoners in this tale?*

*What notion of justice is at the heart of this story?*

Written by stylus on sheaves of delicate and crumbly papyrus dating from the Middle Kingdom of Egypt (ca. 2040 – 1674 B.C.) and preserved by the dry, hot climate of Egypt, is an ancient tale by an anonymous Egyptian author.<sup>1</sup> The tale of 430 lines of hieratic text—stylized hieroglyphics—is a simple and yet surprisingly rich story about justice. It has been named *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*. At the heart of the *Tale* is a series of nine pleas by a wronged peasant to an Egyptian judge to do justice (*ma'at*). The *Tale* contains interesting analogies for justice—justice is like sailing a ship, going on a hunt, akin to the judgment of souls, or participating in the harmony of the cosmos. The *Tale* addresses themes such as the relationship between power, vengeance, and punishment and justice, and the relationship between justice and reward (reciprocity) in this world and in the next. It also addresses a problem chronic as long as we go about this world under Adam's shadow—the delay and the corruption of justice and law. The *Tale* reverberates with themes related to justice that are never quite grasped or implemented by the generations of men, and must constantly be re-thought, re-worked, and re-applied—*curia semper reformanda*. The Egyptian peasant's pleas argued four thousand years ago, and the images, symbols, and metaphors of justice he adopts, thus remain as vivid and thought-provoking as when first written down by an Egyptian scribe.

### ***Ma'at: The Egyptian Concept of Justice***

The Egyptian notion of justice (*ma'at*) was rich, broad, and multi-dimensional. It makes John Rawls's conception of "justice as fairness" seem one-dimensional, banal, even trite.<sup>4</sup> For the Egyptian, the conception of "justice as *ma'at*" encompassed in an integral way both specific and universal, personal and social, moral and legal, and human and divine connotations of justice. Justice was something that touched and concerned both the ruler and the ruled, the city and the cosmos, the quick and the dead, the present, the past, and the future. It embraced notions of harmony, social solidarity, reciprocity, and retribution. For the Egyptian, justice was what was fitting, orderly, right, and true. Even more, justice was man's participation in the life of the divine order which underlay the cosmos. As the Stela of King Neferhotep put it, to act justly is to be "in the heart of God," for being in the heart of God is *Ma'at*.<sup>5</sup> Justice was personified as the goddess *Ma'at*. It is this rich conception of justice that the peasant invokes when he urges the judge to do justice. And it is this rich conception of justice that allows him to speak so eloquently and in many ways more wisely than our current intellectuals whose vision is often weakened by a lack of peripheral vision that comes from narrow, positivistic theories of law, a myopia that comes from a refusal to grapple with the divine, and an astigmatism that comes from a materialistic, secular philosophy of right. In many ways, the Egyptian peasant was wiser than the Harvard egghead. (from <http://www.harris-greenwell.com/HGS/TheTaleOfTheEloquentPeasant>)

**QUESTION: Was this idea of *ma'at* evident in Ptah-hotep?**



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*[Barton Introduction] A remarkable appreciation of the rights of the common people is revealed in this story, which has come down to us in copie made before 1800 B.C. The principle part of the story is given below.*

There was a man, Hunanup by name, a peasant of Sechet-hemat, and he had a wife,.....by name. Then said this peasant to his wife: "Behold, I am going down to Egypt to bring back bread for my children. Go in and measure the grain that we still have in our storehouse,.....bushel." Then he measured for her eight bushels of grain. Then this peasant said to his wife: "Behold, two bushels of grain shall be left for bread for you and the children. But make for me the six bushels into bread and beer for each of the days that I shall be on the road." Then this peasant went down to Egypt after he had loaded his asses with all the good produce of Sechet-hemat.

This peasant set out and journeyed southward to Ehnas. He came to a point opposite Per-fefi, north of Medenit, and found there a man standing on the bank, Dehuti-necht by name, who was the son of a man named Iseri, who was one of the serfs of the chief steward, Meruitensi.

Then said this Dehuti-necht, when he saw the asses of this peasant which appealed to his covetousness: "Oh that some good god would help me to rob this peasant of his goods!"

The house of Dehuti-necht stood close to the side of the path, which was narrow, not wide. It was about the width of a .....-cloth, and upon one side of it was the water and upon the other side was growing grain. Then said Dehuti-necht to his servant: "Hasten and bring me a shawl from the house!" And it was brought at once. Then he spread this shawl upon the middle of the road, and it extended, one edge to the water, and the other to the grain.

The peasant came along the path which was the common highway. Then said Dehuti-necht: "Look out, peasant, do not trample on my clothes!" The peasant answered: "I will do as you wish; I will go in the right way!" As he was turning to the upper side, Dehuti-necht said: "Does my grain serve you as a road?" Then said the peasant: "I am going in the right way. The bank is steep and the path lies near the grain and you have stopped up the road ahead with your clothes. Will you, then, not let me go by?" Upon that one of the asses took a mouthful of grain. Then said Dehuti-necht: "See, I Will take away your ass because it has eaten my grain."

Then the peasant said: "I am going in the right way. As one side was made mpassable I have led my ass along the other, and will you seize it because it has taken a mouthful of grain? But I know the lord of this property; it belongs to the chief steward, Meruitensi. It is he who punishes every robber in this whole land. Shall I, then, be robbed in his domain?"

Then said Dehuti-necht: "Is it not a proverb which the people employ: >The name of the poor is only known on account of his lord?' It is I who speak to you, but the chief steward of whom you think." Then he took a rod from a green tamarisk and beat all his limbs with it, and seized his asses and drove them into his compound.

Thereupon the peasant wept loudly on account of the pain of what had been done to him. Dehuti-necht said to him: "Don't cry so loud, peasant, or you shall go to the city of the dead." The peasant said: "You beat me and steal my goods, and will you also take the wail away from my mouth? O Silence-maker! Give me my goods again! May I never cease to cry out, if you fear!"

The peasant consumed four days, during which he besought Dehuti-necht, but he did not grant him his rights. Then this peasant went to the south, to Ehnas to implore the chief steward, Meruitensi. He met him as he was coming out of the canal-door of his compound to embark in his boat. Thereupon the peasant said: "Oh let me lay before you this affair. Permit one of your trusted servants to come to me, that I may send him to you concerning it." Then the steward Meruitensi, sent one of his servants to him, and he sent back by him an account of the whole affair. Then the chief steward, Meruitensi, laid the case of Dehuti-necht before his attendant officials, and they said to him: "Lord, it is presumably a case of one of your peasants who has gone against another peasant near him. Behold, it is customary with peasants to so conduct themselves toward others who are near them. Shall we beat Dehuti-necht for a little natron and a little salt? Command him to restore it and he will restore it."

The chief steward, Meruitensi, remained silent---he answered neither the officials nor the peasant. The peasant then came to entreat the chief steward Meruitensi, for the first time, and said: "Chief steward, my lord, you are greatest of the great, you are guide of all that which is not and which is. When you embark on the sea of truth, that you may go sailing upon it, then shall not the.....strip away your sail, then your ship shall not remain fast, then shall no misfortune happen to your mast then shall your spars not be broken, then shall you not be stranded---if you run fast aground, the waves shall not break upon you, then you shall not taste the impurities of the river, then you shall not behold the face of fear, the shy fish shall come to you, and you shall capture the fat birds. For you are the father of the orphan, the husband of the widow, the brother of the desolate, the garment of the motherless. Let me place your name in this land higher than all good laws: you guide without avarice, you great one free from meanness, who destroys deceit, who creates truthfulness. Throw the evil to the ground. I will speak hear me. Do justice, O you praised one, whom the praised ones praise. Remove my oppression: behold, I have a heavy weight to carry; behold, I am troubled of soul; examine me, I am in sorrow."

*[Barton: Meruitensi is so pleased with the eloquence of the peasant that he passed him on to another officer and he to still another until he came before the king. Altogether the peasant made nine addresses. His eighth address follows.]*

This peasant came to implore him for the eighth time, and said: "Chief steward, my lord, man falls on account of..... Greed is absent from a good merchant. His good commerce is..... Your heart is greedy, it does not become you. You despoil: this is not praiseworthy for you.....Your daily rations are in your house; your body is well filled. The officers, who are set as a protection against injustice,---a curse to the shameless are these officers, who are set as a bulwark against lies. Fear of you has not deterred me from supplicating you; if you think so, you have not known my heart. The Silent one, who turns to report to you his difficulties, is not afraid to present them to you. Your real estate is in the country, your bread is on your estate, your food is in the storehouse. Your officials give to you and you take it. Are you, then, not a robber? They plow for you..... for you to the plots of arable land. Do the truth for the sake of the Lord of Truth.You reed of a scribe, you roll of a book,

you palette, you god Thoth, you ought to keep yourself far removed from injustice. You virtuous one, you should be virtuous, you virtuous one, you should be really virtuous. Further, truth is true to eternity. She goes with those who perform her to the region of the dead. He will be laid in the coffin and committed to the earth; ---his name will not perish from the earth, but men will remember him on account of his property: so runs the right interpretation of the divine word.

"Does it then happen that the scales stand aslant? Or is it thinkable that the scales incline to one side? Behold, if I come not, if another comes, then you host opportunity to speak as one who answers, as one who addresses the silent, as one who responds to him who has not spoken to you. You have not been.....; You have not been sick. You have not fled, you have not departed. But you have not yet granted me any reply to this beautiful word which comes from the mouth of the sun-god himself: >Speak the truth; do the truth: for it is great, it is mighty, it is everlasting. It will obtain for you merit, and will lead you to veneration.' For does the scale stand aslant? It is their scale-pans that bear the objects, and in just scales there is no..... wanting."

