

The Code of Hammurabi

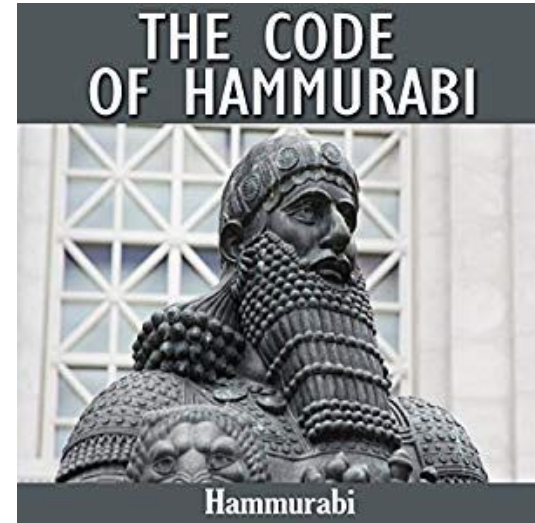
The Code of Hammurabi was created in roughly 1700 BCE by the Babylonian King, Hammurabi, and written in stone.



The Hammurabi Code had nearly 300 laws in total that governed the lives of the king's Babylonian subjects. The people were encouraged to comply with the law, as the king attributed it to the gods, whom were at the top of the hierarchy. Some of the rules included:

- If anyone is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death
- If anyone take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates, he shall be put to death
- If anyone be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and he does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the corn which has been cause to ruin

- If a son strikes his father, his hands shall be hewn off
- If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye. If one break a man's bone, they shall break his bone. (This law went on further, but the basic principle is the famous eye for an eye concept, which was very prominent in the Hammurabi Code



The Hammurabi Code was so successful because Hammurabi used the fear of religion to enforce his laws. He simply put that he is King because he was chosen by the gods and people both feared and respected him because they feared and respected the Babylonian Gods. Their chief god was Marduk. Marduk was the patron god of Babylon and was associated with vegetation, judgement, and magic. But the Sculpture of Hammurabi's Code suggested that he received the right to create laws) from Shamash, the sun god of Babylonia.



The Hammurabi Code was based on two methods of Justice.

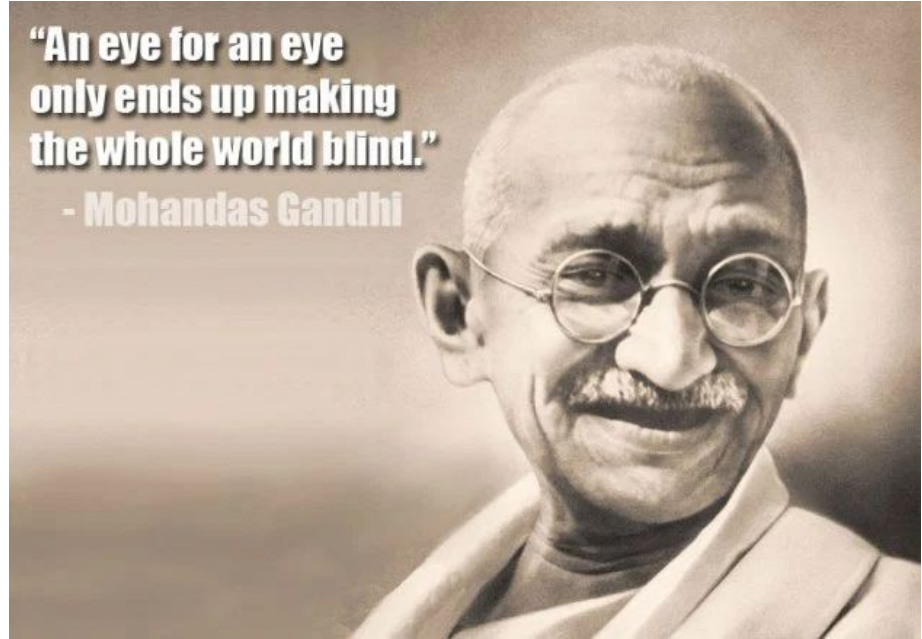
Restitution; The offender must repay the victim for goods stolen, damaged, or otherwise make amends for the wrong committed.

Retribution; If a wrong is committed, there should be some form of proportional (“eye for an eye”) punishment upon the perpetrator.

