

Biblical Framework Part 1

Religious Neutrality & Pagan Literature Vs Biblical Literature

Introduction.

Last week we got into the preconditions for knowledge. How do I know what I know? How is it possible that I know anything? How can I classify things? What are the necessary preconditions?

Preconditions For Knowledge And Meaning

The universe must be classifiable

The universe must be stable

Meaning comes from context

And we said knowledge requires a stable universe and the Bible gives an explanation for that. God created a **stable universe**. God created man in His image so that man is pre-programmed for his environment. And we can therefore **classify things with language** that is meaningful. If we don't have a stable universe, if dogs transmute overnight into cats then what happens to the learning process? It stops. So, God created a stable universe that is classifiable in human language. Man names and classifies everything in the universe; birds, fish, animals, plants, stars, galaxies, and on and on. One of the most remarkable things we saw about this was how we begin doing this. How we learn to speak as a little child. How we learn how to speak language having never learned a previous language. How that happens is still unknown but we get a hint of it in the Bible. It's because God made man in His image and thus pre-programmed for our

Biblical Framework Part 1

environment. The universe is structured to be describable by human language.

Without Scripture - No Language or Knowledge

We say the Scripture gives a justification for why language works, and if you reject the Scripture you can't use the Scriptural view of language and that puts the non-Christian in trouble.

We have the preconditions for language and knowledge and the precondition for language and knowledge is stability of categories.

How, in a universe run by chance and natural law do you get stability?

But those on the pagan side have a real problem because ultimately in pagan thought you've got "chance" back of everything and if chance is lurking in the background then where does stability come from? You can't justify how knowledge and language are even possible. Yet we do learn things. We do speak language. But how? We saw that the pagan is really in a fix because God has set eternity in his heart, a desire to find meaning in life.

Biblical Framework Part 1

Meaning comes from Context

Run:

She has a run in her hose.
I'll run to the store.
He hit a home run.

Drive:

I'll drive to the store.
I want to drive the point home.
I want you to drive the nail into that 4"x6".

Side:

Lay them side-by-side for comparison.
We bought a side of beef.
Paint this side of the building.

And we saw that meaning is found in context. We always read in context to get the meaning. Well, what's my context? If I'm going to get meaning I've got to push the boundaries of context out all the way to eternity but the problem in paganism is that when you push out there's nothing there. Just "mystery" and you don't get meaning from mystery. And yet I'm never satisfied with what the world offers because there's this abyss in my heart that only an eternal God can fill. And why did God do this? Why did He set eternity in our hearts? Ecc. 3:11b tells us, "yet so that man will not find out the work God has done from beginning to the end". In other words, God structured the universe to tease us into a relationship with Him but man will never figure it out on his own. We must come to Him on His terms respecting His authority and until we do we will never figure it out. The only thing that satisfies is fellowship with the God who made us. That is why we were created. Until we have that we will never find rest. I want to remind you of some of the features of the pagan mind. Remember, this is a brilliant mind. We're not calling anyone stupid here. Calling someone a pagan is not name calling. It's simply saying they don't adhere to the culture of the Bible. So, the pagan mind is at enmity with God. That means it's not neutral and we want to tackle the myth of

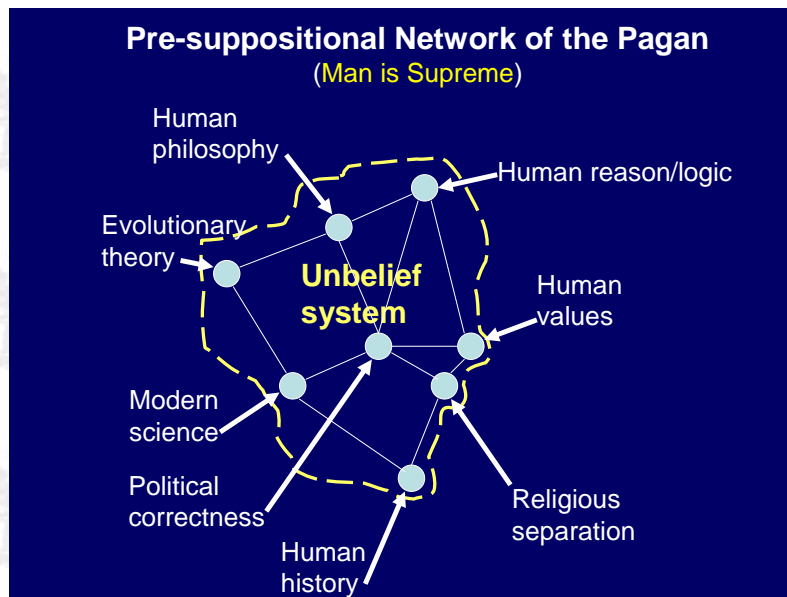
Biblical Framework Part 1

neutrality today because Christians naïvely buy into the idea that we can be religiously neutral.

Class 3 begins.

RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY

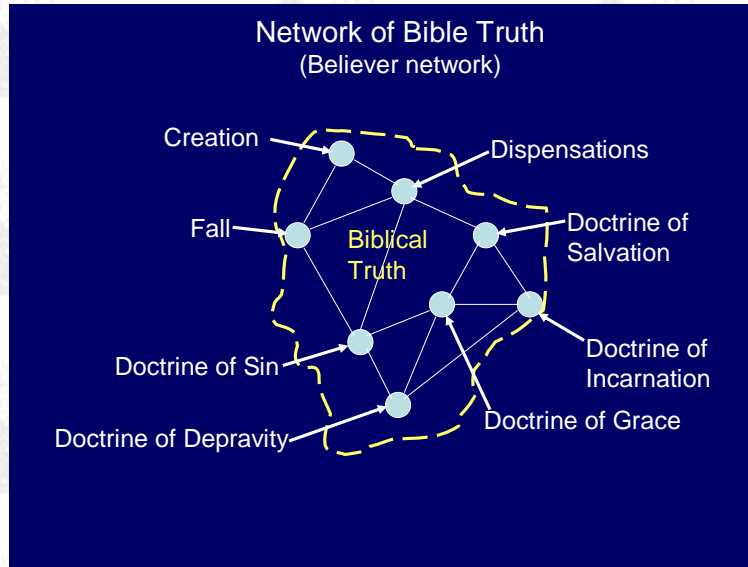
It's important for you to understand and master why **no one** can be religiously neutral. You need to understand how the pagan mind works. Their minds are darkened from suppressing the truth of God's existence. They've pushed God out of their thoughts so many times that they've come to a point that they get more than uncomfortable with us, they can get downright combative! They will appear to be very logical, and will try to make you uncomfortable because of your beliefs.



Let's look again at what makes up the pagan mind, because we come from the same mindset. The Human viewpoint (HVP) mind has only ONE reality, and that is Autonomous Man, with his knowledge through rationalism, empiricism, and mysticism. He wants to be an autonomous man, self ruled and self contained. God is not part of this picture. This person does not want to have a supreme God in his reality because if he

Biblical Framework Part 1

acknowledges God, he must also acknowledge his responsibility and accountability to a Higher Being – his Creator.



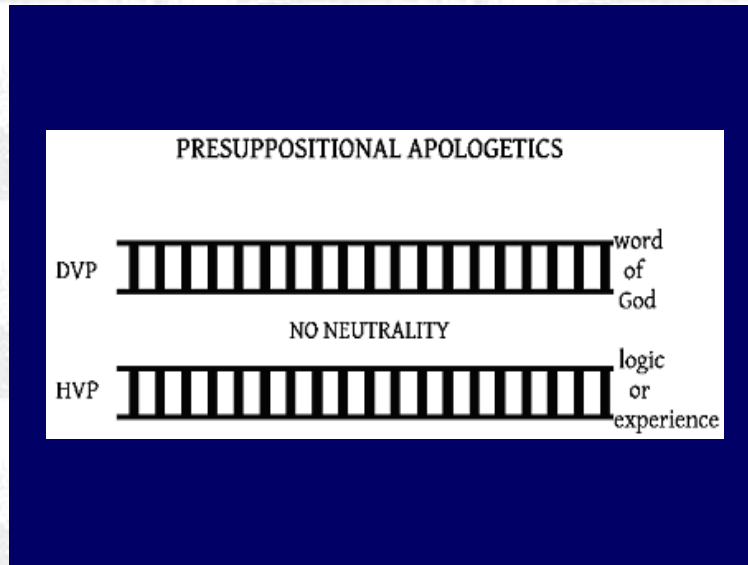
The believer, on the other hand, is being “renewed in mind” by Divine viewpoint (DVP) which is the reading and studying of God’s Word, understanding that there are TWO realities, God, outside of us and in His own Reality as the Creator, eternal and Sovereign, complete within the triune Godhead needing no other, and the converted pagan mind now saved by grace through faith is now believing the Bible to be God telling us about Himself, ourselves, and how He is working out history from His point of view. Piece by piece, truth by truth, doctrine by doctrine, the believer is replacing Human Viewpoint with Divine Viewpoint.

Back to religious neutrality.

When someone asks you, “to leave your religious beliefs outside the door, so we can have a ‘religious-free’ discussion” and therefore a “reasonable” discussion – watch out! What they are doing is setting you up for a human viewpoint – “let’s leave God out of this” discussion. It’s a pagan ploy to knock you off balance and agree with them that a

Biblical Framework Part 1

meaningful discussion can take place using only Human Viewpoint (HVP) language with human reasoning only. That is what they mean by “Religious Neutrality”. Remember the picture of the parallel railroad tracks?



They are asking you to get off your train and join them on what they call “neutral” ground, which, in reality, is to get on their train, but it cannot be done, as we shall see as we go along in this course. Just remember that neutrality is an illusion, a myth!

