**HUMA 1850 Bible and Modern Contexts**

**Oct. 15: Creation Narratives and the OT and Modern Film**  
Read for Today: IB Ch. 3 Echoes of Empire in Monarchal Israel (pp. 74-84); Genesis 1-11.

1. The Pentateuch

* features the pre-history of Israel (i.e., the stories that occur before the founding of the nation of Israel)
* comprises first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
* who wrote the Pentateuch?
* problems with single author hypothesis: different writing styles in the text, differing names for God and certain places; multiple versions of the same stories (doublets); anachronistic names for places

2. Group Work: Two Creation Stories in Genesis 1-3

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Genesis 1:1-2:4a | Genesis 2:4b-5 |
| * name of God: * portrayal of God: * order of creation: * creation of humans: * literary style: * themes: |  |  |

3. The Documentary Hypothesis

* J (Yahwist): version one of the “Old Epic” stretching from Creation to the Exodus; uses the name of Yahweh for God; composed in southern Israel in time of King Solomon or shortly thereafter (ca. 950 BCE)
* E (Elohist): version two of the “Old Epic”; uses the name Elohim for God; written ca. 750 BCE after the ten northern tribes split from the two southern tribes; many of the stories of Abraham come from this source
* D (Deuteronomist): ca. 650 BCE a book of the law was found in the Jerusalem Temple; scholars think this was Deuteronomy; mostly laws in sermonic form; joined to the other texts ca. 550 BCE
* P (Priestly): end of 6th c. BCE Israelites return from Exile in Babylon; there was then an attempt by the priestly class to reinvigorate and restore worship; part of effort was to create a unified history of Israel; these priests gave the Pentateuch its final form ; (ca. 500-400 BCE) and added legal materials related to worship and genealogical lists
* a new Documentary Hypothesis: L (Lay or “non-priestly” source) instead of J and E
* the stories of the Pentateuch are united by a single theme: a cycle of rebellion/disobedience, punishment, mercy

4. Ancient Near Eastern Parallels to Creation and the Flood

* *Epic of Atrahasis*
  + written ca. 1800 BCE, Akkadian
  + creation myth: humans created by gods to do work
  + flood story: Enlil wants to kill humans with a flood; Enki warns the hero Atrahasis, who creates an ark
* *Epic of Gilgamesh*
  + written ca. 21000 BCE, Sumerian
  + hero Gilgamesh meets Utnapishtim (this story’s Noah) who tells his story of how he became immortal
* *Enuma Elish*
  + written ca. 1800-1600 BCE, Babylonian
  + creation myth starting with watery chaos; trees in paradise;
* *Great Hymn to Aton*
  + written ca. 1400 BCE, Egyptian
  + speaks things into being; ends with humans

5. Gen 11:1-9: The Tower of Babel

* the ziggurat of Ur
* note: plural name for God, use of the disobedience—punishment—mercy theme

6. Psalms

* Hebrew title is Praises; a hymnbook of praise and thanksgiving addressed to God rather than from God like the prophets
* 150 psalms divided into five books as reflection of the Pentateuch
* attributed to David but come from various times and various authors: royal, laments, liturgy
* borrowings: Ps. 104 and the Egyptian Hymn to Aton; Ps. 29 originally about Baal?; Pss. 14 and 40 virtually identical to 53 and 70