

APOLOGETICS 29 – WHICH GOD? – PART 2

BIBLICAL CREATION VS EASTERN RELIGIONS

INTRODUCTION

Apologetics - ἀπολογία apologia

The definition of Christian Apologetics is “the information that enables a believer to provide a defense for why a doctrine is believed.”

1 Peter 3:15 – But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

In our previous topics, we have determined that there is a supernatural, unseen creator. But which god is God?

Acts 17:23-24 – Using this text, we will contrast the account of creation from the Bible with that of Eastern religions.

VS. HINDUISM

Hinduism was developed from a compilation of cultures from about 1500-1200 BC. Their writings are known as the Rigveda. In the Rigveda, the Brahma is the creator (Pic). It is said that the Brahma made the universe out of himself.

Hinduism considers the universe to be millions of years old. This universe we live in is not the first or the last. In the Hindu religion, reincarnation is not just about life but every aspect of the universe.

After Brahma made the universe, it is Vishnu that sustains the universe and life. These two are the principal deities within the Shiva, making what is called the Hindu trinity. Within Hinduism, some variations emphasize each of the principal deities.

As part of the cycle of birth, life, and death, it is Shiva who will ultimately destroy the universe. This is not necessarily as bad as it might sound because it allows Brahma to start the creation process all over again. Here are some other statements in the Rigveda:

- A lotus flower grew from Lord Vishnu’s navel, and Brahma was sitting on it. Brahma separated the flower into three parts - the heavens, the Earth, and the sky.
- Out of loneliness, Brahma split himself into two to create a male and a female. From this male and female, all beings were created.
- Another story references life coming from the cracking of an enormous egg, which is the life from which the universe is born.
- The Hymn of Creation concludes that nobody knows how the universe came into being and even questions whether Brahman knows.
- Hindus don’t have a single story of creation. There is no single scripture that starts with “In the beginning” that one can liken to the Book of Genesis that Christians have.

APOLOGETICS 29 – WHICH GOD? – PART 2

BIBLICAL CREATION VS EASTERN RELIGIONS

Some Hindu texts offer a more scientific explanation based on the evolution of primary elements from a single source. In fact, the atheistic naturalist view of evolution has been adopted by many Hindus. They see symmetry in scientific evolution and Hindu reincarnation.

VS. HINDUISM EVALUATION

It is really uncanny how atheistic evolution and Hindu versions of creation are paralleled in philosophy. Hinduism is spiritual evolution.

Based on our previous scientific evaluation of life and the historical record in archeology, the Hindu version of creation has no merit in reality.

VS. BUDDHISM

Questions about the eternity or infinity of the universe at large are counted among the 14 unanswerable questions that the Buddha maintained were counterproductive areas of speculation.

As such, many Buddhists do not think about these kinds of questions as meaningful for the Buddhist goal of relieving oneself and others from suffering. One does not need to know the origin of life to achieve enlightenment.

The Dalai Lama dismisses the element of randomness in the theory of evolution based on natural selection. In their view, any evolution must be based on and conditioned by karma.

Buddhists believe the beginning of this world and life is inconceivable since they have neither beginning nor end. Their beliefs are based on Hindu beliefs, but they reject the idea of a supreme being and, therefore, reject any prolonged discussion about origins.

VS. BUDDHISM EVALUATION

As Buddhism does not have any real creation account, it is more difficult to contrast with the Biblical creation account. But as stated, they do share in the philosophy of Hinduism in the perpetuity of the universe, which is not based on any reality.

VS. TAOISM

Taoism is an ancient religion founded in China. It is said that ancient thinkers watched the world and how everything flows together. They wanted to create a society that emphasized balance and order. Tao means road, channel, or path. Taoism teaches that the primary goal is to become one with the essence of Tao and, therefore, achieve an intuitive knowing of life. Their creation account was derived from the idea of things balancing.

In the beginning, there was nothing but chaos. The elements of Heaven and Earth mingled around in a ball of mass similar to the shape of an egg. These elements were waiting for the right time to transform into what is now known as Heaven and Earth.

This chaotic world, with the roaming elements of Heaven and Earth, remained for 18,000 years until the hatching of an egg.

APOLOGETICS 29 – WHICH GOD? – PART 2

BIBLICAL CREATION VS EASTERN RELIGIONS

Once the egg hatched 18,000 years later, the chaotic elements of Heaven and Earth were transformed to make our known world today. The pure elements of Heaven rose up and became what the Taoists call yang, and the less pure and more dense elements of Earth sank and became what is now known to the Taoists as yin.

Inside the egg was a creature named Pan Ku. He was the main creator of the Earth.

After 18,000 years Pan-Ku died. His left eye became the Sun, and his right eye became the Moon. From his blood came the rivers and seas; from his breath came the wind, and his voice became thunder. The fleas on his body were also transformed into human beings.

Pan Ku began creating the Earth once he hatched from the egg. He moved the Yin from Yang with the swing of his axe, creating the Earth (Yin) and the Sky (Yang). To keep them separated, Pan Ku stood between them and decided to push the Sky away to make sure that they were separate. This task took 18,000 years; with the sky growing 3 meters higher each day, the Earth grew 3 meters thicker, and Pan Ku also grew another 3 meters taller.

VS. TAOISM EVALUATION

Again, like most ancient Eastern religions' creation myths, these myths have no basis in history, archeology, or reality. It is nonsensical.

CONCLUSION

Creation accounts served important functions in ancient cultures, telling people what their purpose in life was, justifying their political structure, and establishing their local god as the head of their society. These creation accounts show such great imagination, and it does not appear that their authors intend to present as history the creative steps that their gods took to form the world. Their creation stories only serve as backdrops to justify and establish the current sociological setting.

Genesis tells of one transcendent God, who alone made and rules the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them; there is nothing left for any other god to create or sustain.

The goal of early Genesis is not to entertain its listeners or justify the superiority of the Israelites, but to convey a history of God's actions in creating the world for man, its caretaker, as the image of God but not in any way part of Him.

Acts 17:23-25 – The imaginations of men are not as unique as they would appear. The Eastern religions picture God as an impersonal force, and that man can rejoin that force. In Greek mythology, the gods were nothing more than superhumans that one could attain to through form and exercise of power.

Paul made it clear that God is the Lord of heaven and earth and has no need of man, but God has graced each and every man by granting him life.