*[Barton: After a ninth speech on the part of the peasant, the tale concludes as follows.]*

Then the chief steward, Meruitensi, sent two servants to bring him back. Thereupon the peasant feared that he would suffer thirst, as a punishment imposed upon him for what he had said. Then the peasant said.....

Then said the chief steward, Meruitensi: "Fear not, peasant! See, you shall remain with me."

Then said the peasant: "I live because I eat of your bread and drink your beer forever."

Then said the chief steward, Meruitensi: "Come out here....." Then he caused them to bring, written on a new roll, all the addresses of these days. The chief steward sent them to his majesty, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Neb-kau-re, the blessed, and they were more agreeable to the heart of his majesty than all that was in his land. His majesty said, "Pass sentence yourself my beloved son!" Then the chief steward, Meruitensi, caused two servants to go and bring a list of the household of Dehuti-necht from the government office, and his possessions were six persons, with a selection from his....., from his barley, from his spelt, from his asses, from his swine, from his.....

*[Barton: From this point on only a few words of the tale can be made out, but it appears from these that the goods selected from the estate of Dehuti-necht were given to the peasant and he was sent home rejoicing.]*

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**Source:**

From: George A. Barton, *Archaeology and The Bible*, 3rd Ed., (Philadelphia: American Sunday School, 1920), pp. 418-421.

# Akhenaten and the Amarna Period

*By Dr Kate Spence*

([http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/akhenaten\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/akhenaten_01.shtml))

## The appeal of the Amarna period

Some people are drawn by interest in Akhenaten himself or his religion, others by a fascination with the unusual art which appeals strongly to the tastes of modern viewers and provides a sense of immediacy rarely felt with traditional Egyptian representation. The radical changes Akhenaten made have led to his characterisation as the 'first individual in human history' and this in turn has led to endless speculation about his background and motivation; he is cast as hero or villain according to the viewpoint of the commentator.

Akhenaten came to the throne of Egypt around 1353 BC. The reign of his father, Amenhotep III, had been long and prosperous with international diplomacy largely replacing the relentless military campaigning of his predecessors. The reign culminated in a series of magnificent jubilee pageants celebrated in Thebes (modern Luxor), the religious capital of Egypt at the time and home to the state god Amun-Re. The new king was crowned as Amenhotep IV (meaning 'Amun is content') and temple construction and decoration projects began immediately in the name of the new king. The earliest work of his reign is stylistically similar to the art of his predecessors, but within a year or two he was building temples to the Aten or divinised sun-disk at Karnak in a very different artistic style and had changed his name to Akhenaten in honour of this god.

**The radical changes Akhenaten made have led to his characterisation as the 'first individual in human history ...**

Akhenaten's 'great king's wife' was Nefertiti and they had six daughters. There were also other wives, including the enigmatic Kiya who may have been the mother of Tutankhamun. Royal women play an unusually prominent role in the art of the period and this is particularly true of Nefertiti who is frequently depicted alongside her husband. Nefertiti disappears from the archaeological record around year 12 and some have argued that she reappears as the enigmatic co-regent Smenkhkare towards the end of Akhenaten's reign.

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## Religious reforms

The Egyptians had traditionally worshipped a whole pantheon of gods who were represented in human or animal form or as animal-headed humans. Some gods were specific to particular towns or places; others had broader appeal. From early periods solar gods such as Re had played an important role in Egyptian state religion because the distant but universal power of the sun fitted well with prevailing ideas of the supreme power of the king both within Egypt and beyond its borders.

## **Akhenaten raised the Aten to the position of 'sole god'...**

In the New Kingdom, solar gods again became prominent, among them the Aten, the visible sun-disk which can be seen traversing the sky each day. Akhenaten raised the Aten to the position of 'sole god', represented as a disk with rays of light terminating in hands which reach out to the royal family, sometimes offering the hieroglyphic sign for life. Akhenaten and his family are frequently shown worshipping the Aten or simply indulging in everyday activities beneath the disk. Everywhere the close ties between the king and god are stressed through art and text. The king forms the link between the god and ordinary people whose supposed focus of worship seems to have been Akhenaten and the royal family rather than the Aten itself.



Akhenaten's religion is probably not strictly speaking monotheistic, although only the Aten is actually worshipped and provided with temples. Other gods still existed and are mentioned in inscriptions although these tend to be other solar gods or personifications of abstract concepts; even the names of the Aten, which are written in cartouches like king's names, consist of a theological statement describing the Aten in terms of other gods. The majority of traditional gods were not tolerated, however, and teams of workmen were sent around the temples of Egypt where they chiselled out the names and images of these gods wherever they occurred.

A number of hymns to the Aten were composed during Akhenaten's reign and these provide a glimpse of what James Allen has described as the 'natural philosophy' of Akhenaten's religion. The wonders of the natural world are described to extol the universal power of the sun; all creatures rejoice when the sun rises and nasty things come out at night when the sun is not present.

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## **Horizon of the Aten**

### **In the cliffs around the boundaries of the city the king left a series of monumental inscriptions...**

Akhenaten decided that the worship of the Aten required a location uncontaminated by the cults of traditional gods and to this end chose a site in Middle Egypt for a new capital city which he called Akhetaten, 'Horizon of the Aten'. It is a desert site surrounded on three sides by cliffs and to the west by the Nile and is known today as el-Amarna. In the cliffs around the boundaries of the city the king left a series of monumental inscriptions in which he outlined his reasons for the move and his architectural intentions for the city in the form of lists of buildings.

To the east of the city is a valley leading into the desert in which the king began excavating tombs for the royal family. On the plain near the river massive temples to the Aten were constructed: these

were open to the sky and the rays of the sun and were probably influenced by the design of much earlier solar temples dedicated to the cult of Re. Other sites of religious importance are located on the edges of the desert plain. There were also at least four palaces in the city which vary considerably in form, plus all the administrative facilities, storage and workshops necessary to support the royal family, court and the temple cults.



Akhetaten is sometimes described as if it were some sort of broad Utopian project. However, while temple and palace areas of the city are clearly planned, there is actually no evidence that Akhenaten showed any interest in the living arrangements of his people and residential areas suggest organic urban development. The wealthy seem to have enclosed an area of land with a high wall and built their spacious houses and

ancillary structures within, while the houses and shacks of those that followed the court are crammed in between these luxurious walled estates. The city was probably less dense than other urban centres of the day but this was only because it was inhabited for such a short time and processes of infilling were in their infancy. Amarna is one of the few sites where we have a significant amount of archaeological information about how people actually lived in ancient Egypt.

## The Aftermath

Akhenaten died in his seventeenth year on the throne and his reforms did not survive for long in his absence. His co-regent Smenkhkare, about whom we know virtually nothing, appears not to have remained in power for long after Akhenaten's death. The throne passed to a child, Tutankhamun (originally Tutankhaten) who was probably the son of Akhenaten and Kiya. The regents administering the country on behalf of the child soon abandoned the city of Akhetaten and the worship of the Aten and returned to Egypt's traditional gods and religious centres. The temples and cults of the gods were restored and people shut up their houses and returned to the old capitals at Thebes and Memphis.

### **His image and names were removed from monuments.**

Over time, the process of restoration of traditional cults turned to whole-scale obliteration of all things associated with Akhenaten. His image and names were removed from monuments. His temples were dismantled and the stone reused in the foundations of other more orthodox royal building projects. The city of Akhetaten gradually crumbled back into the desert. His name and those of his immediate successors were omitted from official king-lists so that they remained virtually unknown until the archaeological discoveries at Akhetaten and in the tomb of Tutankhamun made these kings amongst the most famous of all rulers of ancient Egypt.

## Hymn to Aten

### QUESTIONS:

**Who was Amenhotep IV and why is he so significant to Egyptian history?**

**Is this hymn similar in any way to those of modern monotheistic religions?**

1. *Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven, O' living Aten, thou who wast the first to live. When thou hast risen on the eastern horizon, Thou hast filled every land with thy beauty.*

5. *Thou art fair, great, dazzling, high above every land;*

*Thy rays encompass the lands to the very limit of all thou hast made. Being Re, thou dost reach to their limit And curb them [for] thy beloved son; Though thou art distant, they rays arc upon the earth;*

10. *Thou art in their faces, yet thy movements are unknown. When thou dost set on the western horizon, The earth is in darkness, resembling death. Men sleep in the bed-chamber with their heads covered, Nor does one eye behold the other.*

15. *Were all their goods stolen which are beneath their heads They would not be aware of it. Every lion has come forth from his den, All the snakes bite. Darkness prevails, and the earth is in silence,*

20. *Since he who made them is resting in his horizon, At daybreak, when thou dost rise on the horizon, Dost shine as Aten by day, Thou dost dispel the darkness And shed thy rays.*

25. *The two Lands arc in a festive mood, Awake, and standing on (their) feet, For thou hast raised them up; They cleanse their bodies and take (their) garments; Their arms are (lifted) in adoration at thine appearing;*

