

Comparison of the gilgamesh epic and genesis



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Running Head: COMPARISON OF THE GILGAMESH EPIC AND GENESIS

Comparison of the Gilgamesh Epic and Genesis Danielle E. Burritt Robert Wesleyan College In comparison of the Hebrew story of Genesis and the Epic of Gilgamesh, there are numerous similarities but also renowned differences. Among the similarities and difference, readers have used the comparison between the two stories and character to formed a theory of which story inspired the other. In similarity of the two stories/characters found in Genesis and the Epic of Gilgamesh, both stories are forms of epics.

An epic is a long poem or story that is narrating the deeds and the adventures of a hero or legendary figures. Both stories surround a legendary figure and the deeds/adventures they encountered. A significant relation of the two stories was, they both had a God or God(s) which is the narrator of the stories. Another connection between the two stories was when Eve was tempted by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit, sinned, was ashamed of being naked, and was excluded for the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3: 1-23).

Inkidu was tempted by a women, slept with her, was ashamed of being naked, and the wild beast him (pg3&4, para 1-6). The flood is a major connection between and the Hebrew story and the Epic of Gilgamesh. The decision to destroy mankind is a similarity between the stories. God saw wickedness and evil in mankind and decided to destroy them (Genesis 6: 5-7). In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Gods saw “ the uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible” and agreed to exterminate mankind (pg 50, para 1).

Noah and Ut-Napishtim were advised to build a boat to escape a flood and told to save himself, his family, and sample of all species (Genesis 6: 9-22)(pg 50&51 para 2&1). In both of the stories the boat rest on a mountain and a bird was released to determine if the waters receded (Genesis 8: 7-12) (pg53, para 2). In both stories, after the waters receded and dried up they both make a sacrifice to god or the Gods (genesis 20-21)(pg 54, para1). Even though many similarities exist between the two stories, there still are major differences.

There were a number of differences between the two stories. A major difference among the stories was, in the book of Genesis there is only one God, and God is the creators of all things; (Genesis chpt 1&2). In the Epic of Gilgamesh (pg vii-1, para1-9) there was various Goddess and only one creator. Noah received his instructions about the flood directly from god (Genesis 6: 11-21) and Ut-Napishtim received them indirectly through a dream (pg50, para 1). In the Bible it rained for forty day and forty nights (Genesis 7: 17) and in the Epic of Gilgamesh it only rained for seven days (pg53, para2).

Another differences between the stories was that Noah released a raven and three dove to determine if the waters receded (genesis 7-12) and in the Epic of Gilgamesh, UT-Napishtim released a dove, swallow, and raven (pg53, para 2). The Sacrafices that Noah and Ut-Napishtim make after the flood is another difference between the stories. Noah builds an altar, and took " very clean beast, and of every fowl, and offered burnt offering on the alter" (Genesis8: 20).

Ut-napishtim offered “ the lapis lazuli” round her neck to the Gods (pg54, para1). These comparisons show the differences between the Hebrew story and the Epic of Gilgamesh. I believe that the book of Genesis is completely truthful and contains no error in its original form. God preserved the Hebrew story through his people and, inspired Moses to write the book of Genesis and preserved him from including any errors. Therefore, I believe that the Gilgamesh epic is a re-establish account of the book of genesis.