What do I mean by “The Myth of Religious Neutrality” and notice one of the devices I just used. I brand their slogan of “religious neutrality” as a myth. By doing so, I’ve undermined its authority. I’ve cast doubt on it. This is what the pagan mind-set does to us, isn’t it? “You Christians, you’ve got your Bible theory, your interpretation, but your Bible is just an ancient book.” Why not turn the statement around and ask from where it is that they derive their position? You’ve got the truth. You’ve got the preconditions for truth and knowledge. They don’t. You know that they know that there is a God, but that they’re suppressing that truth (Romans 1:18-20). You also know that the more they suppress the truth, the more God gives them over to their own

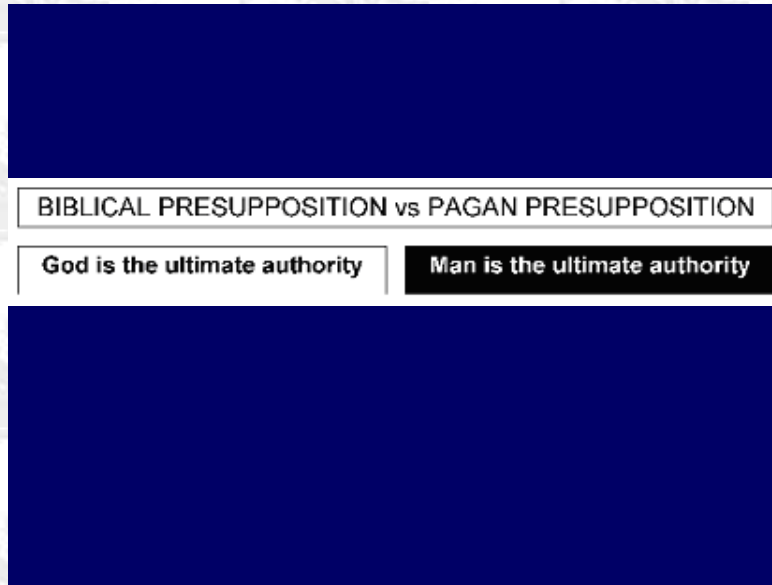
Biblical Framework Part 1

sinful nature (Romans 1:21-32). So, we know myth (HVP) from reality (DVP). If you decide to confront them, do it graciously, but don't compromise the truth. You will be called a "fanatic", "narrow minded", "a fundamentalist", "a Bible thumper", and thought of as "intellectually weak". Well, get used to it because the lines are becoming more and more clear between true believers and the rest of the world. This is just part of the spiritual battle, and it is imperative that you read, study, and understand the Bible by attending a Bible teaching church to equip yourselves for these engagements. Look at 2 Corinthians 10:5, "*We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...".. Don't let them use your tools against you and your Bible. So, you never want to buy into what someone says without examining it. Chase down the implications of the idea presented....see where it takes you. Don't buy into a question without asking yourself where the question is leading. If it's a question you don't want to answer, pose your own question or ask about the implications you see from the question just asked.

You have to remember that the basis of these questions and encounters you get into are coming from a presupposition that man is the ultimate authority.

Your basic presupposition is that God is the ultimate authority, and He has revealed Himself to man, along with man's history-from beginning to the end, with the wonders of the salvation message, the programs He has for Israel and the Church. We understand that God is Sovereign and in control of every atom and molecule in the universe. He is the One who places nations in power and takes them down for His own purpose. History has meaning, purpose, direction, and God is in control! How do we know this? It's in the Old and New Testament – the Bible.

Biblical Framework Part 1



The claim of neutrality denies that God had any fundamental role in structuring the universe. Here's our argument from Genesis. If God is the Creator, then He is important for every subject. Let's think about that logic. If God is who the Bible says He is, has He not structured the universe His way? Does the universe not reflect His character and His being? Then isn't God important for every subject? What does Religious neutrality theory start with? That science and religion are separate and independent. In other words, you can teach science without any reference or implications that God exists. Well, let's test this. If somebody believes in the neutrality theory, they're saying math is math, whether or not God exists; history is history whether or not God exists; literature is literature whether or not God exists. But if that's so, you've already by implication denied that the God of the Bible can exist, because if He did exist He would be important for all these subjects. And you're saying He's not important for these subjects because you say the subjects don't change, whether or not He's there. The moment you've said that, you've denied the existence of God. So, the myth of neutrality is not neutral. It denies the existence of God!

Biblical Framework Part 1

Religious Neutrality (the myth)

Pagan view:

The elements of **chance and mystery** are part of their beliefs. Therefore, there is **no stability**, for tomorrow things may change; (the N+1 principle). So they have no basis for knowing / learning things, no basis for language or even rational thought.

Bible believing view:

God created a stable universe.
God created man in His image.
Man is pre-programmed for his environment.
Therefore man can classify things with language that is meaningful,
and man can know and learn things.

So, in summary, we can say this about religious neutrality: In the Pagan view (or worldly view or Godless view):

The elements of **chance** and **mystery** are part of their beliefs. Therefore, there is no stability, for tomorrow things may change (the N+1 principle: all data up to this point may change because of the next piece of information discovered). So they have no basis for knowing or learning things and no basis for language or even rational thought.

