

STUDY PACK 7

PAGANISM

“There is a great difference between the works of men and the works of God, that the same minute and searching investigation which displays the defects and imperfections of the one, brings out also the beauties of the other.” ~ Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p-1 ~

I. THE COMMON NATURE OF PAGAN RELIGIONS

What do the Canaanite religions, the Chinese worship of Shing Moo, the New Age Movement, European Freemasonry, the Greek Mystery Cults, American Indian religion, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, the Aztecs, the Incas, Buddhism, Voodoo, the Roman Emperor religion, the Mother Goddess religion of ancient European tribes, the Druids, the modern environmentalists’ movement and local spiritist witch doctors have in common? They all _____

_____. So did the Nazi party of 1930’s and 1940’s Germany.

It should not come as a surprise that there are similar religious principles found in religious movements around the world, in different cultures, and during different periods of history. Revelation 17:5 describes the revived Babylonian mystery this way.

“Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.”

It is clear from this statement that the Babylonian mystery religion did not begin and end in the city of Babylon. By forming a religion based upon the essential principles of the sinful human nature the Babylonian priests created a set of religious principles with universal appeal. Names would vary, ceremonies would differ, and control of religious organizations would change. But in _____, and in _____ new organizations were developed — operating on _____.

As generations passed, many groups probably were unaware of the nature of their origin. Yet certain basic principles, the principles of the flesh, remained the same. Mystery Babylon truly became the mother of harlots (spiritual unfaithfulness) and of the abominations of the earth — spiritual, moral, economic, and political wickedness.

“All who have paid the least attention to the literature of Greece, Egypt, Phoenicia or Rome are aware of the place which the ‘mysteries’ occupied in these countries, and that, whatever circumstantial diversities there might be, in all essential respects these ‘mysteries’ the different countries were the same.”

~ Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 12 ~

According to the statements of the Book of Revelation, the various religions, sects, and movements (harlots, and abominations) will be reunited one day under the banner of their “mother” — the original “Mystery Babylon.” Throughout history “Babylon” has been divided because of _____. From the local witch doctor to the Roman Emperor to the all powerful Hindu gurus to the Pope, individuals have sought to rule over segments of the Babylonian mystery religion for their own benefit. During the Tribulation period Satan will provide his own especially prepared Antichrist and False Prophet to lead mystery Babylon. Under _____, Mystery Babylon will become _____.

II. THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BABYLONIAN PAGANISM

The following principles are basic to the Babylonian Mystery Religion: First and most basic is _____. The concept of a Creator God implies the accountability of man, the creature, to his Creator — the God of the Bible. Paganism begins with the denial of creation — see Romans 1:18-21.

After you reject the concept of a Creator God you must come up with a way to explain the _____, the _____, the _____, and to _____. This is why _____ and _____ to provide answers to the basic questions of life. The myths and legends often take different forms, but the answers they provide are virtually always the same. The differences in the myths and legends often cause people to describe the religions and sects they are connected with as separate religious traditions. But the stories often change only slightly from generation to generation. It is only in comparing the stories from one century to another that you see real difference. Regardless of the myths or legends employed, the real issues are the principles they teach. In religion after religion, these remain the same — see Romans 1:21-23.

These myths and legends always focus on _____ — see Romans 1:22-23.

In transferring respect from the Creator to creation the most common myth _____ — _____. Another common myth is that mere natural processes are responsible for everything. An example of this myth is the theory of evolution. Whatever form is used the end result is the same—nature worship.

Man’s motive for these myths is clear. If there is a Creator God, _____. The Creator determines the moral code, reveals it to man and holds man responsible. IF there is no Creator God — _____ by _____. This is man’s primary way of _____. Man’s lust becomes the justification for man’s actions. A subjective moral code is developed. It is tailored to allow each individual to justify his own actions while sitting in judgment upon everyone else — see Romans 1:24-32.

Another standard principle of paganism is the concept of _____. Various pagan groups differ on exactly what works are needed to achieve salvation, but they all agree upon salvation based upon human merit. While there is disagreement upon exactly who you have to appease in order to achieve salvation, the pagan cults always agree that _____. Whether salvation is dependent upon witch doctors, priests, the Pope, a church council, or an all powerful church-state, appeasing man is always considered essential to individual salvation.

Another standard belief is the belief in _____. Spiritism becomes the basis for revelation both to groups and to individuals.

Since man has an inherent basic need to hope that problems will be solved, paganism needs to provide a possibility for the fulfillment of that hope. Since the Creator GOD can no longer be accepted as the answer to man's needs, another answer must be provided. And that answer is human government! Blind faith in the potential of human government is a basic part of socialism.

