

Is Jesus a myth? Is Jesus just a copy of the pagan gods of other ancient religions?

Question: "Is Jesus a myth? Is Jesus just a copy of the pagan gods of other ancient religions?"

Answer: There are those who argue that the stories about Jesus in the New Testament are simply myths borrowed from pagan folk culture, such as the stories about Osiris, Dionysus, Adonis, Attis, and Mithras. These myths are said to be basically the same story as the New Testament text about Jesus Christ of Nazareth. As Dan Brown claims in "The Da Vinci Code": "Nothing in Christianity is original."

To discover the truth about the claim that the Gospel writers took this storyline from mythology, it is important to 1) uncover the history behind the claims; 2) to examine how the idols to which Christ is compared are actually depicted and described; 3) expose all logical errors that are made, and 4) see why the New Testament Gospels are reliable descriptions of the true and historical Jesus Christ.

The claim that Jesus was a myth or an exaggeration stems from the writings of liberal German theologians of the 19th century. They basically said that Jesus was just a copy of popular fertility gods from different regions who would have died and risen— Tammuz in Mesopotamia, Adonis in Syria, Attis in Asia Minor, and Horus in

Egypt. It is important to note that none of the books containing these theories were taken seriously by the scientists of the time. The assumption that Jesus was a recycled Tammuz, for example, has been examined by contemporary scientists and judged to be completely unsubstantiated. These claims have only recently been revived; mainly due to the rise of the internet and the mass distribution of information by sources who write without proof.

This brings us to the next part of our investigation: do the ancient mythical gods indeed resemble the person of Jesus Christ? For example, the movie Zeitgeist claims the following about the Egyptian god Horus:

- He was born on December 25 as the son of a virgin: Isis Maria**
- A star in the East announced his arrival**
- Three kings came to worship the newborn “saviour”**
- He became a child prodigy teacher when he was 12**
- At age 30 he was “baptized” and started a “ministry”**
- Horus had twelve “disciples”**
- Horus was betrayed**
- He was crucified**
- He was in a tomb for three days**
- After three days he arose**

But when the actual writings about Horus are expertly studied, we find the following:

• Horus was the son of Isis, but there is no record in history that she was called “Mary”. • Isis was not a virgin, but the widow of Osiris and had Horus with Osiris. • Horus was born in the month of Khoiak (October/November), so not on December 25. In addition, there is no mention of Christ's actual date of birth in the Bible. • There is no record of three kings visiting Horus after his birth. The Bible also nowhere gives the actual number of wise men who came to visit Christ • Horus is in no way a “savior”; he died for no one. • There is no record of Horus being a teacher at age twelve. • Horus is not “baptized”. The only tale of Horus that has anything to do with water is one in which Horus is torn to pieces, with Isis asking the crocodile god to get him out of the water. • Horus had no “ministry”. • Horus did not have twelve disciples. According to the texts about Horus, he had four demigods who followed him, and there are some references to sixteen human followers and an unknown number of ironsmiths who fought with him. • It does not say anywhere that Horus was betrayed by a friend. • Horus was not crucified. There are several stories of Horus's death, but none of them features crucifixion. • It does not say anywhere that Horus was buried for three days. • Horus has not risen. It does not say anywhere that Horus came out of the tomb with the body with which he was placed in the tomb. According to some accounts, Horus/Osiris is revived by Isis and then becomes the lord of the underworld.

When you put both stories side by side, there are little to no similarities between Jesus and Horus.

Jesus is also compared to Mithras by the people who claim that Jesus Christ is a myth. . All the above descriptions about Horus are applied to Mithras

(such as: born of a virgin, crucified, resurrected after three days, etc.). But what is the myth of Mithras really like?

- **He was born of a rock, not of a woman.**
- **First he fought with the sun and then with a primeval bull, believed to be the first creation. Mithras killed the bull, which subsequently became the basis of the life of the human race.**
- **The birth of Mithras was celebrated on December 25, along with the shortest day.**
- **There is no mention anywhere that he was a great teacher.**
- **It is not mentioned anywhere that Mithras had twelve disciples. The idea that Mithras had twelve disciples may have originated from a mural in which Mithras is surrounded by the twelve constellations.**
- **Mithras did not rise physically from the dead. Instead, after completing his earthly mission, Mithras was transported alive and well in a chariot to paradise. The early Christian writer Tertullian did write about followers of Mithras performing resurrection scenes but this happened well after the New Testament period. So as far as anything was taken over, Christianity was copied precisely by the followers of Mithras.**

More examples can be given about Krishna, Attis, Dionysus and other mythological gods, , but the result is the same. Ultimately, the historical Jesus described in the Bible is unique. The supposed similarities between the story of Jesus and pagan myths have been greatly exaggerated. Moreover, while stories of Horus, Mithras and others predate Christianity, very little has been recorded historically

about the "pre-Christian" beliefs of those religions. The vast majority of the earliest texts on those religions date from the third and fourth centuries AD. It is naive to assume that the "pre-Christian" beliefs of those religions (of which little has been described) were identical to their "post-Christian" practices. It is more likely that some similarities between these religions and Christianity arose from these religions adopting Christian teachings about Jesus.

