



STUDENT READER

DAVE RAYMOND'S

ANTIQUITY



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Student Reader
Assignments & Exams

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LESSON 4

Look on My Works, Ye Mighty: Babel & Mesopotamia

LECTURE 4.1

The Reliability & Chronology of the Old Testament

ASSIGNMENT: Read Exodus 32:16, Deuteronomy 4:2, 31:22, 31:24-26, I Samuel 10:25, Jeremiah 30:2 and the included quotation from the historian Josephus. How does the Old Testament attest to its own authority? How does Josephus attest to the authority of the Old Testament?

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Verses on the authority of the Old Testament

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“The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.”

Exodus 32:16

“You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.”

Deuteronomy 4:2

“So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the people of Israel.”

Deuteronomy 31:22

“When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ‘Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.’”

Deuteronomy 31:24-26

“Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his home.”

I Samuel 10:25

“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.’”

Jeremiah 30:2

.....

Quotation from *Against Apion* by Titus Flavius Josephus

.....

“We do not possess myriads of inconsistent books, conflicting with each other. Our books, those which are justly accredited, are but two and twenty, and contain the record of all time. Of these, five are the books of Moses, comprising the laws and the traditional history from the birth of man down to the death of the lawgiver. This period falls only a little short of three thousand years. From the death

of Moses until Artaxerxes, who succeeded Xerxes as king of Persia, the prophets subsequent to Moses wrote the history of the events of their own times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life. From Artaxerxes to our own time the complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets. We have given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and, if need be, cheerfully to die for them."

LECTURE 4.2
Babel & Sargon

ASSIGNMENT: Read Genesis 10:1-11:9, the *Nam Shub* of Enki, and "The Legend of Sargon of Akkad." Compare and contrast the Genesis historical record with the ancient Mesopotamian accounts. How does Sargon compare to Nimrod? To Moses?

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The Nam Shub of Enki
.....

Once upon a time, there was no snake, there was no scorpion,
There was no hyena, there was no lion,
There was no wild dog, no wolf,
There was no fear, no terror,
Man had no rival.
In those days, the land Shubur-Hamazi,
Harmony-tongued Sumer, the great land of the
decrees of princeship,
Uri, the land having all that is appropriate,

The land Martu, resting in security,
The whole universe, the people well cared for,
To Enlil in one tongue gave speech.
Then the lord defiant, the prince defiant, the king
defiant,
Enki, the lord of abundance, whose commands are
trustworthy,
The lord of wisdom, who scans the land,
The leader of the gods,
The lord of Eridu, endowed with wisdom,
Changed the speech in their mouths, put conten-
tion into it,
Into the speech of man that had been one.

.....
"The Legend of Sargon of Akkad"
.....

Sargon, the mighty king, king of Akkad am I,
My mother was lowly; my father I did not know;
The brother of my father dwelt in the mountain.
My city is Azupiranu, which is situated on the
bank of the Purattu [Euphrates],
My lowly mother conceived me, in secret she
brought me forth.
She placed me in a basket of reeds, she closed my
entrance with bitumen,
She cast me upon the rivers which did not overflow
me.
The river carried me, it brought me to Akki, the
irrigator.
Akki, the irrigator, in the goodness of his heart
lifted me out,
Akki, the irrigator, as his own son brought me up;
Akki, the irrigator, as his gardener appointed me.
When I was a gardener the goddess Ishtar loved me,
And for four years I ruled the kingdom.
The black-headed peoples I ruled, I governed;
Mighty mountains with axes of bronze I destroyed.
I ascended the upper mountains;
I burst through the lower mountains.
The country of the sea I besieged three times;

Dilmun I captured.
 Unto the great Dur-ilu I went up, I . . .
 . . . I altered . . .
 Whatsoever king shall be exalted after me,

 Let him rule, let him govern the black-headed
 peoples;
 Mighty mountains with axes of bronze let him
 destroy;
 Let him ascend the upper mountains,
 Let him break through the lower mountains;
 The country of the sea let him besiege three times;
 Dilmun let him capture;
 To great Dur-ilu let him go up.

LECTURE 4.3
Mesopotamian Culture

ASSIGNMENT: Read the beginning of Tablet I from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. How does the character of Gilgamesh and the city of Uruk reflect the values of Mesopotamian culture?

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The Epic of Gilgamesh,
 Excerpt from Tablet I

I will tell of the history of Gilgamesh, he who knows all that has happened and has seen all the lands of the world, he who has seen all kinds of wisdom and knows the mysteries and has seen what is hidden. He bringeth news dating farther back than the deluge. He has travelled far-distant roads and became weary, and now he has engraved on standing stones the whole of the story.

