

RLST 145 -- Introduction to the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible

Study Guide for lecture on Wednesday, October 11

Biblical Law

Readings in Ancient Near Eastern Law Codes:

Laws of Lipit-Ishtar (LI) -- on line; course packet

Laws of Ur-Nammu (UN) -- on line; course packet

Laws of Eshnunna (LE) -- on line; course packet

Code of Hammurabi (CH) -- In ANET pp. 138-167. Skim the code, but read carefully the following sections -- prologue, paragraphs 6-10, 21-25, 108-109, 129, 192-214, 229-231, 250-252, epilogue

Middle Assyrian Laws (MAL) -- on line; course packet. Read carefully -- Tablet A: 3-4, 10, 14-16, 20-21, 24, 44, 50-55, 59; Tablet B:2.

Hittite Laws (HL) -- on line; course packet. Read carefully -- Tablet I:1-5, 7-8, 93-95; Tablet II: 123, 166-167, 187-188, 199-200.

As you read through the Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Codes try to identify points of similarity and difference. **The following points will be discussed in lecture.**

1. Who is the author of the laws? (See especially Ex 24:3-4, 31:18, 34:29-35. UN prologue [lines 24-168]; LI prologue and epilogue; CH prologue [on handout].)
2. What are the implications of the divine authorship of biblical law in terms of
 - (a) scope: do the ANE and biblical law systems differ in scope (i.e., what areas of human life and activity fall within the concern of the laws)? (See especially Ex 23:4-5, 9-19, Lev 18-20.)
 - (b) the relationship between law and morality: do you perceive a distinction between ANE and biblical law regarding the relationship between law and morality? (See especially Lev 19:9-10, 14, 17-18, 29, 32, 33-34; Dt 22:1-3, 6.)
 - (c) the purpose of the law: what is the purpose of the law in ANE and biblical society (i.e., what are the "benefits" it is designed to achieve)? (See especially UN prologue, LI prologue, CH prologue; Ex 19:1-6, Lev 18:24-30; 19:1-4; 20:7-8.)
3. Are there formal or stylistic differences between ANE and biblical law? (See especially Ex 22:20, 23:9; Lev 19:33-34; Dt 20:19-20, 24:17-22.)
4. Compare ANE and biblical law in terms of concern for the disadvantaged, humanitarianism and the distinctions based on social class. (See especially, UN 14, 22; CH 15, 16, 19, 195-208; MAL A24, A44, A59; HL I 1-8, 17-18, 95, 99; Ex 21:2-6, 18-21, 26-32; Lev 24:17-22, 25:35-46; Dt 15:1-18, 20:1-9, 23:16-17, 23:16-17, 24:19-22.)
5. What is the value placed on human life in the two systems. (Consider which crimes are punished by capital punishment and which by monetary compensation; see especially UN 15-19; CH 6-10, 21-25, 108-109, 129, 192-199, 201, 206-208, 210, 212, 229, 230; MAL A3, A7-10, A20, A53, A55, B2; HL I 1-18, 37-38, 126, II 105-107, 123, 187-188, 199-200; Ex 21:12-14; Lev 24:17-22; Num 35.)

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