Thoughts on Genesis 1 St. John Lutheran Fall, 2021

Mesopotamian Beliefs

Enuma Elish	Genesis
Divine spirit and cosmic mater are coexistent and coeternal	Divine spirit creates cosmic matter and exists independently of it
Primeval chaos; Ti'amat enveloped in darkness	The earth a desolate waste, with darkness covering the deep
Light emanating from the gods	Light created
The creation of the firmament	The creation of the firmament
The creation of dry land	The creation of dry land
The creation of luminaries	The creation of luminaries
The creation of man	The creation of man
The gods rest and celebrate	God rests and sanctifies the seventh day

Structure in Genesis 1

Day one: one work: light	Day four: one work: luminaries
Day two: one vault:	Day five: one work: birds, fish
Day one: two works: earth and vegetation (double use of the evaluation, v. 10,12)	Day one: two works: land animals and man (double use of the evaluation, v. 25. 31)

Problems in Interpretation

- Days of Genesis 1
- Genesis as 'myth'

Genesis 1:1

- Genesis 1:1; In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth
- Does Genesis 1 teach an absolute beginning to creation, or
- Does Genesis 1 affirm existence of matter before creation
- Brevard Childs: "While there is a choice grammatically the theology of the Priestly writer excludes the latter possibility...we have seen the effort of the Priestly writer to emphasize the absolute transcendence of God over his material."
- Gerhard von Rad & Victor Hamilton agree, as do most Christian and Jewish scholars

Spirit in Genesis 1

- In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2
 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was
 over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was
 hovering over the face of the waters.
- Hebrew word is ruach

Created in the Image of God

- Genesis 1:26: And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- What does to make in our image?
 - Von Rad: Ancient kings would place a statue in conquered lands
 - Hamilton: Ancient kings were said to be made in their god's image, but not the ordinary people
 - Madson: It is a job description.