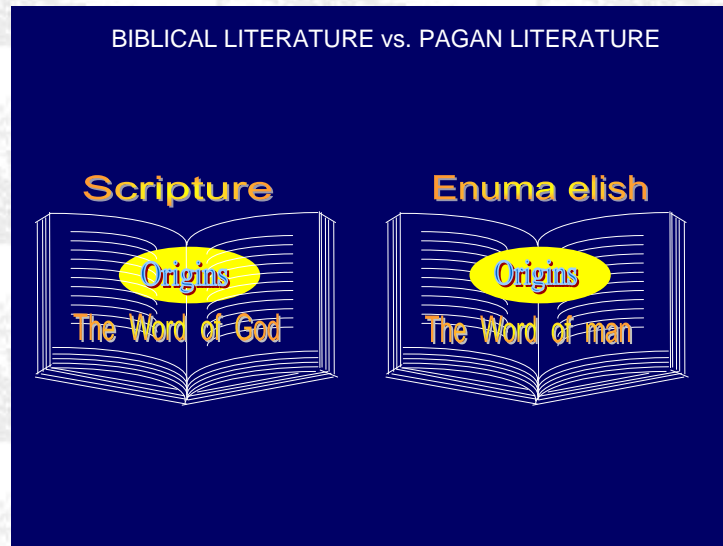
In the Bible believing view:

God created a stable universe.
God created man in His image.
Man is pre-programmed for his environment.
Therefore man can classify things with language that is meaningful,
and man can know and learn things.

PAGAN LITERATURE vs. BIBLICAL LITERATURE

Last week we talked about language and context. Now we want to look at an ancient pagan text called *Enuma elish* alongside Genesis of the Bible.

Biblical Framework Part 1



The *Enuma elish* was written by Babylonians about the time of Moses. Moses lived between ~1525 BC - ~1405 BC. Both of these texts are about origins (how things began). Both of them were written about the same time. The *Enuma Elish* is a Babylonian or Mesopotamian myth of creation (origins) recounting the struggle between cosmic order and chaos. It is said to be the principle source of our knowledge of Mesopotamian cosmology. Cosmology is a world view of what the universe is all about. And *Enuma elish* is the cosmology of the Mesopotamians i.e. the people that lived back in Bible times that occupied modern day Iraq. So, *Enuma elish* is our principle source for understanding what these people believed the universe was all about.

When we study Genesis we say it teaches us certain things about God. So, when we go to *Enuma elish* we want to do the same thing. We want to ask, "What does *Enuma elish* teach us? What are the core principles in this text?" And by doing this we're going to see how the pagan mind always twists certain truths in Genesis. And it's always the same twist. Why this twist and not another twist? What's going on here? And when we get through and we compare the ancient *Enuma elish* with modern cosmic evolution guess what we discover. They're essentially the same. Deep down, ancient paganism is no different than modern cosmic

Biblical Framework Part 1

evolution – one reality, with man wanting to be autonomous and the only authority.

Here's the irony of the situation. As you send your children to school, teachers will tell the Christians students "You believe an ancient book, full of ancient beliefs." But isn't it funny that when I look at the ancient beliefs in *Enuma elish* they are essentially the same as modern cosmic evolution? Deep down, ancient paganism is no different than modern cosmic evolution.

So now who's related to the ancient books?

In truth, scholars believe the *Enuma elish* is an epic used to justify the preeminence of Babylon over all the other cities of the country, and especially the supremacy of the god Marduk over all the other Babylonian gods.¹ In other words it's a political and religious treatise. But why do they couch it in a creation epic?

Because whenever man deals with a profound topic he is unconsciously admitting that "origins" give the framework for the epic. Why is history the way it is, and why are things the way they are? Because of "origins". Starting points (presuppositions) determine conclusions and every epic has a view of origins because that sets the framework.

Remember the movie *Star Wars* with its reference to "the Force"? What Spielberg did there was what every pagan writer or author does, i.e. he converts the personal sovereign God into an impersonal force, with a good side and an evil or dark side – a mystery, if you will, that no one can fully explain. So, a word of caution when you go to a movie or read a book, take a class, or study a subject, always compare it to the Biblical framework of events: Creation, Fall, Flood, etc., and the doctrines that come out of these events. This will keep you in balance. If you don't, you will always unconsciously be affected by the pagan thought.

Biblical Framework Part 1

ENUMA ELISH Text

What do you notice about the similarities between Genesis 1 and this *Enuma elish* text?

I haven't given you the whole text, the whole text goes on for pages and pages, and everywhere you see the dash I cut a section out, lots of things out, and instead of going through 400-500 lines of material, I pulled out the special lines. *Enuma elish* are the first two words which mean "When above."

