

## The Gospel Plan of Salvation

### *God's Part*

1. The great **Love** of God for man (John 3:16).
2. He gave **Christ** as the Savior (Luke 19:10).
3. He sent the **Holy Spirit** to reveal His word (John 16:13).
4. He gave the **Gospel** as "the power" unto salvation (Romans 1:16).
5. He provided **Atonement** by the blood of Christ (Romans 5:9; Colossians 1:4).

### *Man's Part*

1. **Hear** the Gospel (Romans 10:17; John 8:32).
2. **Believe** the Gospel (Hebrews 11:6; John 20:31).
3. **Repent** of past sins (Luke 13:8; Acts 17:30).
4. **Confess** faith in Christ (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32).
5. **Be Baptized** for the remission of sins (Galatians 3:27; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
6. **Be Faithful** to death (Revelation 2:10).

*God Has Done His Part. Will You Do Yours?*

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## *Faithful Sayings* Olsen Park Church of Christ

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### Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.  
10:20 a.m.  
6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

### Elders:

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Charles Kelley  
Pat Ledbetter

### Deacons:

Dean Bowers  
Eddie Cook  
Bill Davis  
Pat Goguen  
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## Did Genesis Borrow From Pagan Creation Myths?

Since the seventeenth century critics of the Bible have tried to suggest that the books of Moses were not verbally inspired but compiled from source documents which are no longer extant. With the archaeological discovery of Mesopotamian and Egyptian creation myths in recent centuries, critics have tried to further argue that the account of creation in Genesis was merely borrowed, adapted and custom tailored from these myths. While it can not be denied that there are interesting similarities between the Biblical account and these myths, the distinctive features of the Biblical



account make it impossible to credibly entertain such a suggestion.

### **The Mesopotamian Myth - *Enuma Elish***

The Mesopotamian myth, called *Enuma Elish* (from the opening words of the epic - meaning “when on high”) begins with a universe composed of a massive watery chaos of salt and fresh waters mingled together. Two deities make up this mass: Tiamet, the goddess of salt-water and Abzu, the god of fresh-water. The two gods give birth to two other gods: Ea (earth) and Anu (sky). Ea and Anu separate Tiamet and Abzu and Ea kills Abzu and covers his body. Thus earth covers Abzu forming the “abyss” of underground fresh waters.<sup>1</sup> Tiamet is convinced by a new lover to try and restore the original chaos of the universe by killing the younger gods. When they learn of her plot they convince Marduk, the god of storm and light and order him to fight against her. He kills her and from her severed body creates the heavens and the geological formations of the earth.

### **The Egyptian Myth - *The Book of the Evolutions of Ra***

Egyptian myths were varied and diverse depending upon the region of

Egypt in which they were circulated. One myth which was popular east of the delta was related in the book known as the *Book of the Evolutions of Ra*. Like the Mesopotamian myth, originally there was a chaotic watery mass known as the deity Nu. The sun-god Ra brings forth from the midst of Nu two gods: Shu (the god of air, light and heat) and his mate Tefnut. According to some myths about Shu, he was said to separate two lovers that mingled in the waters of Nu: Nut (sky) and Geb (earth). In this separation Shu lifts the watery heavens of Nut above Geb forming the heavens and the earth. The Egyptians believed that the heavens were actually a sea of waters in which the sun and moon floated. It was believed that the rising and setting of the sun was Ra sailing his boat across the watery heavens.

### **The Distinctiveness of the Biblical Account**

The Biblical account shares three things with these pagan myths: **1. Water.** All describe an initial watery mass. In the Biblical account this mass is not pre-existent, but the creation of God (Genesis 1:1-7). **2. Chaos.** All describe a universe of chaos being brought into order. In the Biblical account God creates the initial chaos and then brings it into order (Gen-

esis 1:2). **3. Separation of the Waters.** All describe a separation of waters above and below an expanse of heaven. In the Bible, this expanse doesn’t separate lovers or reflect anthropomorphic battles. Instead, these things are simply the elements that compose the atmosphere (Genesis 1:6,7).

Here is where the similarities end. First, in the Biblical account God is above and separate from His creation (Genesis 1:1). Second, in the Bible the elements which God creates and with which He forms the earth are just that. The earth is not a deity. The sky is not a god. Things are simply things! (Genesis 1:1- 19). Third, in the Biblical account the waters above the firmament are not portrayed as heavenly seas in which the sun and moon literally sail (Genesis 1:9). These “waters” either refer to the water vapors of a cloud canopied pre-flood earth, or to the fluid elements from which God would compose the heavens.<sup>2</sup> The Jews understood this. The book of Job says that God hung the earth “on nothing” (Job 26:7). There are no “sun-boats” taught in Biblical cosmology.

### **Why Are There Similarities?**

The book of Genesis was revealed to Moses sometime around 1500 B.C. This was centuries after the initial events

which it describes took place. We know that during the time of the patriarchs God spoke to family leaders. He revealed to Abel how He wanted to be worshiped (Hebrews 11:4). He revealed to Enoch what would happen in the future (Jude 14,15). It is not unreasonable to consider that God revealed to someone, something about the past (i.e. the Creation). If so, Romans chapter one shows us that man has often twisted the very acts of God to fit their own idolatrous imaginations (Romans 1:20- 25). These pagan creation myths could well reflect the same type of thing. While Genesis was not borrowed from pagan myths, it may be that the pagan myths represent perversions of early man’s historical memory of what had been revealed about creation. This does not discredit the value of the Biblical account. Rather, the fact that such pagan myths contain an echo of what was originally revealed to the patriarchs, then restated to Moses actually reinforces the validity of the Biblical account.

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that the Greek word *abyssos*, may have been derived from the name of Abzu. This has come into English as our word abyss.

<sup>2</sup> The word *mayim*, translated “waters” can be used to refer to water in its strict sense or to other fluid substances.

**By Kyle Pope**