

Document 1: Excerpts from Epilogue of Hammurabi's Code

Hammurabi, the protecting king am I...That the strong might not injure the weak, in order to protect the widows and orphans...I set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me, as king of righteousness.

...By the command of Shamash, the great judge of heaven and earth, let righteousness go forth in the land...let no destruction befall my monument...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...

...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...

If this ruler does not esteem my words...if he destroy the law which I have given, may the great gods of heaven and earth...inflict a curse...upon his family, his land, his warriors, his subjects, and his troops.

Document 2: Excerpts from Hammurabi's Code (circa 1754 BCE)

Note: There are 282 Laws in Hammurabi's code. The numbers below refer to their order on the stele.

Law 129: If a married lady is caught [in adultery] with another man, they shall bind them and cast them into the water.

Law 148: If a man has married a wife and a disease has seized her, if he is determined to marry a second wife, he shall marry her. He shall not divorce the wife whom the disease has seized. She shall dwell in the house they have built together, and shall maintain there as long as she lives.

Law 168: If a man has determined to disinherit his son and has declared before the judge, "I cut off my son," the judge shall inquire into the son's past, and, if the son has not committed a grave misdemeanor..., the father shall not disinherit his son.

Law 195: If a son has struck his father, his hands shall be cut off.

Document 3: Excerpts from Hammurabi's Code (circa 1754 BCE)

Law 21: If a man has broke through the wall [to rob] a house, they shall put him to death and pierce him, or hang him in the hole in the wall which he has made.

Law 23: if the robber is not caught, the man who has been robbed shall formally declare whatever he has lost before a god, and the city and the mayor in whose territory or district the robbery has been committed shall replace for him whatever he has lost.

Law 48: If a man has borrowed money to plant his field and a storm has flooded his field or carried away the crop,...in that year he does not have to pay his creditor.

Law 53, 54: If a man has opened his trench for irrigation and the waters have flooded his neighbor's field, the man must restore the crop he has caused to be lost.

Document 4: Excerpts from Hammurabi's Code (circa 1754 BCE)

Law 196: If a man has knocked out the eye of a free man, his eye shall be knocked out.

Law 199: If he has knocked out the eye of a slave...he shall pay half his value.

Law 209: If a man strikes the daughter of a free man and causes her to lose the fruit of her womb, he shall pay 10 shekels of silver.

Law 213: If he has struck the slave girl of a free man and causes her to lose the fruit of her womb, he shall pay 2 shekels of silver.

Law 215: If a surgeon has operated with a bronze lancet [surgical tool] on the body of a free man...and saves the man's life, he shall receive 10 shekels of silver.

Law 218: if a surgeon has operated with a bronze lancet on a free man for a serious injury, and he has caused his death,...his hands shall be cut off.

Assignment

Step 1: Determine what the grouped laws have in common. Do they deal with family, penalties for breaking the law, social class, women, etc?

Step 2: What do the laws tell you about Babylonian Society? Make sure to **go beyond the obvious**. You can synthesize information from the textbook and our class with the information that you read in the documents.

Step 3: Determine whether you believe these laws are **just**. Pick a side!!! There is no right answer for this step; however, you must justify your position with a thorough explanation.

Step 4: Write one paragraph (**at least 7-8 sentences**) about **ONE** set of laws (i.e. document 1, 2, 3 or 4). Your topic sentence should be what the paragraph is about (i.e. role of women in Babylonian society). You should discuss what you discovered about that issue from the documents/textbook reading. Finally, you should determine whether you believe Babylonian society was fair based on the set of laws about which you write. Make sure to proofread!

Determining your topic sentence (What is the paragraph about?) _____ / 3 points

Analyzing what the laws tell you about Babylonian society _____ / 5 points

Determining whether these laws were just _____ / 5 points

Use of proper grammar/conventions _____ / 2 points