- 1 "When above [*Enuma elish*] the heaven had not (yet) been named,
- 2 (And) below the earth had not (yet) been called by a name,
- 3 (When) Apsu primeval, their begetter,
- 4 Mummu, (and) Tiamat, she who gave birth to them all,
- 5 (Still) mingled their waters together,
- 6 And no pasture land had been formed (and) not (even) a reed marsh was to be seen;
- 7 When none of the (other) gods had been brought into being,
- 8 (When) they had not (yet) been called by (their) name(s) and their destinies had not yet been fixed,
- 9 (At that time) were the gods created within them...

13 They lived many days, adding years (to days)...

-
- 20 The divine brothers gathered together.
 - 21 They disturbed Tiamat and assaulted(?) their keeper,
 - 22 Yea, they disturbed the inner parts of Tiamat,
 - 23 Moving (and) running about in the divine abode(?)...

- 30 [Marduk] took from [Kingu] the tablet of destinies, which was not his rightful possession.

- 40 After he had vanquished (and) subdued his enemies...

Biblical Framework Part 1

50 Strengthened his hold upon the captive gods;
51 And then he returned to Tiamat, whom he had subdued.
52 The lord trod upon the hinder part of Tiamat,
53 And with his unsparing club he split her skull.
54 He cut the arteries of her blood,
55 And caused the north wind to carry (it) to out-of-the-way places.

60 [Marduk] split [Tiamat] open like a muscle into two (parts);
61 Half of her he set in place and formed the sky (therewith) as a
roof.
62 He fixed the crossbar (and) posted guards,
63 He commanded them not to let her waters escape.

70 And a great structure, its counterpart, he established, (namely)
Esharra [earth],

80 He created stations for the great gods;
81 The stars their likeness(es), the signs of the zodiac, he set up.
82 He determined the year, defined the divisions...

90 Punishment they inflicted upon [Kingu] by cutting (the arteries
of) his blood.
91 With his blood they created mankind;
92 [Ea] imposed the services of the gods (upon them) and set the
gods free.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN GENESIS AND ENUMA ELISH

Sequence

Look at lines 1-2 of *Enuma elish*. Do you notice any similarities with Gen 1:1? “Heavens and the earth.” So you’ve got the same theme, the

Biblical Framework Part 1

same content. Look at line 5 “Still mingled their waters together,” and what do you read in Gen. 1:2? Waters, water, a chaos of water. Now drop all the way down to line 50. the word “Strengthened”. This is talking about Marduk subduing the other gods in his rise to supreme deity in the Babylonian pantheon. “Strengthened his hold upon the captive gods; And then he returned to Tiamat, whom he had subdued,”...line 54 “He cut the arteries of her blood,”...line 60 “[Marduk] split [Tiamat] open like a muscle into two (parts); Half of her he set in place and formed the sky, (therewith) as a roof.” Anyone see the parallel in Gen? On what day were the skies made? Day 2, Gen 1:6-8. Line 70, “And a great structure, its counterpart, he established, (namely Esharra [earth]...” What day did the dry land appear in the Genesis text? Day 3, Gen 1:9-11. So far, what do you notice about the sequence of actions here as compared to Gen 1? Are they the same?

The heavens and the earth are a watery mass; in the Genesis text the heavens and the earth have a watery mass. The sky is formed, and the sky is formed in the Bible. The earth is formed and the earth is formed in the Bible. Continuing with *Enuma Elish*, line 81 “The stars their likeness(es), the signs of the zodiac, he set up.” What day were the stars set up in Gen? Day 4, Gen 1:14. Line 82, what’s the purpose of the stars? “He determined the year, defined the divisions” of the year; and what are the stars’ function in the Bible? For signs and seasons and days and years, the calendar. What’s the last act in *Enuma Elish*? Line 91, With his blood they created mankind. The creation of man. What’s the last act in Genesis 1? Day 6, the creation of man.

If it’s true that these guys in the ancient world just made this up, isn’t it striking that we have two different civilizations remembering the same order of events? I wonder why that happens. That’s why I say when you come to literature like this as a Christian, don’t just walk into it cold, say wait a minute, “What do I already know from the word of God about this subject? Here I have an account of origins now what

Biblical Framework Part 1

do I know about origins from the word of God? Well, I know the sequence of creation. This is a part of humbling yourself before the Lord. This is spiritual preparation. Spiritual preparation before intellectual thought.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENESIS AND ENUMA ELISH

Creator-creature Distinction vs Continuity of Being

We want to emphasize the differences and you'll want to refer to the diagram below to keep in touch with what we're doing. Look at this text carefully. You have three gods, Apsu, Mummu and Tiamat. Based on this author's words in line 5, if you were an artist, how would you sketch the appearance of these gods? "(Still) mingle their waters together" Notice the pronoun, "their waters." These gods and goddesses are material, they're water deities, there's no clear demarcation between the gods and matter, or god and anything else. The gods and goddesses are spirit and matter. Notice, line 20, after the gods were created "The divine brothers gathered together, They disturbed Tiamat and assaulted their keeper," Notice there is a war going on. There's chaos here. "Yea, they disturbed the inner parts of Tiamat, Moving and running about in the divine abode?" When you read that, what does it tell you about the structure of Tiamat? Tiamat has some kind of volume or space and inside her these other gods were running around inside her, so she must be space, she must have volume; she's not only a water deity but she appears to have volume in which the other gods are running around making a big noise. Look further to see if this bears out. Line 52, "The lord trod upon the hinder part of Tiamat," this is Marduk defeating Tiamat in battle to assume the status as chief god of Babylon. "And with his unsparing club he split her skull, He cut the arteries of her blood," which shows how the Ninevites killed people in those days. We could go on and on but what I want you to see is a key difference here between the God of Genesis and the gods and goddesses