When the gods fashioned Gilgamesh, to him they gave a perfect form. The glorious sun Shamash bestowed upon him glory; Adad the terrible god of storms bestowed upon him courage. The great gods

perfected his magnificence beyond all others, terrible like the great wild bull. Two thirds god they made him; one third man they made him.

Of Uruk, its great rampart he built, and the wall of the sacred Eanna temple, the holy sanctuary. Behold the outer walls which gleam with the brilliance of copper; see the inner wall which none might rival. Touch the threshold stone—it is from ancient days. Goest thou into the Eanna temple, yea, the dwelling place of Ishtar, the like of which no subsequent king or living man might equal. Ascend and walk about on the wall of Uruk, inspect the corner-stone, and examine its brick-work, whether its wall is not made of burned brick, and its foundation laid by the Seven Sages. One third for city, one third for garden, one third for field, and a precinct for the temple of Ishtar. These parts and the precinct comprise Uruk. Unveil the tablet box of copper. Unlatch the clasp of its brazen lock. Unbind the fastenings of the hidden opening. Bring forth and read out the lapis lazuli tablet that tells of the great hardships endured by Gilgamesh.

Greater than other kings, lofty in stature, a hero born in Uruk, a wild and rampaging bull was he. He leads forth at the front, the leader; he brings up the rear, a trusted companion. He is a great net who protects his men, a thrashing flood-wave capable of devastating even walls of stone. As son of Lugalbanda, Gilgamesh is perfection in his strength, son too of the august cow, Ninsun, the goddess. Gilgamesh is tall, glorious, and terrific. It was he who cut open the passes through the mountains, who dug the wells on the slopes of the mountainsides, and who crossed the ocean itself, the great sea, to meet the sunrise, exploring every part of the whole world for the secret of life. It was he who by his strength alone reached Utnapishtim, the distant, who restored the holy places that the Flood had destroyed, and who for the teeming masses instilled the rites of heaven.

Who can rival Gilgamesh? Who might like him say “It is I who am king?” From the moment of his birth his name has forever been Gilgamesh.

Two thirds god they made him; one third man they made him. The Great Goddess herself planned the shape of his body; glory, beauty and perfection were bestowed on him by Nudimmud. His foot was a triple cubit in size, his leg half a rod. Six cubits did he cover in each stride. His cheeks were flush with ample beard, and his hair was thick like barley. His beauty was beyond compare, he was the most handsome man on earth.

Around the enclosed space that is Uruk he walks, mighty like the wild bull, head raised high. None with weapon might challenge him as rival. His men stand at attention, longing for his orders; but the old men of Uruk grouse that Gilgamesh has left no son to his father, for his arrogance has grown boundless. He has taken all their children, for is Gilgamesh not the shepherd of his people? Gilgamesh does not leave a daughter to her mother, nor the maiden to the warrior, nor the wife to her husband. Yet Gilgamesh is the magnificent and glorious shepherd of his people.

LECTURE 4.4
Creation Myths, Sumer, and Akkad

ASSIGNMENT: Read the example of a Babylonian creation myth. How does the Babylonian creation story differ from the Genesis account? How does it lack an *ex nihilo* creation, and how is it therefore violent?

.....
Enuma Elish
 Tablet IV

They set up a throne for Marduk and he sat down facing his forefathers to receive the government. "One god is greater than all great gods, a fairer fame, the word of command, the word from heav-

en, O Marduk, greater than all great gods, the honor and the fame, the will of Anu, great command, unaltering and eternal word! Where there is action the first to act, where there is government the first to govern; to glorify some, to humiliate some, that is the gift of the god, Truth absolute, unbounded will; which god dares question it? In their beautiful places a place is kept for you, Marduk, our avenger. We have called you here to receive the scepter, to make you king of the whole universe. When you sit down in the Synod you are the arbiter; in the battle your weapon crushes the enemy. Lord, save the life of any god who turns to you; but as for the one who grasped evil, from that one let his life drain out."

They conjured then a kind of apparition and made it appear in front of him, and they said to Marduk, the first-born son, "Lord, your word among the gods arbitrates, destroys, creates: then speak and this apparition will disappear. Speak again, again it will appear." He spoke and the apparition disappeared. Again he spoke and it appeared again. When the gods had proved his word they blessed him and cried, "MARDUK IS KING!"

