

Hammurabi's Code

Study these laws taken from the Code of Hammurabi, and then answer the questions below.

1. If a person accuses another person of a crime, the accused shall go to the river and jump in. If he drowns, the person who accused him may have the accused person's house. If the accused doesn't drown, then the River-God has decided that he is innocent. The person who made the accusation is to be put to death, and the accused shall take his house.
2. If anyone opens his ditches to water his crop, but is careless, and the water floods the field of his neighbor, then he shall pay his neighbor corn for his loss.
3. 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.
4. If a physician kills a patient or cuts out a patient's eye when trying to remove a tumor, the physicians' hands will be cut off.
5. If a builder builds a house and the house collapses and kills the owner of the house, the builder shall be put to death. If the house collapses and kills the owner's son, then the son of the builder shall be put to death.
6. If a son hits his father, his hands shall be cut off.
7. If a fire breaks out in a house and a person who helps to put out the fire steals something from the house, that person shall be thrown into the fire.
8. If a man destroys the eye of another man, his eye shall be destroyed. If he breaks the bone of another, his bone shall be broken.
9. 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 found guilty: 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 a servant in her husband's house.
10. If a man wishes to divorce his wife, he must return her dowry and give her the use of part of his field for farming and part of his property so that she can provide for her children.
11. If a man's wife becomes sick, the husband may take a second wife, but must continue to care for the sick wife as long as she lives.
12. If a person steals from a temple or takes goods stolen from the temple, he shall be put to death.

Based on these laws, what can we learn about Babylonian society? Record your answers below.

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Making a living: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Other aspects of Babylonian society: \_\_\_\_\_  
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