

HAMMURABI

?–1750 BC



WHY HE MADE HISTORY Hammurabi was a Babylonian king who established a set of laws to guide his people. The Code of Hammurabi is one of the earliest written collections of laws in history.

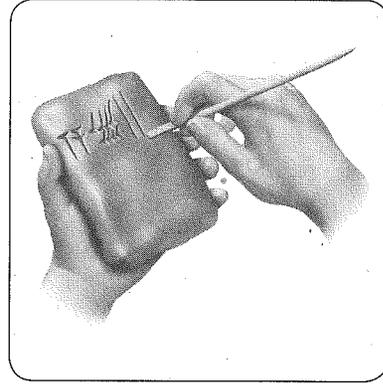


As you read the biography below, think about how King Hammurabi's code of laws helped govern the people of Babylon.

You may have heard the expression “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.” Did you know that this expression comes from a real law? The laws assembled by King Hammurabi were known as the Code of Hammurabi. There were a total of 282 laws used in ancient Babylon.

Hammurabi's laws were known to be strict and detailed. Punishment was harsh. For example, if you broke another person's bone, then your bone would be broken. Or if a carpenter built a house that later collapsed and killed the son of a homeowner, then the carpenter's own son would be put to death. Penalties varied according to status. Wealthy people were usually allowed to pay a fine instead of receiving a physical punishment. If the victim was a poor person, the rich might not be punished at all. Many of the laws are now considered harsh and outdated. However, these laws helped govern ancient Babylon during the rule of Hammurabi.

Hammurabi was the king of Babylon from 1792 to 1750 BC. He conquered other regions near his kingdom and merged them into his own empire. Hammurabi's Babylonian Empire stretched from the Persian Gulf to what is now Iraq, and included parts of present day Syria and Turkey.



VOCABULARY

cuneiform writing made by pressing a wedge-shaped tool into clay tablets

Hammurabi created his code by revising and elaborating on existing laws. The Code of Hammurabi was meant to protect the weak, and to treat conquered people fairly. The 282 laws dealt with matters such as crime, business regulations, wages, debts, family matters, military service, witchcraft, and false accusations. The Code of Hammurabi is one of the earliest known legal codes in existence. It was written in **cuneiform** on stone tablets. A stone monument on which the laws were written can be viewed today in the Louvre Museum in Paris, France.

After Hammurabi's death in 1750 BC, the Babylonian Empire collapsed. Babylon was invaded and conquered by the Kassites. The Kassites ruled Babylon for 400 years and followed the Code of Hammurabi.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. What was the Code of Hammurabi?

2. **Make Generalizations** In what ways might the Code of Hammurabi be similar to modern laws here in the United States?

ACTIVITY

3. Image that you are King Hammurabi. You have begun writing laws for the people of Babylon. Make a list of five laws that you would consider the most important for your people to obey.

Nebuchadnezzar

c. 630–562 BC



WHY HE MADE HISTORY King

Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler of the New Babylonian Empire from 605 to 562 BC. He is best known for conquering Jerusalem and for building the legendary Hanging Gardens of Babylon.



As you read the biography below, think about the strength Nebuchadnezzar must have had to accomplish all that he did.



There were four different kings of Babylon who were named Nebuchadnezzar. However, there was only one who made a major mark on history. Nebuchadnezzar, the second king known by that name, ruled Babylon from 605 to 562 BC. He was known for his power and strength, and his skills as a military leader. By fighting and defeating Assyria and Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar became the master of Western Asia for a time.

Nebuchadnezzar is remembered for the improvements he made to many temples and palaces in his kingdom. Under his rule many important buildings were built and renovated. One of these structures was the Ishtar Gate, a famous **procession** way decorated with ornate designs. Another well-known structure from Nebuchadnezzar's time was the ziggurat, a tall, pyramid-shaped tower.

The most famous structure from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, built at the Babylonian capital city near what is present day Baghdad in Iraq. According to legend, one of Nebuchadnezzar's wives had once

VOCABULARY

procession a parade

puppet king a leader who is controlled by an outside force

razed demolished

lived in the mountains. She didn't like the dry plains of Babylon and missed the greenery of her homeland. To please her Nebuchadnezzar ordered that thousands of brightly colored trees and flowers be planted on top of the terraces and roofs of the palace. From the ground, the gardens seemed to hang in the air. The ancient Greeks named the Hanging Gardens one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Nebuchadnezzar was also famous for capturing Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish kingdom. In 597 BC, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and replaced their ruler with a **puppet king**. Nebuchadnezzar earned a reputation as a cruel and powerful monarch. When the Jewish people rebelled against his rule, Nebuchadnezzar **razed** the temple in Jerusalem and sent many of the Jews to Babylon as prisoners. He finally destroyed the city in 586 BC.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon. He ruled the Babylonian Empire until his death in 562 BC.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?

2. **Summarize** Name and describe two of Nebuchadnezzar's accomplishments.

ACTIVITY

3. Use an encyclopedia or an online resource to do research on one of the structures that was built during Nebuchadnezzar's rule. Write a short summary about what you learn.

Enheduanna

c. 2285–2250 BC



WHY SHE MADE HISTORY Enheduanna, the daughter of Sargon the Great, was a priestess and a writer. She is often considered history's first known author.



As you read the biography below, think about what it must have been like for Enheduanna to be a writer during her time.

Enheduanna was the daughter of Sargon the Great, the king who founded the first great empire in history. Sargon the Great, also known as Sargon of Akkad, conquered all of Sumeria around 2347 BC. He was the first king to unite northern and southern Mesopotamia. Sargon appointed his daughter Enheduanna to serve as high priestess at Ur, one of the Sumerian city-states.

Enheduanna was a writer and a poet. She is the oldest author who is known by name. Enheduanna wrote two or three major works. These are lengthy **hymns** to Inanna, the Sumerian goddess of love and war. She also wrote 42 shorter hymns about the Akkadian temples in the different cities in Mesopotamia, and the **deities** that were worshipped at those temples.

As high priestess Enheduanna was connected to the moon god Nanna, as well as his daughter Inanna. Many of Enheduanna's writings were devoted to Nanna and Inanna. Her poems show her faith in her role as high priestess and express her feelings toward Inanna, whom she favored over the other gods. In addition to praising her gods, Enheduanna wrote about her own life and the struggles she faced



VOCABULARY

hymn a song of praise

deities gods

cuneiform writing made by pressing a wedge-shaped tool into clay tablets

because of her faith. She also wrote about what she was thinking as she wrote her hymns.

Enheduanna is considered the oldest author known by name, but her writings are rarely studied in school. This may be because her style of writing was complex and challenging. Her writings have been preserved on cuneiform tablets that have survived more than 4000 years.

It is likely that Enheduanna wrote many works that have been lost. Her most famous surviving works are *The Exaltation of Inanna* and *In-nin sa-gur-ra*. Both of these works were hymns written to be sung in praise the goddess Inanna. Enheduanna's work has a strong and personal presence, which is likely to be autobiographical in nature.

Little else is known about Enheduanna, although she is believed to be among the figures on a stone disk that was discovered by archaeologists digging at the site of the temple in Ur. The disk, made of alabaster, depicts a group of priests making an offering to the Sumerian moon god Nanna. The tallest figure in the center of the disk is thought to be Enheduanna.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. What were the subjects of Enheduanna's writings?

2. **Contrast** Compare what you have learned about Enheduanna with another famous writer. Tell how they are alike and how they are different.

ACTIVITY

3. Think about whether you prefer the day or nighttime. Write a poem to either the sun or the moon, based on your preference. Use what you have learned about Enheduanna to try to make your poem unique.