Many historians, of different perspectives, have noted the many similarities of pagan religions. Secular historian James G. Frazer is sometimes considered the leading authority on the ceremonies of pagan groups. He writes in *Golden Bough*, pg.3, "For recent researches into the early history of man have revealed _____ with which, under many superficial differences, the human mind has elaborated its first crude philosophy of life. Accordingly if we can show that a barbarous custom like that of the priesthood of Nemi has existed elsewhere: if we can prove that these motives which led to its institution; if we can prove that these motives have operated widely, perhaps universally, in a human society. Producing in varied circumstances a variety of institutions especially different but generically alike."

In *Pagans and Christians*, pg.38, Robin Lane Fox has written, "in this pagan religiousness, there is, I believe, _____ despite the many variations in local practice."

Christian scholar Alexander Hislop writes, "All who have paid the least attention to the literature of Greece, Egypt, Phoenicia or Rome are aware of the place which the 'Mysteries' occupied in these countries, and that whatever circumstantial diversities there might be in all essential respects these 'Mysteries' in the different countries were the same."

In *The Two Babylons*, pg. 224, Hislop also quotes a historian named Prescott (*The Conquest of Peru*) who said, "One is astonished to find so close a resemblance between the institutions of the American Indian, the Ancient Roman, and the Modern Catholic."

Jeremiah states, "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that hath made all the earth drunken," (Jeremiah 51:7).

III. SATANISM AND PAGANISM

As you study the Book of Revelation, it is clear that Satan is behind the Babylonian Mystery Religion — see Revelation 17. However, many members of the various sects of paganism are totally unaware that they are participating in a Satanically spawned plot. Most men depend upon the rationalizations of pagan mythology to calm their consciences and ease their guilt.

Satanism is for those who are openly willing to worship Satan — for people who are so comfortable with their sinful nature that they no longer need rationalizations and mythology. They openly worship the evil one and admit that they practice and enjoy evil. Few people ever come to openly accept Satanism, _____

IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF WORLD RELIGIONS

The pagan religions provide mankind with their excuses for disobeying the Creator God. Pagan religions have been used to justify child sacrifice, invading and conquering nations, rape and plunder, homosexuality, and every possible fleshly lust of man. Paganism always justifies socialism and the primacy of the state.

At times people have tried to merge paganism with the Biblical worship of God. Inevitably, paganism corrupts true Biblical worship. Then people end up practicing wickedness in the name of Christ. However, to practice moral, political, or economic wickedness, you must rebel against the principles of the Bible. You can practice moral, political, or economic wickedness in obedience to paganism — in fact to be obedient to paganism you must practice wickedness.

V. MESOPOTAMIAN CIVILIZATION

A. Between Rivers

The region between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers is called Mesopotamia which means “_____.” It is also called the _____ because it was an ideal area for an agricultural economy.

B. Sumer

At the time of the dispersion, evidently some of the people remained in Mesopotamia and developed the farmlands by making irrigation ditches and canals. This civilization is known as Sumer. Though the farms were scattered over the countryside, these farmers built their homes close together for common protection. Each settlement developed their own government with its own laws and army. These types of governments came to be known as city-states as each was a small nation in its own right. One of the major cities of Sumer was the city of Ur which is often spoken of in the Bible (the ancestral home of Abram).

Archeologists believe that the Sumerians were quite advanced with their own sewer system made from baked bricks, extensive use of the wheel, a sundial, a number system based on 60 and from which may have developed our time system and the concept of a 360-degree circle, and the arch and vaulted ceilings used in architecture.

The Sumerians worshiped many gods, and the citizens believed that the city and all of its inhabitants belonged to the particular god of that city. Each city built its own towered temple which was called a ziggurat. Some Bible scholars believe that the ziggurats in Sumer and pyramids in Egypt are evidences of the dispersion, and that these structures

Writing was an early accomplishment of Sumerian culture. The formation of their writing was wedge-shaped and has been named cuneiform which means “wedge-shaped.” This writing was originally a picture language where each symbol represented a word. The symbols were later modified to add phonetic characteristics.

In addition to farmers, Sumer had a variety of craftsmen such as potters or jewelers, and its inhabitants were involved in extensive trade. The traders traveled by sea along the Persian Gulf and some possibly reached as far as the Indus River. The oil which seeped from the ground near the Euphrates River and which was used for lamps and flares was traded for fine hardwoods, gold, copper, and ivory.