

The apache and
christian creation
stories are unique
religion essay



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The Apache and Christian creation stories are unique and interesting in their own ways. Long ago, there were people in the United States before the European settlers. They were Native Americans, people whose hearts and souls were one with the land and surrounding nature, the Apache. The Apache people had a unique and well developed society which included every aspect of life. One of the most interesting aspects of the Apache is their creation story. In the Apache creation story, nothing existed at the beginning; there was no earth or anything for that matter, only darkness shrouded everywhere. From the darkness appeared a thin disc, one side yellow and the other side white, suspended in midair. Inside the disc sat a small bearded man, who was called Creator. In Apache religion there is one main Creator, Ussen, and then lesser gods, making them have a total of four Gods thus making the Apache people polytheistic. The Creator found a Girl without Parents sitting on a cloud asking about the Earth. There were also four sacred colors, black, blue, yellow, and white which have guided the Apachs in their prayer to the Creator. The four colors symbolize the colors of the threads Tarantula used to pull and stretch the earth. During creation, the Creator made the gods, heavens, earth, plants, and animals all from his sweat. The creator sent a lesser God named Lightning-Maker to encircle the world, and he returned with three uncivilized creatures, two girls and a boy. These creatures had no eyes, ears, hair, mouths, noses, or teeth. They had arms and legs, but no fingers or toes. The three creatures were placed inside a sweathouse created by Girl without Parents. They came out of the sweathouse and the Creator then gave each of them fingers, toes, mouths, eyes, ears, noses and hair. Creator named the boy, Sky-Boy, to be chief of the Sky-People. One girl he named Earth-Daughter, to take charge of the

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earth and its crops. The other girl he named Pollen-Girl, and gave her charge of health care for all Earth-People. The Creator thought that it would be a fun idea to create animals, birds, trees, and hills to cover the earth. Like many other religions, the Apache religion has a creation story that includes a flood. After the flood was over, the Creator left and put Lightning-Rumbler, in charge of clouds and water. The Creator left Sky-Boy in charge of the Sky-People. The Earth-Daughter was left in charge of all crops and Earth-People. Pollen-Girl was in charge of the health and guidance of everyone. The Christian theory of creation is unique in its own way as well. The Christian theory states that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. When God created Light, he saw that the light was good; so he separated the light from the darkness. The light was called Day, and the darkness was called Night. This was the first day of creation. The firmament that God created from water was called Heaven. Then evening and morning were created, this was the second day of creation. The water was gathered in one place so that dry land appeared, the dry land was called Earth, and the gathered water was called Seas. God then made the vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit, this was the end of the third day. On the fourth day, God made two great lights, a greater light to rule the day, and a lesser light to rule the night; he also made the stars. On the fifth and sixth days, God created the creatures of the Earth, sea, and sky and told them to multiply. God created man in his own image, in the image, he created male and female. God blessed them, and told them to be fruitful and multiply. He also told them to command all of the earth; and he gave them green plants for food. God blessed them and that was the end of the sixth day. God blessed the seventh day and rested from all his work. These

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creation stories are the backbone of each of the Christian and Apache belief systems.

The Apache and Christian belief systems include a variety of characters, which are present in the creation stories. There is but only one God involved in the Christian creation story therefore making Christianity a monotheistic religion. The Apache creation story involves multiple figures; the Creator and the lesser Gods making this a polytheistic faith. These characters have either helped the divine being create the universe or they were created by the divine being to take care of the Earth. The Creator in the Apache myth is depicted as a small man with a beard. This can be compared to God in the Christian creation theory. Both are depicted as old males. These elderly male 'figures' may represent wisdom and knowledge. In the Apache story, the Creator was the Supreme Being that is in charge of everything. There were also lesser Gods that helped the Creator create the Earth, while in the Christian theory, God created everything by himself. Although the God in the Christian creation story does get tired on the seventh day of creation and needs rest, he is not anthropomorphic. The Creator in the Apache story is considered to be anthropomorphic. The Creator displays humanlike characteristics, for instance, he was sweating throughout the whole creation time period.

In the Apache creation story, there were many figures involved in the creation of the universe, while in Christianity there was only one God that created the universe. A very prominent concept that stood out in the Apache creation myth is the fact that there were animals involved in the creation of the universe. Animals like hummingbirds and tarantulas played a vital part in

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the creation of the universe. The fact that animals aided in the creation of the universe, is reflected in the actual beliefs of the Apache people. The Apache believe in nagualism and animism. They believe that a human being has the power to magically turn him or herself into an animal form. They also believe that that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, and other parts of the natural environment. Followers of the Christian faith do not believe in nagualism as this belief is thought to be a “ primitive” practice. Animals are considered sacred to the Apache, so there sacredness may be because of the roles the animals played in the creation of the universe. Animals do not seem as significant in the Christian faith, maybe this because animals were actually created by God and did not assist in the creation of the universe.

The use of numbers in the Apache and the Christian creation stories is very prominent. The number four is considered to be sacred to the Apache. During the creation of the universe, the Apache Creator always said things four times, and he clapped and rubbed his hands together four times. There were also a total of four Gods that mixed their sweat together to create a bean which eventually became the earth. The tarantula spun black, blue, yellow, and white cords and pulled them in four direction; east, south, west, and north. The number four was a significant part of the Apache creation story. The number four is still considered sacred to the Apache. During rituals and dances, they sing all their songs and prayers in sets of four; all rites last four nights. In the Christian belief, it took seven days to create the universe. This can be related to the amount of days we have in a week. In the creation myth, God hallowed on the seventh day and worked the other

six days. In our modern world, Sunday -the seventh day of the week- is supposed to be for rest, just like in the Christian creation myth. The number seven is also important in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. It seems that numerology was so important that representing an event or series of events with the number 7 helped prove that the story was true. The number seven also means control. The numerology that appeared in the creation stories reflects belief of the respective creed.