They robed him in robes of a king, the scepter and the throne they gave him, and matchless war-weapons as a shield against the adversary. "Be off. Slit life from Tiamat, and may the winds carry her blood to the world's secret ends."

The old gods had assigned to Bel what he would be and what he should do, always conquering, always succeeding; Then Marduk made a bow and strung it to be his own weapon, he set the arrow against the bow-string, in his right hand he grasped the mace and lifted it up, bow and quiver hung at his side, lightnings played in front of him, he was altogether an incandescence. He netted a net, a snare for Tiamat; the winds from their quarters held it, south wind, north, east wind, west, and no part of Tiamat could escape.

With the net, the gift of Anu, held close to his side, he himself raised up Imhullu the atrocious wind, the tempest, the whirlwind, the hurricane,

the wind of four and the wind of seven, the tumid wind worst of all. All seven winds were created and released to savage the guts of Tiamat, they towered behind him. Then the tornado Abuba his last great ally, the signal for assault, he lifted up. He mounted the storm, his terrible chariot, reins hitched to the side, yoked four in hand the appalling team, sharp poisoned teeth, the Killer, the Pitiless, Trampler, Haste, they knew arts of plunder, skills of murder. He posted on his right the Batterer, best in the melee; on his left the Battle-fury that blasts the bravest, lapped in this armor, a leaping terror, a ghastly aureole; with a magic word clenched between his lips, a healing plant pressed in his palm, this lord struck out.

He took his route towards the rising sound of Tiamat's rage, and all the gods besides, the fathers of the gods pressed in around him, and the lord approached Tiamat. He surveyed her scanning the Deep, he sounded the plan of Kingu her consort; but so soon as Kingu sees him he falters, flusters, and the friendly gods who filled the ranks beside him, when they saw the brave hero, their eyes suddenly blurred.

But Tiamat without turning her neck roared, spitting defiance from bitter lips, "Upstart, do you think yourself too great? Are they scurrying now from their holes to yours?" Then the lord raised the hurricane, the great weapon he flung his words at the termagant fury, "Why are you rising, your pride vaulting, your heart set on faction, so that sons reject fathers? Mother of all, why did you have to mother war? You made that bungler your husband, Kingu! You gave him the rank, not his by right, of Anu. You have abused the gods my ancestors, in bitter malevolence you threaten Anshar, the king of all the gods. You have marshaled forces for battle, prepared the war-tackle. Stand up alone and we will fight it you, you and I alone in battle."

When Tiamat heard him her wits scattered, she was possessed and shrieked aloud, her legs shook from the bowels down, she gabbled spells, muttered

maledictions, while the gods of war sharpened their weapons. Then they met: Marduk, that cleverest of gods, and Tiamat grappled alone in singled fight. The lord shot his net to entangle Tiamat, and the pursuing tumid wind, Imhullu, came from behind and beat in her face. When the mouth gaped open to suck him down he drove Imhullu in, so that the mouth would not shut but wind raged through her belly; her carcass blown up, tumescent.

She gaped—and now he shot the arrow that split the belly, that pierced the gut and cut the womb. Now that the Lord had conquered Tiamat he ended her life, he flung her down and straddled the carcass; the leader was killed, Tiamat was dead, her rout was shattered, her band dispersed.

Those gods who had marched beside her now quaked in terror, and to save their own lives, if they could, they turned their backs on danger. But they were surrounded, held in a tight circle, and there was no way out. He smashed their weapons and tossed them into the net; they found themselves inside the snare, they wept in holes and hid in corners suffering the wrath of god. When they resisted he put in chains the eleven monsters, Tiamat's unholy brood, and all their murderous armament. The demoniac band that has marched in front of her he trampled in the ground.

But Kingu the usurper, he chief of them, he bound and made death's god. He took the Tables of Fate, usurped without right, and sealed them with his seal to wear on his own breast. When it was accomplished, the adversary vanquished, the haughty enemy humiliated; when the triumph of Anshar was accomplished on the enemy, and the will of Nudimmud was fulfilled, then brave Marduk tightened the ropes of the prisoners. He turned back to where Tiamat lay bound, he straddled the legs and smashed her skull (for the mace was merciless), he severed the arteries and the blood streamed down the north wind to the unknown ends of the world.