Biblical Framework Part 1

of *Enuma elish* and it's not just in this text, ALL of paganism, from *Enuma elish* to *Star Wars*, it ALWAYS has the same idea. The gods and goddesses are part and parcel of the cosmos. There's no clear-cut distinction in paganism between the gods and goddesses and the cosmos. The gods and goddesses are part and parcel with the cosmos. There is no Creator-creature distinction. In the Bible how many Gods are there in Gen. 1? One God, there's a plurality of sorts because He spoke in plural which we'll get to one day, but the point is, there is One God and He is distinct from all else. He doesn't create the cosmos out of Himself. He creates it *ex nihilo*. Do you know what that means? Re-read Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Do you read any corresponding statement in any of the first four or five lines of *Enuma elish*? There's a vast difference between those two texts. The difference is this, and get this idea because we'll come back to it again and again. The thing that makes the Bible anti-pagan is the Creator-creature distinction. That is the most fundamental thing that we can learn from the entire Bible. God is not ever to be identified with water, trees, sky, and stars. God makes those, but those are not God; God is never to be identified with those things. And paganism always does this, it always makes this twist of identifying the gods if they exist with the universe. Now, you may not think this is a popular idea in America but folks, it is on center stage. Recently a Hindu chaplain opened the Senate with a prayer. In that prayer, Rajan Zed of the Indian Association of Northern Nevada prayed this way. "We meditate on the transcendental glory of the deity supreme who is inside the heart of the earth inside the life of the sky and inside the soul of the heaven."ⁱⁱ Now, what had this Hindu said? He did what paganism always does, he identified god with nature, with the creation. Now, that is the very heart of idolatry. Idolatry, at its very core is to not distinguish the Creator from the creation but to drag Him down into the created order. That is idolatry, and it is spiritual rebellion.

Biblical Framework Part 1

So the first twist paganism makes is it does away with the Creator-creature distinction. It has got to get rid of a God who stands outside of the created order. It always does this and we'll find out why later on.

BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW vs PAGAN WORLDVIEW	
CREATOR-CREATURE DISTINCTION <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2 levels of reality God man nature <i>ex nihilo</i> creation	CONTINUITY OF BEING <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 level of reality god(s) > man > animals > rocks spontaneous generation
PERSONAL SOVEREIGNTY <ul style="list-style-type: none">- God in controlMan responsible	IMPERSONAL CHANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none">- No one in controlMan a victim

Personal Sovereignty vs Impersonal Chance

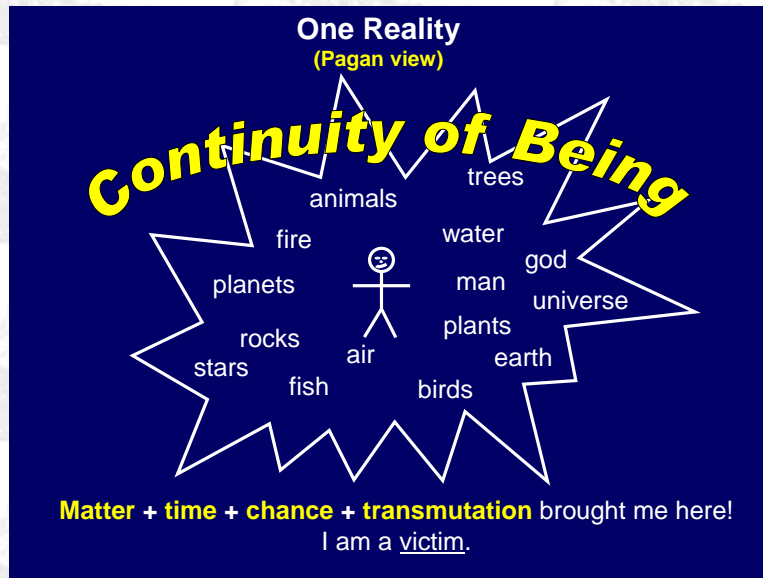
Did you notice the struggle, the war going on in *Enuma elish*? This is always in pagan literature. Not only is the Creator-creature distinction missing, but we also have the problem of "Who is ultimately in charge? And what is the answer from the Bible? God. He has unchallenged and really unchallengeable control over everything. What do we find, for example, in Job 1? Satan comes into the throne room of God and what's he there for? To get permission. He can't do anything he wants. He has to go to God to get permission. He's not on the same plane as God. There's no challenge there. God is controlling the universe and what happens in it. What is going on in the pagan literature? You have a knock down drag out to find out who's going to win. So ultimately here's the question that paganism can never answer, and it's a very strong question. "If today Marduk beats up all the other gods, what about tomorrow? Will another god, younger and stronger than Marduk,

