



# The Code of Hammurabi (1700s BCE): The Oldest Code of Laws in the World

*HAMMURABI KING OF BABYLON*

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Four Translations with Pictures of The Code of Hammurabi.

Hammurabi was the sixth Amorite king of Babylon from 1792 BC to 1750 BC middle chronology. He is known for the set of laws called Hammurabi's Code, which constitute one of the earliest surviving codes of law in recorded history. The structure of the code is very specific, with each offense receiving a specified punishment. The punishments tended to be very harsh by modern standards, with many offenses resulting in death, disfigurement, or the use of the "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Lex Talionis "Law of Retaliation") philosophy. The code is also one of the earliest examples of the idea of presumption of innocence, and it also suggests that the accused and accuser have the opportunity to provide evidence. However, there is no provision for extenuating circumstances to alter the prescribed punishment.

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