When the gods saw all this they laughed out loud, and they sent him presents. They sent him

their thankful tributes. The lord rested; he gazed at the huge body, pondering how to use it, what to create from the dead carcass. He split it apart like a cockle-shell; with the upper half he constructed the arc of sky, he pulled down the bar and set a watch on the waters, so they should never escape. He crossed the sky to survey the infinite distance; he stationed

himself above *apsu*, that *apsu* built by Nudimmud over the old abyss which now he surveyed, measuring out and marking in. He stretched the immensity of the firmament, he made Esharra, the Great Palace, to be its earthly image, and Anu and Enlil and Ea had each their right stations.

LECTURE 4.5

Babylon & Mesopotamian Religion

ASSIGNMENT: Complete Exam #4. (See below for an optional, additional assignment.)

EXAM #4

1. How does Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem "Ozymandias" reveal man's pride in his power as well as his limits?
2. For what reasons is the Old Testament a reliable text?
3. Why do chronology and dating the events of the Old Testament matter?
4. How is city-building an important feature of the City of Man culture found in both Cain's line and in the history of Mesopotamia?
5. For what reasons did the people build the Tower of Babel?
6. Why might Eridu be the site of Babel?
7. Who was Nimrod?
8. Who was Sargon I?
9. What does *Mesopotamia* mean, and where is it located?
10. What were Mesopotamian cities and governments like?
11. What was the purpose of the ziggurat?
12. What was cuneiform? What is the content of the vast majority of cuneiform tablets discovered?
13. How does the Mesopotamian creation account in the *Enuma Elish* both compare and contrast to the creation story of Genesis?
14. What does *The Epic of Gilgamesh* reveal about Mesopotamian or Sumerian culture?
15. Of what character was Hammurabi? How does his law code differ from that of the Old Testament?

ASSIGNMENT: [Optional] Read the following excerpts from the epilogue of the “Code of Hammurabi.” Where does Hammurabi say his laws come from? How is this different from where Moses says his laws come (see Deut. 4:2)?

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The “Code of Hammurabi,”
Excerpts from the Epilogue

.....

Laws of justice which Hammurabi, the wise king, established. A righteous law, and pious statute did he teach the land. Hammurabi, the protecting king am I. I have not withdrawn myself from the men, whom Bel gave to me, the rule over whom Marduk gave to me, I was not negligent, but I made them a peaceful abiding-place. I expounded all great difficulties, I made the light shine upon them. With the mighty weapons which Zamama and Ishtar entrusted to me, with the keen vision with which Ea endowed me, with the wisdom that Marduk gave me, I have uprooted the enemy above and below (in north and south), subdued the earth, brought prosperity to the land, guaranteed security to the inhabitants in their homes; a disturber was not permitted. The great gods have called me, I am the salvation-bearing shepherd, whose staff is straight, the good shadow that is spread over my city; on my breast I cherish the inhabitants of the land of Sumer and Akkad; in my shelter I have let them repose in peace; in my deep wisdom have I enclosed them. That the strong might not injure the weak, in order to protect the widows and orphans, I have in Babylon the city where Anu and Bel raise high their head, in E-Sagil, the Temple, whose foundations stand firm as heaven and earth, in order to bespeak justice in the land, to settle all disputes, and heal all injuries, set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me,

as king of righteousness.

The king who ruleth among the kings of the cities am I. My words are well considered; there is no wisdom like unto mine. By the command of Shamash, the great judge of heaven and earth, let righteousness go forth in the land: by the order of Marduk, my lord, let no destruction befall my monument. In E-Sagil, which I love, let my name be ever repeated; let the oppressed, who has a case at law, come and stand before this my image as king of righteousness; let him read the inscription, and understand my precious words: the inscription will explain his case to him; he will find out what is just, and his heart will be glad, so that he will say:

“Hammurabi is a ruler, who is as a father to his subjects, who holds the words of Marduk in reverence, who has achieved conquest for Marduk over the north and south, who rejoices the heart of Marduk, his lord, who has bestowed benefits for ever and ever on his subjects, and has established order in the land.”

When he reads the record, let him pray with full heart to Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady; and then shall the protecting deities and the gods, who frequent E-Sagil, graciously grant the desires daily presented before Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady.

In future time, through all coming generations, let the king, who may be in the land, observe the words of righteousness which I have written on my monument; let him not alter the law of the land which I have given, the edicts which I have enacted; my monument let him not mar. If such a ruler have wisdom, and be able to keep his land in order, he shall observe the words which I have written in this inscription; the rule, statute, and law of the land which I have given; the decisions which I have made will this inscription show him; let him rule his subjects accordingly, speak justice to them, give right decisions, root out the miscreants and criminals from this land, and grant prosperity to his subjects.