30. *The whole land performs its labor. All beasts are satisfied with their pasture; Trees and plants arc verdant. The birds which fly from their nests, their wings are (spread) in adoration to thy soul; All flocks skip with(their)feet; All that fly up and alight Live when thou has risen [for] them. Ships sail upstream and downstream alike, For every route is open at thine appearing. The fish in the river leap before thee,*

40. *For thy rays are in the midst of the sea Thou creator of issue in woman, who makest semen into mankind, And dost sustain the son in mother's womb, Who dost soothe him with that which stills his tears, Thou nurse in the very womb, giving breath to sustain all thou dost make!*

45. *When he issues from the womb to breathe on the day of his birth, Thou dost open his mouth completely and supply his needs. When the chick in the egg cheeps inside the shell, Thou givest it breath within it to sustain it. Thou hast set it its appointed time in the egg to break it,*

50. *That it may emerge from the egg to cheep at its appointed time; That it may walk with its feet when it emerges from it. How manifold is that which thou hast made, hidden from view! Thou sole god, there is no other like thee! Thou didst create the earth according to thy will, being alone:*

55. *Mankind, cattle, all flocks, Everything on earth which walks with (its) feet, And what are on high, flying with their wings. The foreign lands of Hurru and Nubia, the land of Egypt- Thou dost set each man in his place and supply his needs;*

60. *Each one has his food, and his lifetime is reckoned. Their tongues are diverse in speech and their natures likewise; Their skins are varied, for thou dost vary the foreigners. Thou dost make the Nile in the underworld, And bringest it forth as thou desirest to sustain the people*

65 *As thou dost make them for thyself, Lord of them all, who dost weary thyself with them, Lord of every land, who dost rise for them, Thou Ten of the day, great in majesty. As for all distant foreign lands, thou makest their life,*

70. *For thou hast set a Nile in the sky, That it may descend for them, That it may make waves on the mountains like the sea, To water their fields amongst their towns. How excellent are thy plans, thou lord of eternity!*

75. *The Nile in the sky is for the foreign peoples, For the flocks of every foreign land that walk with (their) feet, While the (true) Nile comes forth from the underworld for Egypt. Thy rays suckle every field; When thou dost rise, they live and thrive for thee.*

80. *Thou makest the seasons to nourish all that thou hast made: The winter to cool them; the heat that they (?) may taste thee. Thou didst make the distant sky to rise in it, To see all that thou hast made. Being alone, and risen in thy form as the living Aten,*

85. *Whether appearing, shining, distant, or near, . Thou makest millions of forms from thyself alone: Cities, towns, fields, road, and river. . . There is no other that knows thee,*

95. *Save thy son Akhenaten, For thou hast made him skilled in thy plans and thy might. The earth came into being by thy hand, just as thou didst make them (i.e mankind). When thou hast risen, they live;*

100. *When thou dost set, they die. For thou art lifetime thyself, one lives through thee; Eyes arc upon (thy) beauty until thou dost set. All labor is put aside when thou dost set in the west; When [thou] risest [thou] makest . . . flourish for the king.*

105. *As for all who hasten on foot, Ever since thou didst fashion the earth, Thou dost raise them up for thy son who came forth from thyself, The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Akhnaten.*

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Introduction and translation by R. J. Williams, in D. Winton Thomas (ed.), *Documents from Old Testament Times* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1958)



## Excerpt from The Book of the Dead

### QUESTIONS:

*What seems to be the purpose of the Book of the Dead?*

*In what way are the first two sections a "negative confession?"*

*What do you think is the purpose of naming the 42 gods and goddesses?*

### Egyptian Afterlife

The Egyptians had really complex beliefs about life after death. Death was not considered to be the end of one's life, rather it was considered to be a necessary process that one has to go through in order to enter a dimension of complete bliss and eternity. However this was dependent on the way the individual live their lives. The Egyptians have their own criteria for judgment according to which each individual will be judged and awarded his destination in the afterlife.

The afterlife was known by many different terms such as "Field of Offerings" and "Rushes". The Egyptians spent their life preparing for life after death. According to the ancient mythology all individuals would enter the underworld, which was a terrifying dimension which every individual dreaded. The underworld had its own tests which the individual had to overcome in order to proceed to the blissful afterlife.

Religion played an important role in all aspects of life for the Egyptians. Their religion was polytheistic in nature and had many different deities that were assigned different responsibilities and domains of creation. The gods were classified into different categories. Amongst them were gods that solely governed the underworld. Egyptians priests developed many myths and legends concerning life after death and it was these stories that dominated the Egyptian afterlife beliefs.

According to ancient Egyptian beliefs the soul was a perishable entity which meant that it was at great risk at all times. This is why the Egyptians had elaborate burial rituals the purpose of which was to ensure the preservation of the dead bodies and the various elements of the soul. Some of the most important burial rituals included the process of mummification, the making of the tomb, the casting of spells and death masks. The Egyptians believe the soul had three parts namely Ka, Ba and Ahk and it was essential to ensure the protection of all these three parts.

Upon death the soul would enter the underworld where he would have to pass certain tests and then reach his judgment day. This would take place in the Hall of Two Truths. Anubis was a jackal headed deity considered to be the god of the dead. He would be the judge along with forty two other deities and judges that would judge each soul.

The worth of the soul would be valued with a set of scales that would be placed on his heart. All the good deeds and bad deeds performed by the individual would then be placed on these scales and then he would be judged according to their criterion, which was the Ma'at. Ma'at was considered to be the goddess of justice and was symbolized by a feather. Depending upon which scales were heavy the soul would be made to proceed to its final destination. Those souls whose scales of good had outweighed their scales of bad would be

granted permission to enter the blissful afterlife. On the other hand those whose scales of bad deeds were heavy would be handed over to the Devourer of the Dead, which was the Egyptian equivalent of hell. (from <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/articles/article/Egypt/Egyptian-Afterlife-Beliefs-/3182>)

## Introduction

[The dead will say:]

Homage to you, Great God, the Lord of the double Ma'at (Truth)!

I have come to you, my Lord,

I have brought myself here to behold your beauties.

I know you, and I know your name,

And I know the names of the two and forty gods,

Who live with you in the Hall of the Two Truths<sup>1</sup>

Who imprison the sinners, and feed upon their blood,

On the day when the lives of men are judged in the presence of Osiris<sup>2</sup>

In truth, you are "The Twin Sisters with Two Eyes,"<sup>3</sup> and "The Daughters of the Two Truths."

In truth, I now come to you, and I have brought Maat to you,

And I have destroyed wickedness for you.

I have committed no evil upon men.

I have not oppressed the members of my family.

I have not wrought evil in the place of right and truth.

I have had no knowledge of useless men.

I have brought about no evil.

I did not rise in the morning and expect more than was due to me.

I have not brought my name forward to be praised.

I have not oppressed servants.

I have not scorned any god.

I have not defrauded the poor of their property.

I have not done what the gods abominate.

I have not cause harm to be done to a servant by his master.

I have not caused pain.

I have caused no man to hunger.

I have made no one weep.

I have not killed.

I have not given the order to kill.

I have not inflicted pain on anyone.

I have not stolen the drink left for the gods in the temples.

I have not stolen the cakes left for the gods in the temples.

I have not stolen the cakes left for the dead in the temples.

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<sup>1</sup> This word, Truth, is the Egyptian word maat (here it is doubled: maat maat). It means more than just truth; among other meanings are "justice," "purity," "balance," and "order." All these senses

<sup>2</sup> Osiris is the chief of the Egyptian gods. The judgment day isn't a single day, as it is in Christian tradition, but rather an ongoing thing.

<sup>3</sup> The Two Truths.

I have not fornicated.  
 I have not polluted myself.  
 I have not diminished the bushel when I've sold it.  
 I have not added to or stolen land.  
 I have not encroached on the land of others.  
 I have not added weights to the scales to cheat buyers.  
 I have not misread the scales to cheat buyers.  
 I have not stolen milk from the mouths of children.  
 I have not driven cattle from their pastures.  
 I have not captured the birds of the preserves of the gods.  
 I have not caught fish with bait made of like fish.  
 I have not held back the water when it should flow.  
 I have not diverted the running water in a canal.  
 I have not put out a fire when it should burn.  
 I have not violated the times when meat should be offered to the gods.  
 I have not driven off the cattle from the property of the gods.  
 I have not stopped a god in his procession through the temple.<sup>4</sup>  
 I am pure.  
 I am pure.  
 I am pure.  
 I am pure.  
 My purity is the purity the great *Bennu* (heron) in Heracleopolis.<sup>5</sup>  
 Behold, I am the nose of the God of Breath<sup>6</sup> who gives life to the people,  
 On the day of completing the Eye of Ra<sup>7</sup> in Heliopolis,<sup>8</sup>  
 On the last day of the second month of winter,  
 In the presence of the pharaoh of this land.  
 I have seen the the Eye of Horus when it was full in Heliopolis!  
 Therefore, let no evil befall me in this land  
 In this Hall of the Two Truths,  
 Because I know the names of all the gods within it,  
 And all the followers of the great God.

### **The negative confession and the naming of the forty-two gods**

Hail, Long-Strider who comes from Heliopolis, I have not done iniquity.  
 Hail, Embraced-by Fire who comes from Kher-aha, I have not robbed with violence.  
 Hail, Divine-Nose who comes from Khemmenu, I have not done violence to another man.  
 Hail, Shade-Eater who comes from the caverns which produce the Nile, I have not

<sup>4</sup> Images of the gods would "process" through the temples, around the outside of a temple, and even the streets. The gods were thought to be present in these statues. During these processions, worshippers would ask questions of the god as it passed. It would then answer those questions by leaning in one direction or the other.

