

## The Code of Hammurabi

**Law 196: "If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out."**

- Significance: This is one of the most cited laws and is an example of the "lex talionis" or "an eye for an eye" principle. It can be used as a starting point to discuss retributive justice versus modern concepts of rehabilitative or restorative justice.

**Law 110: "If a 'sister of a god' open a tavern, or enter a tavern to drink, then shall this woman be burned to death."**

- Significance: This law offers a view into the societal roles and expectations of priestesses (referred to as "sisters of a god") and their importance or sanctity in Babylonian society.

**Law 129: "If a man's wife be surprised (in flagrante delicto) with another man, both shall be tied and thrown into the water, but the husband may pardon his wife and the king his slaves."**

- Significance: This provides a platform to discuss the status of women, marital fidelity, and the consequences of adultery in ancient Babylon, as compared to various societies and time periods.

**Law 251: "If an ox be a goring ox, and it shown that he is a gorer, and he do not bind his horns, or fasten the ox up, and the ox gore a free-born man and kill him, the owner shall pay one-half a mina in money."**

- Significance: This can be a precursor to discussions on responsibility and liability, especially in contemporary contexts (e.g., modern legal cases where companies are held liable for known product defects).

**Law 53: "If anyone be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the break occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the corn which he has caused to be ruined."**

- Significance: An early example of environmental or infrastructural regulation. It emphasizes the individual's responsibility towards community welfare.

**Law 15: "If any one take over a field to till it, and obtain no harvest therefrom, it must be proved that he did no work on the field, and he must deliver grain, just as his neighbor raised, to the owner of the field."**

- Significance: This emphasizes the value of hard work and fairness. It can be used to discuss contractual obligations and expectations.

**Law 137: "If a man wish to separate from his wife who has borne him no children, he shall give her the amount of her purchase money and the dowry which she brought from her father's house, and let her go."**

- Significance: This reflects the economic aspects of marriage and the societal expectation of procreation within a marriage in ancient Babylon. It can be contrasted with modern views on marriage and divorce.

**Law 218: "If a physician operates on a man for a severe wound with a bronze lancet and causes the man's death, or opens an abscess (in the eye) of a man with a bronze lancet and destroys the man's eye, they shall cut off his hand."**

- Significance: Liability in professional malpractice is showcased here, and it provides a basis for discussing professional responsibility across time and cultures.

**Law 195: "If a son strikes his father, they shall cut off his fingers."**

- Significance: Respect for parental authority and the severity of punishments for what's considered familial insubordination can be explored. It presents an opportunity to discuss changing views on parental rights, child rights, and domestic discipline.

**Law 21: "If a man strikes the body of a man, higher in rank than he, he shall receive sixty blows with an ox-whip in public."**

- Significance: This highlights the hierarchical nature of Babylonian society and the different values placed on individuals based on their social status. This can lead to discussions about social hierarchies in various cultures and periods and the evolution of egalitarian values.