Biblical Framework Part 1

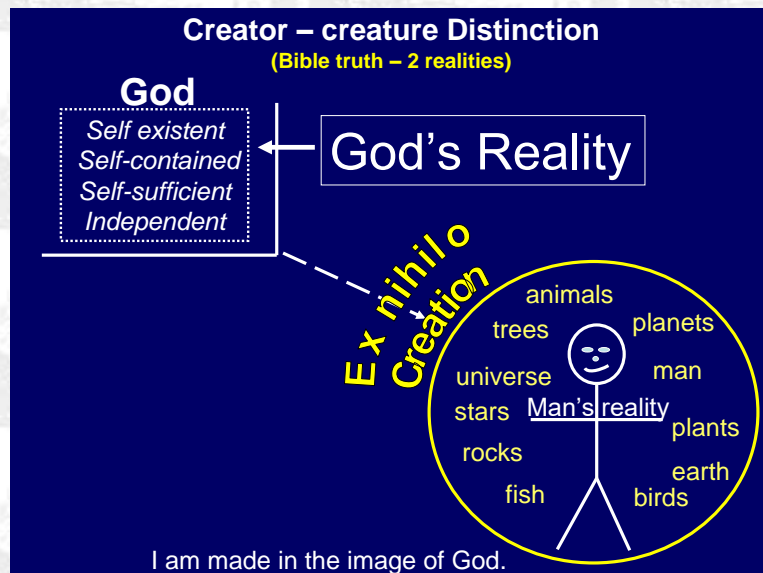
rise up and triumph over him? On the polytheistic basis of *Enuma Elish*, what assurance would Babylon have about her future? Who is in charge in the final analysis?" If you lived in Babylon and your welfare politically and economically depended literally upon a god like Marduk, could Marduk predict what's going to happen 2,000 years ahead if Marduk has other equals? The problem in polytheism is that there's no god who is ever unequalled. No god can ever be sure that another god won't arise and defeat him. The future is left up to chance. Nobody knows what's going to happen. Talk about instability. The pagan mind, when faced with this dilemma, usually tries to appeal to something behind the gods, because even a pagan wants stability in life. How do I get stability in my life when chance is ultimately back of everything? The order comes in, in a sneaky way. The pagan mind when faced with the dilemma usually tries to appeal to something behind the gods. Note in *Enuma elish* line 30: "[Marduk] took from [Kingu] the tablet of destinies." Whoever holds the tablet of destinies seems to be in control at that time but it changes hands all the time and it is supposed to provide the stability. The Greeks and the Romans later took that tablet of destinies idea and brought up the Latin word that we still use: Fate. Those of you who read ancient Greek drama know that there was always the problem of "the Fate," "the Fate" seems to determine what's going on. So you have the gods running around but in the background you have this quiet mysterious Fate.

We know for a fact that the people who wrote the *Enuma elish* are the descendants of Noah's sons. We also know that the eight who got off Noah's Ark had the same creation story, Genesis 1-2:4. Everyone was, so to speak, "on the same tablet".ⁱⁱⁱ Well, what happened? Everyone had the same creation story at the beginning, but now, about 1000 years after the Flood, we find some similarities but at the core we see the twist the pagan mind puts on truth.

Biblical Framework Part 1



What has happened is that over a few generations, the handing down of the truth that was preserved by the eight people on the Ark was gradually morphed from God's story of the Creator-creature distinction (TWO realities), to man's story of Continuity of Being (ONE reality), where man does away with his Creator and becomes a "victim" of his environment, so that man is not responsible.



Biblical Framework Part 1

Always remind yourself of these two views in life, but concentrate on the Biblical worldview: of a personal sovereign God, Who is self-contained, without need, creates from nothing (ex nihilo), declares the end from the beginning, tells us the truth about origins in Genesis, controls history from His reality, and to Whom we are responsible in our reality.

Paganism and Biblical Faith

Summary:

There's no neutrality.

That everyone knows God exists.

That God has set eternity in men's hearts.

Language and knowledge exist only if the universe is stable.

For words to have meaning there must be context.

Bottom line: there are only two contexts.

One is the **Creator-creature context**;
the other is the **Continuity of Being context**.

There are no other views!

Let's conclude by summarizing what we've talked about between paganism and Biblical faith.