<sup>5</sup> In Egyptian this city is named, "Hnes" or "Suten-hennen."

<sup>6</sup> The "Lord of Ba," that is, "breath" or "soul"; the Lord of Ba is Osiris, who created the breath of life and the souls of living things.

<sup>7</sup> A monument to the god, Ra. This monument was called the Utchat; there were two—one for Horus and one for Ra, both associated with the sun and the symbol of the eye.

<sup>8</sup> In Egyptian this city is named, "On" or "Annu." In Greek, Heliopolis means "City of the Sun," which is appropriate since its patron god is Ra, the god of the sun.

committed theft.

Hail, Neha-hau who comes from Re-stau, I have not killed man or woman.

Hail, double Lion God who comes from heaven, I have not lightened the bushel.

Hail, Flint-Eyes who comes from Sekhem, I have not acted deceitfully.

Hail, Flame who comes backwards, I have not stolen what belongs to the gods.

Hail, Bone-Crusher who comes from Heracleopolis, I have not lied.

Hail, Flame-Grower who comes from Memphis, I have not carried away food.

Hail, Qerti<sup>9</sup> who comes from the west, I have not uttered evil words.

Hail, Shining-Tooth who comes from Ta-She, I have attacked no man.

Hail, Blood-Consumer who comes from the house of slaughter, I have not slaughtered sacred cattle.

Hail, Entrail-Consumer who comes from the mabet chamber, I have not cheated.

Hail, God of Ma'at who comes from city of twin Maati<sup>10</sup> I have not laid waste lands which have been ploughed.

Hail, Backward-Walker who comes from Bubastis, I have not pried mischievously into others' affairs.

Hail, Aati who comes from Heliopolis, I have not foolishly set my mouth in motion against another man.

Hail, doubly evil who comes from Ati, I have not given way to wrath without cause.

Hail, serpent Amenti who comes from the house of slaughter, I have not defiled the wife of a man.

Hail, you who look at what is brought to you who comes from the Temple of Amsu, I have not polluted myself.

Hail, Chief of the Princes who comes from Nehatu, I have not terrified any man.

Hail, Destroyer who comes from the Lake of Kau, I have not trespassed sacred grounds.

Hail, Speech-Orderer who comes from the Urit, I have not been angry.

Hail, Child who comes from the Lake of Heqat, I have not made myself deaf to Ma'at.<sup>11</sup>

Hail, Disposer-of-Speech who comes from Unes, I have not stirred up strife.

Hail, Basti who comes from the Secret City, I have made no one to weep.

Hail, Backwards-Face who comes from the Dwelling, I have committed no acts of impurity nor have I had sexual intercourse with a man.

Hail, Leg-of-Fire who comes from the Akheku, I have not eaten my heart.<sup>12</sup>

Hail, Kenemti who comes from Kenemet, I have not abused anyone.

Hail, Offering-Bringer who comes from Sais, I have not acted with violence.

Hail, Lord-of-Faces who comes from Tchefet, I have not judged hastily.

Hail, Giver-of-Knowledge who comes from Unth, I have not taken vengeance on a god.

Hail, Lord-of-Two-Horns who comes from Satiu, I have not spoken too much.

Hail, Nefer-Tem who comes from Memphis, I have not acted with deceit nor have I performed wickedness.

Hail, Tem-Sep who comes from Tattu, I have not cursed the king.

Hail, Heart-Laborer who comes from Tebti, I have not polluted the water.

Hail, Ahi-of-the-water who comes from Nu, I have not been haughty.

Hail, Man-Commander, who comes from Sau, I have not cursed the god.

Hail, Neheb-nefert who comes from the Lake of Nefer, I have not been insolent.

Hail, Neheb-kau who comes from your city, I have not been sought distinctions.

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<sup>9</sup> Qerti zere the caverns that are the source of the Nile in Egyptian thought.

<sup>10</sup> The region of ma'at.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote one.

<sup>12</sup> "lost my temper"

Hail, Holy-Head who comes from your dwelling, I have not increased my wealth, except with such things as were mine.

Hail, Arm-Bringer who comes from the the Underworld, I have not scorned the god of my city.

### **Address to the gods of the underworld**

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Hail, gods, who dwell in the house of the Two Truths.

I know you and I know your names.

Let me not fall under your slaughter-knives,

And do not bring my wickedness to Osiris,<sup>13</sup> the god you serve.

Let no evil come to me from you.

Declare me right and true in the presence of Osiris,

Because I have done what is right and true in Egypt.

I have not cursed a god.

I have not suffered evil through the king who ruled my day.

Hail , gods who dwell in the Hall of the Two Truths,

Who have no evil in your bodies, who live upon maat ,

Who feed upon maat in the presence of Horus

Who lives within his divine disk.<sup>14</sup>

Deliver me from the god Baba,

Who lives on the entrails of the mighty ones on the day of the great judgement.

Grant that I may come to you,

For I have committed no faults,

I have not sinned,

I have not done evil,

I have not lied,

Therefore let nothing evil happen to me.

I live on maat , and I feed on maat,

I have performed the commandments of me and the things pleasing to the gods,

I have made the god to be at peace with me,

I have acted according to his will.

I have given bread to the hungry man, and water to the thirsty man,

And clothes to the naked man, and a boat to the boatless.

I have made holy offerings to the gods,

and meals for the dead.

Deliver me, protect me, accuse me not in the presence of Osiris.

I am pure of mouth and pure of hands,

Therefore, let all who see me welcome me,

For I have heard the mighty word which the spiritual bodies spoke to the Cat,

In the House of Hapt-Re, the Open-Mouthed;

I gave testimony before the god Hra-f-ha-f, the Backwards-Face,

I have the branching out of the ished-tree in Re-stau.<sup>15</sup>

I have offered prayers to the gods and I know their persons.

I have come and I have advanced to declare maat,

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<sup>13</sup> Osiris is the god of the dead.

<sup>14</sup> The sun.

<sup>15</sup> These are all religious mysteries that reveal the knowledge of the gods to living humans.

And to set the balance upon what supports it in the Underworld.  
Hail, you who are exalted upon your standard, Lord of the Atefu crown,  
Who name is "God of Breath", deliver me from your divine messengers,  
Who cause fearful deeds, and calamities,  
Who are without coverings for their faces,  
For I have done maat for the Lord of maat.  
I have purified myself and my breast, my lower parts, with the things which make clean.  
My inner parts have been in the Pool of maat.  
I have been purified in the Pool of the south,  
And I have rested in the northern city which is in the Field of the Grasshoppers,<sup>16</sup>  
Where the sacred sailors of Ra bathe at the second hour of the night and third hour of the  
day.  
And the hearts of the gods are pleased after they have passed through it,  
Whether by day or by night.

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<sup>16</sup> This is the itinerary of the soul after death. The soul has passed by areas where the gods rest during the journey of Re through Underworld.

# Egypt: The End of a Civilization

By Dr Aidan Dodson

From ([http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/egypt\\_end\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/egypt_end_01.shtml))

## Defining the end point

The civilisation of ancient Egypt can be traced back in recognisable form to around 3000 BC. It was to endure for over three millennia and it is perhaps the most instantly recognisable of all ancient cultures today. The question of how it came to an end is a perennially popular one, but actually quite difficult to answer, as it is by no means agreed as to what constitutes 'the end' of Egypt as an ancient civilisation.

**...the demise of the hieroglyphs was a manifestation of the decline and fall of the ancient religion...**

Is it the definitive end of native Egyptian rule (at least until the 20th century)? In this case the answer would be the flight of King Nectanebo II in 342 BC. Is it Egypt's absorption into the Roman Empire in 30 BC? Or the last appearance of the ancient hieroglyphic script just before AD 400? Or the closure of the last pagan temples in the sixth century?

In many ways the last suggestion is perhaps the most appropriate, as in all the other cases, the core religious and artistic values of the country continued on, albeit increasingly debased and under pressure. However, the demise of the hieroglyphs was a manifestation of the decline and fall of the ancient religion in the face of Christianity, itself ultimately to be supplanted by Islam.



## Signs of trouble

But what led up to this event, and the series of other potential 'ends' that we have already referred to?

The seeds actually lay around one-and-a-half millennia earlier, when Egypt was apparently at the height of its powers in the reign of Ramesses II (1279-1212 BC), during what is known as the 19th Dynasty of Egyptian history. Ramesses' great foes were the Hittites of what is now modern Turkey, a

key battle with whom, at Qadesh, was frequently displayed on the great pharaoh's temples.

**...this falling behind in military technology was certainly a contributory factor in the coming decline.**

One of the differences between their armies was that while the Egyptians were armed with weapons of bronze, the Hittites had access to a new material - iron. Although they had ample reserves of copper (the key component of bronze) within their boundaries, the Egyptians lacked sources of the far more effective metal. While this was by no means a decisive issue, this falling behind in military technology was certainly a contributory factor in the coming decline.

There were also cracks appearing in the unity of the Egyptian state, and its cohesion was threatened by a short-lived secession of the southern part of the country under the rebel king Amenmesse around 1200 BC, by the murder of Ramesses III in 1153 BC, and by civil war in the far south around 1080 to 1070 BC. Economic crises, raids by foreign bandits, and an orgy of tomb-robbing, during which many of the graves of the ancient pharaohs were looted, accompanied these events.

