

# AFFIRMING FAITH

## LESSON 2: GENESIS VS \_\_\_\_\_ THE ANSWER IF YOU WANT TO REALLY LOOK

Our last study, we ended with the thought that Abraham's grandparents and ancestors worshiped other gods (Josh.24:2) than the God we know in Genesis. Abraham on the other hand heard God's voice (Acts 7:2,3). What was it that made Abraham hear God vs. the other gods that his forefathers worshipped? Who was this God that Abraham should listen to Him over the other deities that existed at the time?

**QUESTION:** If we did not know God and were not familiar with the Bible at all, Rom.1:19,20 tells that God can be known how? \_\_\_\_\_

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Comparing this with Heb.11:3 what does this tell us about a step that must be taken at some point in our journey of understanding? \_\_\_\_\_

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## CREATION EPICS, MYTHS, AND STORIES

### MESOPOTAMIAN (Earliest Known)



In Mesopotamia, the surviving evidence indicates that although many of the gods were associated with natural forces, no single myth addressed issues of initial creation. It was simply assumed that the gods existed before the world was formed. Very little survives of Sumerian literature from before the development of Cuneiform, yet the fragmentary tablets that do contain references to a time before the pantheon of the gods, when only the Earth (Sumerian: ki) and Heavens (Sumerian: an) existed. All was dark, there existed neither sunlight nor moonlight; however, the earth was green and water was in the ground, although there was no vegetation. A Sumerian myth known today as "Gilgamesh and the

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Netherworld” opens with a mythological prologue. It assumes that the gods and the universe already exist and that once a long time ago the heavens and earth were united, only later to be split apart. Later, humankind was created and the great gods divided up the job of managing and keeping control over heavens, earth, and the Netherworld. The origins of humans are described in another early second-millennium Sumerian poem, “The Song of the Hoe.” In this myth, as in many other Sumerian stories, the god Enlil is described as the deity who separates heavens and earth and creates humankind. Humanity is formed to provide for the gods, a common theme in Mesopotamian literature.

### **BABYLONIAN AND LATER VERSIONS (1800 BC.)**

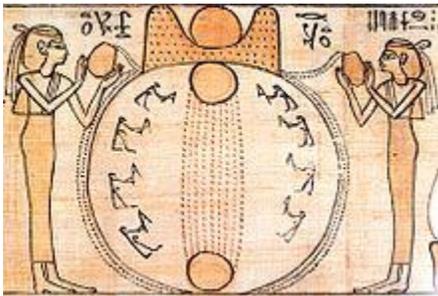


Babylonians have their own epics that came much later in history. In the Babylonian version Enma Enlil, Enki, and the younger gods fight against Tiamat futilely until, from among them, emerges the champion Marduk who swears he will defeat Tiamat. Marduk defeats Quingu and kills Tiamat by shooting her with an arrow which splits her in two; from her eyes flow the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers . Out of Tiamat's corpse, Marduk creates the

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heavens and the earth, he appoints gods to various duties and binds Tiamat's eleven creatures to his feet as trophies before setting their images in his new home. He also takes the Tablets of Destiny from Quingu, thus legitimizing his reign. After the gods have finished praising him for his great victory and the art of his creation, Marduk consults with the god Ea (the god of wisdom) and decides to create human beings from the remains of whichever of the gods instigated Tiamat to war. Quingu is charged as guilty and killed and, from his blood, Ea creates Lullu, the first man, to be a helper to the gods in their eternal task of maintaining order and keeping chaos at bay. As the poem phrases it, "Ea created mankind/On whom he imposed the service of the gods and set the gods free." Following this, Marduk "arranged the organization of the netherworld" and distributed the gods to their appointed stations. The poem ends in Tablet VII with long praise of Marduk for his accomplishments.

### **EGYPTIAN (2780 – 2250 B.C.)**



The different creation myths in Egyptian lore and most have some elements in common. They all held that the world had arisen out of the lifeless waters of chaos, called Nu. They also included a pyramid-shaped mound, called the benben, which was the first thing to emerge from the waters. The sun was also closely associated with creation, and it was said to have first risen from the mound, as the general sun-god Ra or as the god Khepri, who represented the newly-risen sun.

### **GENESIS**

Genesis is written from the standpoint of revealing to us God as separate and different from other things that are called gods and distinguish God from other creation legends and myths.

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All of these have to be accepted by FAITH, so why should we believe that the God of the Bible is the one to follow? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What does Genesis teach us that is DIFFERENT than these other epics and myths? \_\_\_\_\_

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- According to Genesis, the sun, moon and stars were made for what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Are they or have they ever been deities? \_\_\_\_\_
- According to Genesis 1 & 2, what do we know about God? \_\_\_\_\_

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- According to Genesis 1&2, what does this tell us about the creation of man and man's place in all of God's creation? \_\_\_\_\_

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### NEXT LESSON

LESSON 3 – **EDEN** God's Response and Plan Begins – Is the story of Eden a myth? Did it really exist? What can we learn about God, man, animals and creation?