

lot of books and finds out what your rights are, and maybe he'll have to say, Wait for an important case and see whether you have these rights or not!

But Hammurabi evidently thought he could make them clear enough that the ordinary person could read the inscription and tell. That's quite different from the old idea, that at the days of the writing of the Bible, writing was very uncommon. I don't mean necessarily everybody in Babylon could read this, but certainly he thought either everybody could read it or had a friend who could read it. to them. Writing was quite widespread as early as the time of Abraham in Babylon.

This is quite a time after Abraham. This is at the end of the kgd. of Babylon because it was conquered and taken over by the Medes and Persians. So when we began excavating in Babylon we found in Babylon-- by the way this stone Code of Hammurabi I mentioned was taken away by the Elams once when they conquered Babylon, and it was thought to be of sufficient value (this big heavy stone) to be carried clear off across the mtns. to a distant place where eventually it was found. It is today in the Louvre in Paris.

In Babylon we found thousands of clay tables, about the size of a cake of ivory soap. The bulk of them are legal documents, contracts, that sort of thing. You can see that it was necessary to have documents, and necessary for a person to know how to read these contracts. When you realize that in this Code of Hammurabi which was the law of Babylon from the time of Abraham and one, that in this the statement is made that if a person sees something in somebody else's hands which he knows is his property he can go to the court and give proof this is his property, and the other man is to be killed as a thief! Unless the other man can bring proof that he purchased it legally, and if he can bring such proof then the man from whom he purchased it is killed as a thief. It was mighty important to have written documents, or else living witnesses you would be sure when a thing like that might come up for anything that you purchased.

So we have thousands of these clay tablets recording all sorts of transactions. Thousands of them have been taken from Babylon to the British Museum. In these historical records from Babylon==because all these legal contracts they did not read right away, they glanced at them to see what they were. When they found a historical or literary document naturally those got the first attention. The others were put aside and was hoped they would be read at some time with care.

The historical documents were read and in them it was found that the last king of Babylon was named Nabonidus. This says Belshazzar. It was found that the last king of Babylon, Nabonidus, when the Persians conquered, was sent into exile and allowed to live on. This says that night was Belshazzar the king of Chaldeans slain. This doesn't fit with somebody writing this right on the spot. That would fit very well with the critical idea that 2 400 years later somebody made up a story to encourage people to stand valiantly against the Assyrian oppressors. And he thought of a name which he thought might have been the name of the last king of Babylon, or