The net result was that for the century from 1070 BC onwards, under the 21st Dynasty, Egypt was split in two, the north ruled by the pharaoh, based in the new city of Tanis in the north-east of the country, and the south by the High Priest of Amun at Thebes (modern Luxor). The High Priests nominally owed allegiance to the king, but in practice they comprised an independent line of hereditary rulers, whose status was not solely religious, as they also held the title of Army Leader, making their regime probably more of a military dictatorship than a Taliban-style theocracy.

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## **Decline**

Egypt's fate was now firmly tied in with the rest of the eastern Mediterranean world, in which it struggled to maintain its economic and military position. Indeed, the army now relied heavily on foreign - especially Greek - mercenaries, rather than the native Egyptians of the country's glory days.

Egypt thus fell easy prey to the expanding Persian empire in 525 BC, remaining under their dominion for over a century. National rule was revived between 404 and 342 BC, but the various regimes (the 28th, 29th and 30th dynasties) were riven by in-fighting, and the Persians reasserted their power in 342 BC. Egypt was seized by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, but regained independence at the break-up of his empire in 310 BC.

However, the new ruler, Ptolemy I, was a Macedonian Greek, and the ruling class of the state was now foreign, running the country as part of the Ptolemaic kings' wider Mediterranean agendas. The ancient religion and culture were supported and new temples built, but the dominant culture was now increasingly European, with Greek becoming the language of state.

The increasingly bloody internal struggles of the ruling house brought Egypt within the orbit of the still-growing Roman Empire, culminating in the defeat of the last of Ptolemy's ruling descendants, Cleopatra VII, and her Roman lover Mark Antony in 30 BC, resulting in the country's absorption into the empire that same year. Egypt now became a mere province, with its primary goal to provide grain for the rest of the empire.



## **Overview of Ancient Israel**

From (<http://www.timemaps.com/civilization/Ancient-Israel>)

The Ancient Israelites settled the land of Canaan sometime between 1300 and 1100 BC. They traced their descent to a nomadic clan chief called Abram, several centuries before, who had migrated to Canaan from Mesopotamia. His descendants had then migrated on to Egypt. Here, according to their ancestral records, they had been mistreated and enslaved, before escaping en masse and moving back up to Canaan.

### **A New Religion**

The Israelites brought with them a unique cultural facet, monotheism. For the first time in history, as far as we know, a religion had appeared which concerned the worship of only one god. By implication, this god was the universal God, the One who controlled all things.

The only possible rival to the Israelite claim to have the first monotheistic religion in world history is found in the reforms of the Egyptian Pharaoh, Akhenaton (died c.1335 BC). These have often been interpreted to have promoted the worship of the Sun god as the one God. However the information on these reforms is patchy, and it may have been as much a political revolution to undercut the power of the traditional priests as it was a religious one. In any case, it barely outlasted Akhenaton's death.

### **A New Ethics**

The Israelite religion was not just unique at that time in recognizing a single god. It also promoted an ethical system which required high standards of behaviour from the people. In short, they were required to treat each other - including women and foreigners - with respect and consideration.

An elaborate code of law would build up over time, constructed around ideas of fairness and justice. At the heart of this code lay the Ten Commandments, which have formed the foundation of Jewish and Christian ethics ever since.

### **The Kingdom**

Initially, the Israelites formed a loose confederation of twelve tribes. National leaders, called judges, emerged from time to time to deal with particular crises. However, by 1000 BC the Israelites had established a kingdom, under their famous king, David. He and his son, Solomon, established their capital at Jerusalem, which also became the chief centre of the Israelite religion after Solomon built the only permitted temple there.

The kingdom shortly divided into two halves, and, thus weakened, the Israelites fell victim to the great powers of the region. The northern kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 BC, and the southern kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC.

### **A Prophetic Tradition**

During this period of division and decline, the Israelites developed a tradition of prophecy whereby a succession of men felt that they had been called by God to speak his messages to the people. These men came from different backgrounds, and clearly had different levels of education; but, in the course of warning the Israelites of impending doom unless they returned to obeying God, they developed a consistent religious philosophy. This revolved around a set of ideas based on the proposition that God was not just the one true God; he was also a God of love; that he required, not just religious ceremonial, but a worship rooted in the "good life" - a life lived with generosity, mercy and love.

After the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, many of its inhabitants - thenceforth known to history as the "Jews" - were taken off to exile in Babylonia. There, the prophetic tradition continued, and the Bible (or Old Testament, as Christians know it), began to take shape as the laws, prophecies, psalms and other literature were written down. When the Persians conquered the Babylonians, their king, Cyrus, restored the Jews to their homeland (538 BC), and allowed them to rebuild their temple.

Within a hundred years or so of the return from exile, the Jews had completed their scriptures, and so laid the foundations for later Judaism. Out of Judaism sprang Christianity, the main religion of Western civilization.

### **Losing a homeland**

The Jews themselves remained in their homeland until the Roman period. Indeed, for a period, they ruled their own independent kingdom (164-63 BC). However, the Romans placed them under the control of the family of Herod, who, although Jewish by religion, were of foreign origin and therefore never truly accepted by the Jews as their rightful rulers.

The Jews deeply resented being under Roman power, and in AD 66, rose in revolt. This was an unmitigated disaster, leading to complete defeat and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Another revolt in AD 115 led to the Jews being prohibited from living in Judaea. By that time, there were many more Jews living outside Judaea than inside it; however, this prohibition marks the true start of the "Diaspora", the scattering of the Jews amongst the nations.

## Psalm 137

### Introduction:

During the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the Babylonian Empire, ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar, laid siege to the Kingdom of Judah and its primary city, Jerusalem. After successfully defeating the Jewish armies, the Babylonians took many Jews back to Babylon as captives. This period, known as the Babylonian Captivity, is important as it marks the time that the early Jews became very serious about chronicling their cultural history in writing. As a result, many of the political histories of the Jewish people became merged with the existing divine history as presented in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Jewish and Christian Bible). Below is the 137<sup>th</sup> Psalm, which expresses the desire of the Jewish people to return from captivity back to their homeland.

<sup>1</sup> By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept  
when we remembered Zion.

<sup>2</sup> There on the poplars  
we hung our harps,

<sup>3</sup> for there our captors asked us for songs,  
our tormentors demanded songs of joy;  
they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

<sup>4</sup> How can we sing the songs of the LORD  
while in a foreign land?

<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, Jerusalem,  
may my right hand forget its skill.

<sup>6</sup> May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth  
if I do not remember you,  
if I do not consider Jerusalem  
my highest joy.

<sup>7</sup> Remember, LORD, what the Edomites did  
on the day Jerusalem fell.

"Tear it down," they cried,  
"tear it down to its foundations!"

<sup>8</sup> Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction,  
happy is the one who repays you  
according to what you have done to us.

<sup>9</sup> Happy is the one who seizes your infants  
and dashes them against the rocks.

## Excerpts from the Book of Genesis (New International Version)

### ***QUESTIONS:***

*What unexplained phenomena are explained by these stories? (make a list)*

*How is the relationship between humans and God depicted in these stories?*

*Why is the significance of the Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac?*

### **Genesis 1**

#### ***The Creation***

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was <sup>[a]</sup> formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. <sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water."

<sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, <sup>[b]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature

that moves on the ground." 29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

**QUESTION: How does this version of the creation of the world compare or contrast with other versions we have read?**

## **Genesis 2**

### ***The Man and the Woman***

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested <sup>[a]</sup> from all his work. 3 And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. 4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens- 5 and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth <sup>[b]</sup> and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth <sup>[c]</sup> and there was no man to work the ground, 6 but streams <sup>[d]</sup> came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground- 7 the LORD God formed the man <sup>[e]</sup> from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

8 Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin <sup>[f]</sup> and onyx are also there.) 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. <sup>[g]</sup> 14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." 18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for the man <sup>[h]</sup> no suitable helper was found. 21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs <sup>[i]</sup> and closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib <sup>[j]</sup> he had taken

out of the man, and he brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> The man said,  
"This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called 'woman, <sup>[k]</sup>'  
for she was taken out of man." <sup>24</sup> For this reason a man will leave his father and mother  
and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> The man and his wife were both  
naked, and they felt no shame.

### **Genesis 3**

#### ***The Fall of Man***

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" <sup>4</sup> "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" <sup>10</sup> He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." <sup>11</sup> And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" <sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." <sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all the livestock  
and all the wild animals!  
You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring <sup>[a]</sup> and hers;  
he will crush <sup>[b]</sup> your head,  
and you will strike his heel."

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said,  
"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;  
with pain you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you."

