

0. RELIGION of ANCIENT BABYLON - Story Preface

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Marduk (an important god of Babylon) is depicted here with Anzu (a dragon). From Austen Henry Layard's book, *Monuments of Nineveh, Second Series*, published (in 1853) by J. Murray (London). To focus on Marduk, the image was cropped (by Georgelazenby) from Layard's original plate. Online via Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

Hammurabi, and the people of his empire, worshiped several gods. Their chief god was Marduk.

The Babylonians built temples, called ziggurats, to worship their gods. The city of Babylon had an especially beautiful temple dedicated to Marduk. It may have looked something like this imagined construction.

From the *Enuma Elish*, the epic poem of this ancient religion, we learn how Marduk becomes the chief god. (The link takes you to a picture of some of the tablets written in Cuneiform, in the Akkadian language.) The people eventually called him "Bel" which means "lord." From the epic creation poem *Gilgamesh*, we learn how man survived a Great Flood.

The parallels between the stories from those ancient religions of Mesopotamia, and the Biblical accounts of creation and the flood, are inescapable. Of course, the deities differ since the people of Mesopotamia worshiped many gods.

Shamash was the Babylonian god of the sun. As patron of law and justice, it is Shamash who now takes center stage in the story of Hammurabi.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/RELIGION-of-ANCIENT-BABYLON-Hammurabi-and-His-Code-of-Laws>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/RELIGION-of-ANCIENT-BABYLON-Hammurabi-and-His-Code-of-Laws>

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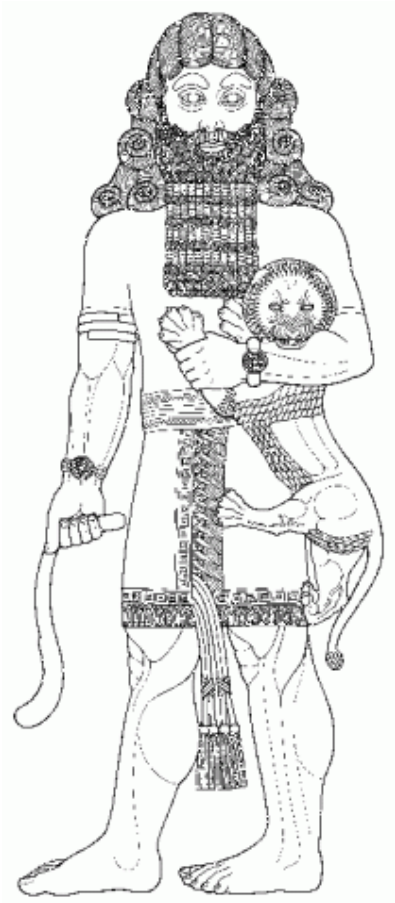


Temple of Babylon - Artist Reconstruction

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Gilgamesh

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Shamash

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