

# BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

“Surely the Best”

Good evening, welcome distinguished colleagues and fellow archaeologists. As you may know, my name is Alyssa Mattox and I am a professor at Stanford University. I want to thank my parents and teacher who got me where I am today. Thank you for inviting me to speak on this most important question, which Mesopotamian empire is the most accomplished? Many of you are familiar with my study of Mesopotamian Empires. There are four Empires. The Akkadians which was the first Empire. The



Assyrians, who were known for their ruthlessness. The Neo Babylonians, who were recognized for their astronomy and hanging gardens. Lastly, the empire which is my personal favorite and field the study, the Babylonians. They were known for their code of laws named Hammurabi's Code of Laws. When you leave here today I want you to take with you that the Babylonians are the most accomplished Empire.

Hammurabi was the first to create a code of laws that applied to everyone in his Empire. This was a good thing for his empire because it helped many people. Hammurabi was given the laws by the gods so this made him very powerful and therefore nobody would break his laws. Hammurabi made his codes very detailed. Some of the things he included in his laws were trade, payment, marriage, and divorce. The code also spelled things out like stealing, causing injury, and other crimes. The laws seemed very harsh but they were very reliable.

The code was first to consider women's rights. Because of this, they could own property, keep wages of their own and get jobs even if they were married! When the king passed the law of women's rights, husbands could not treat their wives like slaves or abuse them. Like women, slaves also could get jobs and keep their hard earned wages. Not only did they keep wages and get jobs but they could buy their way to freedom!



Yes, most of you are wondering what about the other three empires? the Assyrians, Akkadians, and the Neo-Babylonians. Let's take a closer look into each one. First, is the Assyrians. The Assyrians were known for their ruthlessness and who would really want to live in an empire of war and have to wear people's heads around their necks? Secondly, is the Akkadians. The Akkadians were the first empire so they were not experienced and stole the Sumerians writing techniques, which is just lazy. Lastly is the Neo-Babylonians. The Neo-Babylonians were inconsiderate because they only allowed the king and queen into the hanging gardens. This was a waste of money, water and time because other people could not enjoy the garden.

So have I convinced you the Babylonians are the best? I mean they were the first empire to have laws. Today we have a set of laws we have to live up to. If Hammurabi wouldn't have come up with a code of laws then the world would be a madhouse. The laws held freeing slaves and women's rights. So surely the Babylonians are the most accomplished!

Alyssa Mattox #18