

HUMA 1850 Bible and Modern Contexts

Oct. 7: Creation Narratives and the OT and Modern Film (Tony B and Tony M)

**** Test # 1 takes place during the first 20 minutes of today’s class ****

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 sermon 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. 2100 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