<sup>17</sup> To the man he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

<sup>20</sup> The man [Heb: "Adam"] <sup>[c]</sup> named his wife Eve, <sup>[d]</sup> because she would become the mother of all the living. <sup>21</sup> The LORD God made garments of skin for the man and his wife and clothed them. <sup>22</sup> And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." <sup>23</sup> So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup> After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side <sup>[e]</sup> of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

**QUESTION: What do we learn about the Hebrew view of human nature from this story?**

## **Genesis 4**

### ***Cain and Abel***

<sup>1</sup> The man <sup>[a]</sup> lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. <sup>[b]</sup> She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth <sup>[c]</sup> a man." <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. <sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." <sup>8</sup> Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." <sup>[d]</sup> And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" <sup>10</sup> The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." <sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." <sup>15</sup> But the LORD said to him, "Not so <sup>[e]</sup> ; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer

vengeance seven times over." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. <sup>16</sup> So Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod, <sup>[f]</sup> east of Eden. <sup>17</sup> Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. <sup>18</sup> To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech. <sup>19</sup> Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah. <sup>20</sup> Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. <sup>21</sup> His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute. <sup>22</sup> Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of <sup>[g]</sup> bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah. <sup>23</sup> Lamech said to his wives,

"Adah and Zillah, listen to me;

wives of Lamech, hear my words.

I have killed <sup>[h]</sup> a man for wounding me,

a young man for injuring me.

<sup>24</sup> If Cain is avenged seven times,  
then Lamech seventy-seven times."

<sup>25</sup> Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, <sup>[i]</sup> saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." <sup>26</sup> Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

At that time men began to call on <sup>[j]</sup> the name of the LORD.

## **Genesis 6**

### ***The Flood***

<sup>1</sup> When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with <sup>[a]</sup> man forever, for he is mortal <sup>[b]</sup>; his days will be a hundred and twenty years." <sup>4</sup> The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown. <sup>5</sup> The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. <sup>6</sup> The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. <sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them." <sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> This is the account of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. <sup>10</sup> Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. <sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. <sup>13</sup> So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. <sup>14</sup> So make yourself an ark of cypress <sup>[c]</sup> wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. <sup>[d]</sup> <sup>16</sup> Make a roof for it and finish <sup>[e]</sup> the ark to within 18 inches <sup>[f]</sup> of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. <sup>17</sup> I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. <sup>19</sup> You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup> Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to



you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup> You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them."

<sup>22</sup> Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

### **Genesis 7**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD then said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. <sup>2</sup> Take with you seven <sup>[a]</sup> of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and two of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, <sup>3</sup> and also seven of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. <sup>4</sup> Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made." <sup>5</sup> And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him. <sup>6</sup> Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. <sup>7</sup> And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>8</sup> Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, <sup>9</sup> male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup> And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth. <sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. <sup>12</sup> And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup> On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. <sup>14</sup> They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. <sup>15</sup> Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. <sup>16</sup> The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in. <sup>17</sup> For forty days the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. <sup>19</sup> They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. <sup>20</sup> The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet. <sup>[b]</sup>, <sup>[c]</sup> <sup>21</sup> Every living thing that moved on the earth perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. <sup>22</sup> Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. <sup>23</sup> Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup> The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.

### **Genesis 8**

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded. <sup>2</sup> Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky. <sup>3</sup> The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, <sup>4</sup> and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup> The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible. <sup>6</sup> After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark <sup>7</sup> and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. <sup>9</sup> But the

dove could find no place to set its feet because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. <sup>10</sup> He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. <sup>11</sup> When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. <sup>12</sup> He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him. <sup>13</sup> By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. <sup>14</sup> By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry. <sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> "Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. <sup>17</sup> Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number upon it." <sup>18</sup> So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. <sup>19</sup> All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds—everything that moves on the earth—came out of the ark, one kind after another. <sup>20</sup> Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. <sup>21</sup> The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though <sup>[a]</sup> every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. <sup>22</sup> "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."

## **Genesis 9**

### ***God's Covenant with Noah***

<sup>1</sup> Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup> The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. <sup>3</sup> Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. <sup>4</sup> "But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. <sup>5</sup> And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.

<sup>6</sup> "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

<sup>7</sup> As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it."

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup> "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." <sup>12</sup> And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: <sup>13</sup> I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will

remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. <sup>16</sup> Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." <sup>17</sup> So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

## Genesis 11

### *The Tower of Babel*

<sup>1</sup> Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. <sup>2</sup> As men moved eastward, <sup>[a]</sup> they found a plain in Shinar <sup>[b]</sup> and settled there. <sup>3</sup> They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. <sup>4</sup> Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." <sup>5</sup> But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. <sup>6</sup> The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. <sup>7</sup> Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." <sup>8</sup> So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup> That is why it was called Babel <sup>[c]</sup> —because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

## Genesis 12

### The Call of Abram

<sup>1</sup> The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

<sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.

<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you."

<sup>4</sup> So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. <sup>5</sup> He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

<sup>6</sup> Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup> The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring <sup>[a]</sup> I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

<sup>8</sup> From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

**QUESTION: What words would you use to describe the god described in these passages? How does this compare to previous views of gods that we have discussed?**

## Abram in Egypt

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. 11 As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."

14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a very beautiful woman. 15 And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, menservants and maidservants, and camels.

17 But the LORD inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. 18 So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!" 20 Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

## **Genesis 15**

### God's Covenant With Abram

1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield, <sup>[a]</sup>

your very great reward. <sup>[b]</sup> "

2 But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit <sup>[k]</sup> my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

7 He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."

8 But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?"

9 So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon."

10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. 11 Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

12 As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. 13 Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. 14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. 15 You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be

buried at a good old age. 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure."

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river <sup>[1]</sup> of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates- 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

## **Genesis 18**

### **Abraham Pleads for Sodom**

16 When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. 17 Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? 18 Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.<sup>[1]</sup> 19 For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."

20 Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous 21 that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know."

22 The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD.<sup>[1]</sup> 23 Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare<sup>[1]</sup> the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

26 The LORD said, "If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake." 27 Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, 28 what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five people?"

"If I find forty-five there," he said, "I will not destroy it." 29 Once again he spoke to him, "What if only forty are found there?" He said, "For the sake of forty, I will not do it." 30 Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?" He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." 31 Abraham said, "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?" He said, "For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it."

32 Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?" He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it." 33 When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

## Genesis 19

### Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup>“My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”

<sup>3</sup> But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. <sup>4</sup> Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup> They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

<sup>6</sup> Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him <sup>7</sup> and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. <sup>8</sup> Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

<sup>9</sup> “Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

<sup>10</sup> But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. <sup>11</sup> Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

<sup>12</sup> The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here,<sup>13</sup> because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

<sup>14</sup> So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry<sup>[a]</sup> his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

<sup>15</sup> With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.”

<sup>16</sup> When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them. <sup>17</sup> As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, "Flee for your lives! Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!"

<sup>18</sup> But Lot said to them, "No, my lords,<sup>[b]</sup> please! <sup>19</sup> Your<sup>[e]</sup> servant has found favor in your<sup>[a]</sup> eyes, and you<sup>[e]</sup> have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can't flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I'll die. <sup>20</sup> Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it—it is very small, isn't it? Then my life will be spared."

<sup>21</sup> He said to him, "Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of. <sup>22</sup> But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it." (That is why the town was called Zoar.<sup>[f]</sup>)

<sup>23</sup> By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. <sup>24</sup> Then the LORD drained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens. <sup>25</sup> Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. <sup>26</sup> But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

<sup>27</sup> Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the LORD. <sup>28</sup> He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.

<sup>29</sup> So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.

## ***Genesis 22***

### **Abraham Tested**

1 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"  
"Here I am," he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, 7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.

9 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram <sup>[ao]</sup> caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time 16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring <sup>[ap]</sup> all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

19 Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba.



## Excerpts from the Book of Exodus (New International Version)

### QUESTIONS:

*Why was it necessary to unleash the plagues upon the Egyptians?*

*Is there an order to the Ten Commandments?*

*How do the laws of the Hebrews compare with those of Hammurabi?*

### **Exodus 3**

#### ***Moses and the Burning Bush***

<sup>1</sup> Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." <sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

<sup>5</sup> "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. <sup>7</sup> The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup> So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. <sup>10</sup> So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." <sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" <sup>12</sup> And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you <sup>[a]</sup> will worship God on this mountain." <sup>13</sup> Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" <sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, "I am who I am. <sup>[b]</sup> This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" <sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, <sup>[c]</sup> the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation. <sup>16</sup> "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. <sup>17</sup> And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.' <sup>18</sup> "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.' <sup>19</sup> But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. <sup>20</sup> So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

<sup>21</sup> "And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. <sup>22</sup> Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman

living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians."

**QUESTION: What is the connection between Moses and Abraham?**

## Exodus 10

### The Plague of Locusts

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them <sup>2</sup> that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the LORD." <sup>3</sup> So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me. <sup>4</sup> If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts into your country tomorrow. <sup>5</sup> They will cover the face of the ground so that it cannot be seen. They will devour what little you have left after the hail, including every tree that is growing in your fields. <sup>6</sup> They will fill your houses and those of all your officials and all the Egyptians—something neither your fathers nor your forefathers have ever seen from the day they settled in this land till now.' " Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh. <sup>7</sup> Pharaoh's officials said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the LORD their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is ruined?" <sup>8</sup> Then Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. "Go, worship the LORD your God," he said. "But just who will be going?" <sup>9</sup> Moses answered, "We will go with our young and old, with our sons and daughters, and with our flocks and herds, because we are to celebrate a festival to the LORD." <sup>10</sup> Pharaoh said, "The LORD be with you—if I let you go, along with your women and children! Clearly you are bent on evil. <sup>[a]</sup> <sup>11</sup> No! Have only the men go; and worship the LORD, since that's what you have been asking for." Then Moses and Aaron were driven out of Pharaoh's presence. <sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over Egypt so that locusts will swarm over the land and devour everything growing in the fields, everything left by the hail." <sup>13</sup> So Moses stretched out his staff over Egypt, and the LORD made an east wind blow across the land all that day and all that night. By morning the wind had brought the locusts; <sup>14</sup> they invaded all Egypt and settled down in every area of the country in great numbers. Never before had there been such a plague of locusts, nor will there ever be again. <sup>15</sup> They covered all the ground until it was black. They devoured all that was left after the hail—everything growing in the fields and the fruit on the trees. Nothing green remained on tree or plant in all the land of Egypt. <sup>16</sup> Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. <sup>17</sup> Now forgive my sin once more and pray to the LORD your God to take this deadly plague away from me." <sup>18</sup> Moses then left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. <sup>19</sup> And the LORD changed the wind to a very strong west wind, which caught up the locusts and carried them into the Red Sea. <sup>[b]</sup> Not a locust was left anywhere in Egypt. <sup>20</sup> But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go.