When we talked about paganism (worldly system), we said: there is no neutrality, that everyone knows God exists, that God has set eternity in men's hearts, that the precondition for language and knowledge is that the universe is stable and for words to have meaning there must be context, but ultimately the bottom line is there are only two contexts. One is the **Creator-creature context**; the other is the **Continuity of Being context**. Every person understands the world in terms of one or the other of these views. There may be different names to it. It may be expressed in equations and scientific language but

Biblical Framework Part 1

after all is said and done you still wind up in one of these two camps, always! These are fundamental distinctions that are diametrically opposed to one another. We, as Bible believing Christians, must learn that it is an invasion of Oriental religions, particularly, the New Age movement. All the New Age, all the Oriental religions believe in the Continuity of Being. They all believe there's just a relative difference between God and man, if there is a God. God is a super man who is quantitatively stronger than we are, maybe infinitely stronger than we are, infinitely more wise than we are, but there are gray areas and shades of difference between Him and us. In the Scripture He is totally other, He is totally by Himself, He is not in any way dependent upon the creature.

In Isaiah 55:8-9, we understand who the God of the Bible is: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the **LORD**.

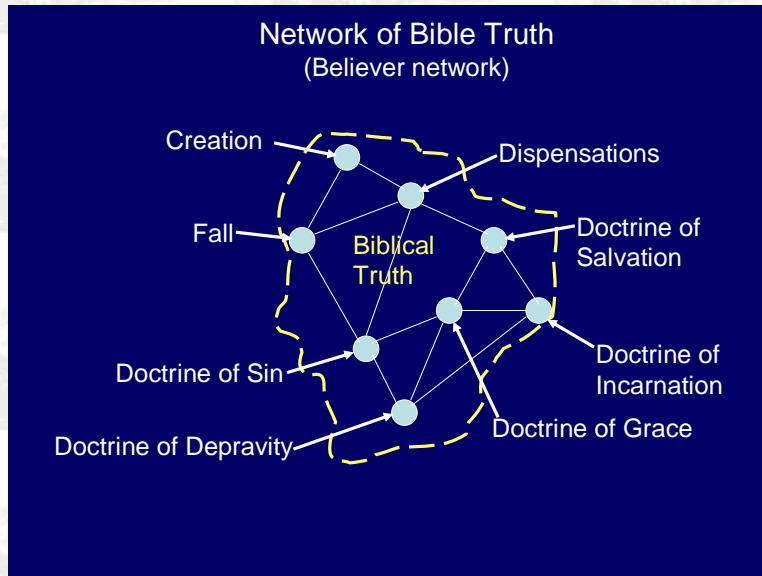
For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

We believe in a Personal Sovereign God who is preexisting the universe.

We believe in a Personal Sovereign God who is self-contained because He doesn't need anything outside of Himself.

That's who our God is.

Biblical Framework Part 1



That's why we must take the Bible seriously. We want to “renew” our minds (our way of thinking); replacing our worldly viewpoint ideas with the truths that come from God's revelation. After all, His viewpoint is the only viewpoint that counts for eternity!

Remember:

Biblical Framework Part 1

Either

you will let the Word of God
interpret the world around you,

or

you will let the world around you
interpret the Word of God.

Either you will let the Word of God interpret the world around you,
or you will let the world around you interpret the Word of God.

Next time,
we'll look more closely at the Creator-Creature distinction Vs.
Continuity of Being.

ⁱ Dallas Theological Seminary, *Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 109* (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1952; 2002), 109:305.

ⁱⁱ http://www.onenewsnow.com/2007/07/hindu_shouted_down_while_offer.php

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2007

ⁱⁱⁱ What else can I deduce on a larger scale? If every people group originally came from Noah's family, then doesn't it follow that in every tribe, in every culture on the face of the planet that we could have surviving memories of what Noah and his sons taught their sons? We're not saying this is true in every case, but theoretically it's a possibility. Now, if that's true then what is the oldest creation story? Genesis. But this is not what you will here on the

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2009

Biblical Framework Part 1

university campus. “When modern scholars first began to analyze ancient pagan texts, like *Enuma Elish*, many of them interpreted them from an evolutionary perspective.” Are they being neutral? Where’s the neutrality? They’re not being neutral; they’re bringing gobs of baggage from the world view of evolution into the discussion of this piece of religious literature. Nobody is being neutral, there’s no objectivity of analysis here; they are approaching the text with the idea that it follows the fabricated history of evolution. What they expected to find was a gradual evolution from earlier, more speculative, polytheistic stories to the later, loftier, monotheistic Genesis. So, they made Genesis later and put the polytheistic stories earlier so you moved from the unordered chaos of polytheism to the higher order of monotheism. And for a hundred years this has been taught in universities, on every continent, that pagan literature gradually evolved into the Bible. Now, I want to read you a quote from G Ernest Wright, another Harvard graduate, who studied archaeology. In his work *The Old Testament Against Its Environment* he totally annihilates this idea. He says “the faith of Israel even in its earliest and basic forms is so utterly different from that of the contemporary polytheisms that one simply cannot explain it fully by evolutionary...changes. Such a contention runs somewhat counter to the habits of thought and the methodological assumptions of many leading scholars of the last two generations. Yet it is difficult to see how any other conclusion is justified by the facts as we now know them from the vast accumulation of knowledge about the Biblical world.” (G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*, 7.)