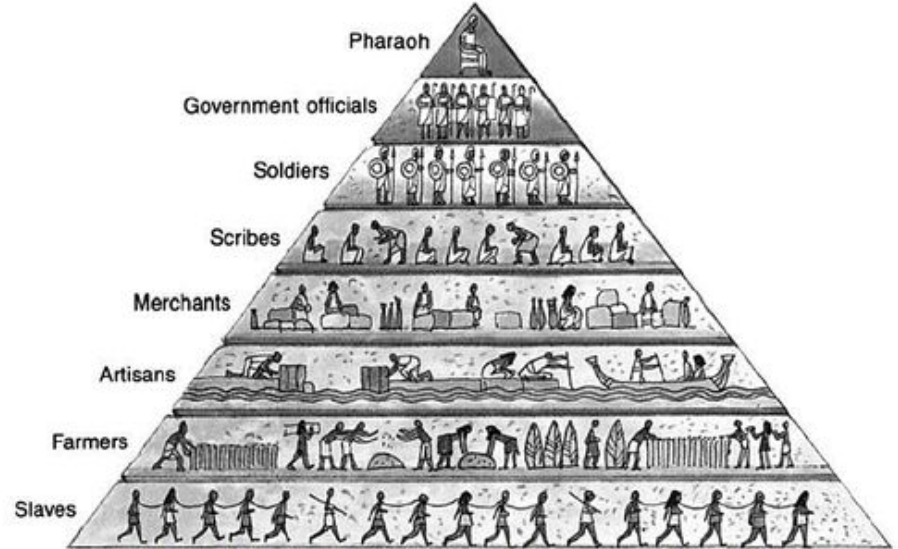
Both of which are key methods in most laws today, though the Hammurabi Code focused more on Retribution.

**“An eye for an eye
only ends up making
the whole world blind.”**

- Mohandas Gandhi

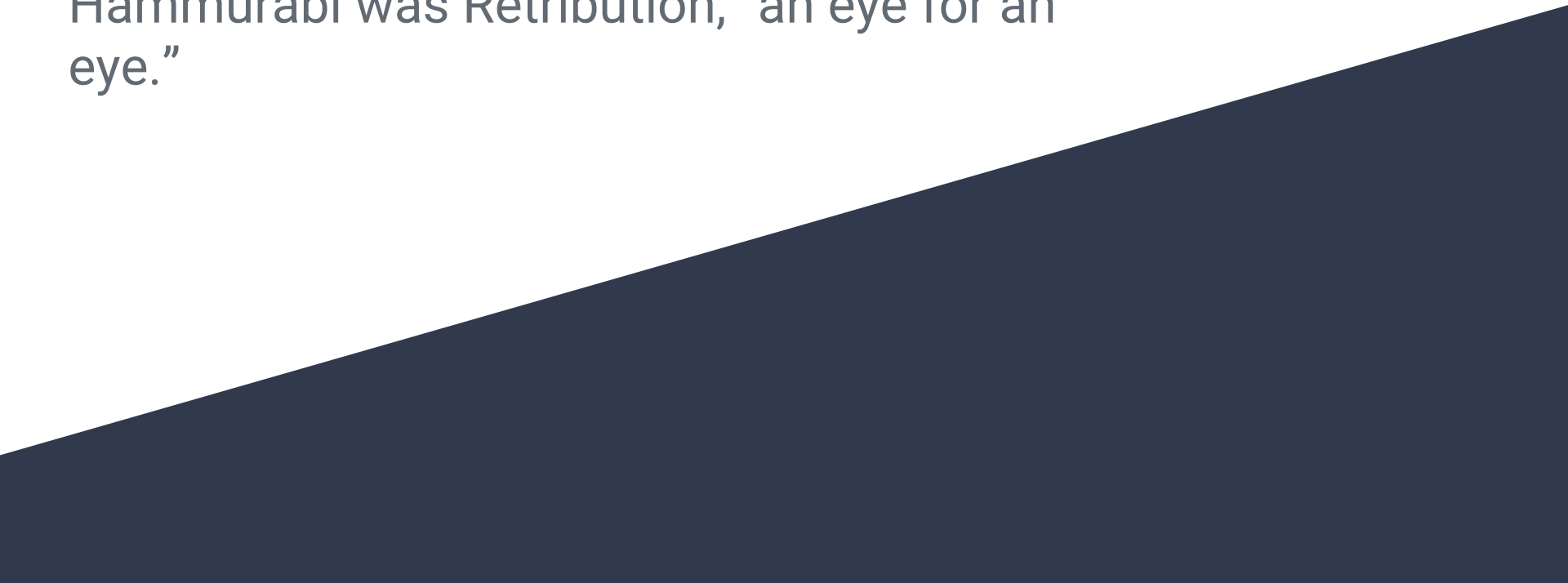


In Hammurabi's Code There is a distinct Hierarchy of Power. Gods were at the top followed by the King, Noble men, Women and children, and the poor and slaves. Because of the hierarchy of power, those who committed crimes often went unpunished and the punishment was forced upon female relatives or slaves. For example in The Code if a man were to hit a woman and she dies, the man's daughter is to be put to death.



The Big Idea

The main form of Justice from the Code of Hammurabi was Retribution, “an eye for an eye.”

A dark blue, solid-colored shape that starts from the bottom left corner and extends diagonally upwards towards the right, covering the bottom half of the slide.

Bibliography

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