### The Plague of Darkness

<sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt—darkness that can be felt." <sup>22</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. <sup>23</sup> No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived. <sup>24</sup> Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "Go, worship the LORD. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind." <sup>25</sup> But Moses said, "You must allow us to have sacrifices and burnt offerings to present to the LORD our God. <sup>26</sup> Our livestock too must go with us; not a hoof is to be left behind. We have to use some of them in worshipping the LORD our God, and until we get there we will not know what we are to use to worship the LORD." <sup>27</sup> But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go. <sup>28</sup> Pharaoh said to Moses, "Get out of my sight! Make sure you do not appear before me again! The day you see my face you will die." <sup>29</sup> "Just as you say," Moses replied, "I will never appear before you again."

### Exodus 11

#### The Plague on the Firstborn

<sup>1</sup> Now the LORD had said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely. <sup>2</sup> Tell the people that men and women alike are to ask their neighbors for articles of silver and gold." <sup>3</sup> (The LORD made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and Moses himself was highly regarded in Egypt by Pharaoh's officials and by the people.) <sup>4</sup> So Moses said, "This is what the LORD says: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. <sup>6</sup> There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt—worse than there has ever been or ever will be again. <sup>7</sup> But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any man or animal.' Then you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. <sup>8</sup> All these officials of yours will come to me, bowing down before me and saying, 'Go, you and all the people who follow you!' After that I will leave." Then Moses, hot with anger, left Pharaoh.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD had said to Moses, "Pharaoh will refuse to listen to you—so that my wonders may be multiplied in Egypt." <sup>10</sup> Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh, but the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go out of his country.

**QUESTION: Why did God send the plagues to Egypt? What does this say about the Hebrew God?**

### Exodus 12

#### *The Passover*

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, <sup>2</sup> "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. <sup>3</sup> Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb <sup>[a]</sup> for his family, one for each household. <sup>4</sup> If any

household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. <sup>5</sup> The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. <sup>6</sup> Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. <sup>7</sup> Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. <sup>8</sup> That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire—head, legs and inner parts. <sup>10</sup> Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. <sup>11</sup> This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover. <sup>12</sup> "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. <sup>13</sup> The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. <sup>14</sup> "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD -a lasting ordinance. <sup>15</sup> For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. <sup>16</sup> On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat—that is all you may do. <sup>17</sup> "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. <sup>18</sup> In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. <sup>19</sup> For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. <sup>20</sup> Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread." <sup>21</sup> Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. <sup>22</sup> Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning. <sup>23</sup> When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down. <sup>24</sup> "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. <sup>25</sup> When you enter the land that the LORD will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. <sup>26</sup> And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' <sup>27</sup> then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.' " Then the people bowed down and worshiped. <sup>28</sup> The Israelites did just what the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. <sup>29</sup> At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. <sup>30</sup> Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead.

**QUESTION: Why would The Passover be such an important thing for the Hebrew people to celebrate?**

## The Exodus

<sup>31</sup> During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD as you have requested. <sup>32</sup> Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me." <sup>33</sup> The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. "For otherwise," they said, "we will all die!" <sup>34</sup> So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing. <sup>35</sup> The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. <sup>36</sup> The LORD had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.

<sup>37</sup> The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. <sup>38</sup> Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. <sup>39</sup> With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves. <sup>40</sup> Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt <sup>[b]</sup> was 430 years. <sup>41</sup> At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all the LORD's divisions left Egypt. <sup>42</sup> Because the LORD kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the LORD for the generations to come.

## Passover Restrictions

<sup>43</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the Passover: "No foreigner is to eat of it. <sup>44</sup> Any slave you have bought may eat of it after you have circumcised him, <sup>45</sup> but a temporary resident and a hired worker may not eat of it. <sup>46</sup> "It must be eaten inside one house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones. <sup>47</sup> The whole community of Israel must celebrate it. <sup>48</sup> "An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it. <sup>49</sup> The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you." <sup>50</sup> All the Israelites did just what the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. <sup>51</sup> And on that very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions.

## Exodus 20

### *The Ten Commandments*

<sup>1</sup> And God spoke all these words: <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

<sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before <sup>[a]</sup> me.

<sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand {generations} of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup> "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup> "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your

animals, nor the alien within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

<sup>12</sup> "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup> "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

<sup>18</sup> When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance <sup>19</sup> and said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." <sup>20</sup> Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning." <sup>21</sup> The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.

**QUESTION: What is different about this set of laws from others we have read?**

#### Idols and Altars

<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites this: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven: <sup>23</sup> Do not make any gods to be alongside me; do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold. <sup>24</sup> " 'Make an altar of earth for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, <sup>[b]</sup> your sheep and goats and your cattle. Wherever I cause my name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you. <sup>25</sup> If you make an altar of stones for me, do not build it with dressed stones, for you will defile it if you use a tool on it. <sup>26</sup> And do not go up to my altar on steps, lest your nakedness be exposed on it.'

#### Exodus 21

<sup>1</sup> "These are the laws you are to set before them:

#### Hebrew Servants

<sup>2</sup> "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything. <sup>3</sup> If he comes alone, he is to go free alone; but if he has a wife when he comes, she is to go with him. <sup>4</sup> If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman and her children shall belong to her master, and only the man shall go free. <sup>5</sup> "But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,' <sup>6</sup> then his master must take him before the judges. <sup>[a]</sup> He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life. <sup>7</sup> "If a man sells his daughter as a servant, she is not to go free as menservants do. <sup>8</sup> If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, <sup>[b]</sup> he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, because he has broken faith with her. <sup>9</sup> If he selects her for his son, he must grant her the rights of a daughter. <sup>10</sup> If he marries another woman, he must not deprive the first one of her food, clothing and marital rights. <sup>11</sup> If he does not provide her with these three things, she is to go free, without any payment of money.

## Personal Injuries

<sup>12</sup> "Anyone who strikes a man and kills him shall surely be put to death. <sup>13</sup> However, if he does not do it intentionally, but God lets it happen, he is to flee to a place I will designate. <sup>14</sup> But if a man schemes and kills another man deliberately, take him away from my altar and put him to death. <sup>15</sup> "Anyone who attacks <sup>[c]</sup> his father or his mother must be put to death. <sup>16</sup> "Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death. <sup>17</sup> "Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death. <sup>18</sup> "If men quarrel and one hits the other with a stone or with his fist <sup>[d]</sup> and he does not die but is confined to bed, <sup>19</sup> the one who struck the blow will not be held responsible if the other gets up and walks around outside with his staff; however, he must pay the injured man for the loss of his time and see that he is completely healed. <sup>20</sup> "If a man beats his male or female slave with a rod and the slave dies as a direct result, he must be punished, <sup>21</sup> but he is not to be punished if the slave gets up after a day or two, since the slave is his property. <sup>22</sup> "If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely <sup>[e]</sup> but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. <sup>23</sup> But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, <sup>24</sup> eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, <sup>25</sup> burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. <sup>26</sup> "If a man hits a manservant or maidservant in the eye and destroys it, he must let the servant go free to compensate for the eye. <sup>27</sup> And if he knocks out the tooth of a manservant or maidservant, he must let the servant go free to compensate for the tooth. <sup>28</sup> "If a bull gores a man or a woman to death, the bull must be stoned to death, and its meat must not be eaten. But the owner of the bull will not be held responsible. <sup>29</sup> If, however, the bull has had the habit of goring and the owner has been warned but has not kept it penned up and it kills a man or woman, the bull must be stoned and the owner also must be put to death. <sup>30</sup> However, if payment is demanded of him, he may redeem his life by paying whatever is demanded. <sup>31</sup> This law also applies if the bull gores a son or daughter. <sup>32</sup> If the bull gores a male or female slave, the owner must pay thirty shekels <sup>[f]</sup> of silver to the master of the slave, and the bull must be stoned. <sup>33</sup> "If a man uncovers a pit or digs one and fails to cover it and an ox or a donkey falls into it, <sup>34</sup> the owner of the pit must pay for the loss; he must pay its owner, and the dead animal will be his. <sup>35</sup> "If a man's bull injures the bull of another and it dies, they are to sell the live one and divide both the money and the dead animal equally. <sup>36</sup> However, if it was known that the bull had the habit of goring, yet the owner did not keep it penned up, the owner must pay, animal for animal, and the dead animal will be his.

## Exodus 22

### Protection of Property

<sup>1</sup> "If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox and four sheep for the sheep. <sup>2</sup> "If a thief is caught breaking in and is struck so that he dies, the defender is not guilty of bloodshed; <sup>3</sup> but if it happens <sup>[a]</sup> after sunrise, he is guilty of bloodshed.

"A thief must certainly make restitution, but if he has nothing, he must be sold to pay for his theft. <sup>4</sup> "If the stolen animal is found alive in his possession—whether ox or donkey or sheep—he must pay back double. <sup>5</sup> "If a man grazes his livestock in a field or vineyard and lets them stray and they graze in another man's field, he must make restitution from the best of his own field or vineyard. <sup>6</sup> "If a fire breaks out and spreads into thornbushes so that it burns shocks of grain or standing grain or the whole field, the one who started the fire must make restitution. <sup>7</sup> "If a man gives his neighbor silver or goods for safekeeping and they are stolen from the neighbor's house, the thief, if he is caught, must pay back double. <sup>8</sup> But if the thief is not found, the owner of the house must appear before the judges <sup>[b]</sup> to

determine whether he has laid his hands on the other man's property. <sup>9</sup> In all cases of illegal possession of an ox, a donkey, a sheep, a garment, or any other lost property about which somebody says, 'This is mine,' both parties are to bring their cases before the judges. The one whom the judges declare <sup>[c]</sup> guilty must pay back double to his neighbor. <sup>10</sup> "If a man gives a donkey, an ox, a sheep or any other animal to his neighbor for safekeeping and it dies or is injured or is taken away while no one is looking, <sup>11</sup> the issue between them will be settled by the taking of an oath before the LORD that the neighbor did not lay hands on the other person's property. The owner is to accept this, and no restitution is required. <sup>12</sup> But if the animal was stolen from the neighbor, he must make restitution to the owner. <sup>13</sup> If it was torn to pieces by a wild animal, he shall bring in the remains as evidence and he will not be required to pay for the torn animal. <sup>14</sup> "If a man borrows an animal from his neighbor and it is injured or dies while the owner is not present, he must make restitution. <sup>15</sup> But if the owner is with the animal, the borrower will not have to pay. If the animal was hired, the money paid for the hire covers the loss.

### Social Responsibility

<sup>16</sup> "If a man seduces a virgin who is not pledged to be married and sleeps with her, he must pay the bride-price, and she shall be his wife. <sup>17</sup> If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must still pay the bride-price for virgins.

<sup>18</sup> "Do not allow a sorceress to live.

<sup>19</sup> "Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death.

<sup>20</sup> "Whoever sacrifices to any god other than the LORD must be destroyed. <sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>21</sup> "Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt.

<sup>22</sup> "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. <sup>23</sup> If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. <sup>24</sup> My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. <sup>25</sup> "If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest. <sup>[e]</sup> <sup>26</sup> If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset, <sup>27</sup> because his cloak is the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate. <sup>28</sup> "Do not blaspheme God <sup>[f]</sup> or curse the ruler of your people. <sup>29</sup> "Do not hold back offerings from your granaries or your vats. <sup>[g]</sup>

"You must give me the firstborn of your sons. <sup>30</sup> Do the same with your cattle and your sheep. Let them stay with their mothers for seven days, but give them to me on the eighth day. <sup>31</sup> "You are to be my holy people. So do not eat the meat of an animal torn by wild beasts; throw it to the dogs.

## Exodus 23

### Laws of Justice and Mercy

<sup>1</sup> "Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness. <sup>2</sup>

"Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, <sup>3</sup> and do not show favoritism to a poor man in his lawsuit. <sup>4</sup> "If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him. <sup>5</sup> If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help him with it. <sup>6</sup> "Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. <sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty. <sup>8</sup> "Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous. <sup>9</sup> "Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt.



### Sabbath Laws

<sup>10</sup> "For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, <sup>11</sup> but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what they leave. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove. <sup>12</sup> "Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household, and the alien as well, may be refreshed. <sup>13</sup> "Be careful to do everything I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

### The Three Annual Festivals

<sup>14</sup> "Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me.

<sup>15</sup> "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

"No one is to appear before me empty-handed.

<sup>16</sup> "Celebrate the Feast of Harvest with the firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field.

"Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field.

<sup>17</sup> "Three times a year all the men are to appear before the Sovereign LORD.

<sup>18</sup> "Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast.

"The fat of my festival offerings must not be kept until morning.

<sup>19</sup> "Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God.

"Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

**QUESTION: How does this set of laws compare/contrast with that of Hammurabi?**

## Excerpts from the Book of Samuel (New International Version)

### **QUESTIONS:**

*What were David's best traits as a monarch?*

*What was life like in Israel during this time?*

*Can you see any of the things that God warned the people about playing out in this section?*

### **1 Samuel 8**

Israel Asks for a King

1 When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

4 So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. 5 They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead <sup>[a]</sup> us, such as all the other nations have."

6 But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. 7 And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. 8 As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. 9 Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

10 Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. 11 He said, "This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. 12 Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. 14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. 15 He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. 16 Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle <sup>[b]</sup> and donkeys he will take for his own use. 17 He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. 18 When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the LORD will not answer you in that day."

19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles."

21 When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the LORD. 22 The LORD answered, "Listen to them and give them a king."

Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Everyone go back to his town."

### **Footnotes:**

- a. 1 Samuel 8:5 Traditionally *judge* ; also in verses 6 and 20
- b. 1 Samuel 8:16 Septuagint; Hebrew *young men*

**QUESTION:** *How does God feel about the idea of a king for the Israelites?*

## 2 Samuel 5

### David Becomes King Over Israel

<sup>1</sup> All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “We are your own flesh and blood. <sup>2</sup> In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.’”

<sup>3</sup> When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.

<sup>4</sup> David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. <sup>5</sup> In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

### David Conquers Jerusalem

<sup>6</sup> The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, “You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off.” They thought, “David cannot get in here.” <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion—which is the City of David.

<sup>8</sup> On that day David had said, “Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those ‘lame and blind’ who are David’s enemies.<sup>[a]</sup>” That is why they say, “The ‘blind and lame’ will not enter the palace.”

<sup>9</sup> David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces<sup>[b]</sup> inward. <sup>10</sup> And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.

<sup>11</sup> Now Hiram king of Tyre sent envoys to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. <sup>12</sup> Then David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

<sup>13</sup> After he left Hebron, David took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. <sup>14</sup> These are the names of the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, <sup>15</sup> Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, <sup>16</sup> Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.

### David Defeats the Philistines

<sup>17</sup> When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. <sup>18</sup> Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim; <sup>19</sup> so David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hands?”

The LORD answered him, “Go, for I will surely deliver the Philistines into your hands.”

<sup>20</sup> So David went to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, “As waters break out, the LORD has broken out against my enemies before me.” So that place was called Baal

Perazim.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>21</sup> The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.

<sup>22</sup> Once more the Philistines came up and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim; <sup>23</sup> so David inquired of the LORD, and he answered, “Do not go straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the poplar trees. <sup>24</sup> As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the poplar trees, move quickly, because that will mean the LORD has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army.” <sup>25</sup> So David did as the LORD commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon<sup>[d]</sup> to Gezer.

## **2 Samuel 6**

### The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup> David again brought together all the able young men of Israel—thirty thousand. <sup>2</sup> He and all his men went to Baalah<sup>[e]</sup> in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name,<sup>[f]</sup> the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim on the ark. <sup>3</sup> They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart <sup>4</sup> with the ark of God on it,<sup>[g]</sup> and Ahio was walking in front of it. <sup>5</sup> David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with castanets,<sup>[h]</sup> harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. <sup>7</sup> The LORD’s anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down, and he died there beside the ark of God.

<sup>8</sup> Then David was angry because the LORD’s wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.<sup>[i]</sup>

<sup>9</sup> David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, “How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?” <sup>10</sup> He was not willing to take the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. <sup>11</sup> The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household.

<sup>12</sup> Now King David was told, “The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.” So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. <sup>13</sup> When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. <sup>14</sup> Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, <sup>15</sup> while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

<sup>16</sup> As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

<sup>17</sup> They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. <sup>18</sup> After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed

the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. <sup>19</sup> Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

<sup>20</sup> When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!"

<sup>21</sup> David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD's people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. <sup>22</sup> I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor."

<sup>23</sup> And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

## **2 Samuel 7**

### God's Promise to David

<sup>1</sup> After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

<sup>3</sup> Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup> But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

<sup>5</sup> "Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? <sup>6</sup> I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

<sup>8</sup> "Now then, tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. <sup>9</sup> I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning <sup>11</sup> and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders<sup>[i]</sup> over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: <sup>12</sup> When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. <sup>15</sup> But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. <sup>16</sup> Your

house and your kingdom will endure forever before me<sup>[k]</sup>; your throne will be established forever.”

<sup>17</sup> Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

#### David’s Prayer

<sup>18</sup> Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said:

“Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? <sup>19</sup> And as if this were not enough in your sight, Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant—and this decree, Sovereign LORD, is for a mere human!<sup>[l]</sup>

<sup>20</sup> “What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign LORD. <sup>21</sup> For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.

<sup>22</sup> “How great you are, Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. <sup>23</sup> And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt?<sup>[m]</sup> <sup>24</sup> You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, LORD, have become their God.

<sup>25</sup> “And now, LORD God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, <sup>26</sup> so that your name will be great forever. Then people will say, ‘The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established in your sight.

<sup>27</sup> “LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. <sup>28</sup> Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your covenant is trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. <sup>29</sup> Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, Sovereign LORD, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.”