This brings us to the next topic to explore: the logical fallacies (fabrications) employed by people who claim that Christianity has taken over from mysterious pagan religions. We will look at two fallacies in particular: the false cause fallacy and the terminological fallacy. If something existed before something else came into existence, some conclude that the first must have caused the second. This is what we call the fallacy of the false cause. It may be that a rooster crows every morning before the sun rises, but that does not mean that the rooster is the cause of the sunrise. Even if pre-Christian stories about mythological gods were very similar to Christ (which they don't), that doesn't mean those stories resulted in the Gospel writers inventing a fake Jesus.

The terminological fallacy occurs when words are given new meaning to prove something. for example, the movie "Zeitgeist" claims that Horus "started his ministry", but thereby redefined the word "ministry". Horus had no actual "ministry" – nothing like the ministry of Christ. Those who claim there was a link between Mithras and Jesus talk about the "baptism" that allowed candidate

followers into the Mithras cult, but what actually happened? Mithras priests ordered these novices to sit in a pit, hang a bull over the pit, and cut open the bull's stomach, all getting blood and dirt all over them. Such an action bears no resemblance to Christian baptism – in which one goes under water (which symbolizes the death of Christ) and rises again out of the water (symbolizing the resurrection of Christ). But those who would argue that Jesus was mythological are very deceptively using the same term (“baptism”) to describe both rituals in hopes of linking them together.

Which brings us to the subject of the truthfulness of the New Testament. No other ancient work has more evidence of its historical authenticity than the New Testament. The New Testament has more scribes (nine), better scribes, and early scribes than any other document of that era. Moreover, history shows that these writers gave their lives for their claim that Jesus had risen from the dead. While there may be people who die for a lie that they thought was the truth, no one dies for a lie that he or she knows is a lie.

In addition, history shows that it takes at least two generations before a myth can become a historical story. That's because mistakes can be disproved and mythical embellishments exposed, as long as the eyewitnesses to an incident are still alive. All of the Gospels of the New Testament were written during the lifetime of the eyewitnesses, with some epistles of Paul being written as early as 50 AD. Paul directly addresses eyewitnesses of that time to check his testimony (1 Corinthians 15:6).

The New Testament attests to the fact that in the first century, Jesus was not mistaken for another god. When Paul preached in Athens, the elite philosophers of that city said, "He seems to be a herald of strange gods; for he brought the gospel of Jesus and of the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him to the Areopagus, and said, May we also learn what this new doctrine is of which thou speakest? For thou bringest unto us some strange things; then we would like to know what this means" (Acts 17:18-20). Obviously, if Paul was just ruminating on some stories about other gods, the Athenians would not have labeled his doctrine a "new" and "strange" teaching. If there were so many gods in the first century who died and rose again, why didn't the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers say "Oh, just like Horus and Mithras" when Paul preached about the resurrection of Jesus from the dead?

We can conclude that the claim that Jesus is a copy of mythological gods, originated with writers whose work has been rejected by scholars, contains logical fallacies and cannot compete with the Gospels of the New Testament, that have hold on for 2000 years, though they have been thoroughly scrutinized by critics all along. The supposed parallels between Jesus and other gods disappear once the original myths are explored. The "Jesus-is-a-myth" theory relies on selective descriptions, new definitions of existing words, and false assumptions.

Jesus Christ is unique in history. His voice rises above all false gods when He asks the question that ultimately determines men's eternal destiny: "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15).

The Zeitgeist movie

The Zeitgeist Film - An Overview

The Zeitgeist film has been circulating on the internet since 2007. . In this film, the director, Peter Joseph, tries to convince viewers that the New Testament writers committed plagiarism by borrowing ideas from astrological sources and pagan mythology, such as the virgin birth, December 25 as the birth date of Christ, the twelve disciples, the miracles, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. This article focuses primarily on disproving the allegation that Jesus is a mythological mixture of pagan deities concocted by various ancient cultures. I will especially discuss the case of Horus, as he is the first major mythological figure presented in the film as a precursor to Jesus. After that, I will briefly go into the other claims.

The Zeitgeist Film - False Claims About Horus

The Zeitgeist movie claims the following:

Claim: "This is Horus. He is the Sun God of Egypt from around 3000 BC."

Response: Horus is not just the sun god. He was also the falcon god whose name means "He who is far away". Ra was the sun god identified with the midday sun. Moreover, Horus was also the god of the sky/air, whose sun was the good, healthy eye and the moon the damaged eye.

Claim: "He is the Sun in anthropomorphic form and his life is a series of allegorical myths related to the movement of the sun in the sky."

Response: This is inaccurate. Horus was not the sun, but was identified with the position of the rising sun. Later he was associated with the sun god Ra. Atum was the god of the setting sun.

Claim: "We know a great deal about this solar messiah from the ancient hieroglyphs in Egypt. For example, Horus, who is the sun, or light, had an enemy named Seth, and Seth was the personification of darkness or night. "

Response: Seth, Horus' brother, was Horus's rival (and usurper to the Egyptian throne). It is still debated whether the battle between Horus and Seth was primarily geopolitical or symbolic in nature. . When the Osiris complex becomes fully visible, Seth appears as the murderer of Osiris and the intended murderer of the child Horus.

Claim: "And Horus, in a metaphorical sense, would win the battle with Seth every morning, while Seth would triumph over Horus at night and send him to the underworld. It is important to note that 'darkness versus light' or 'good versus evil' is one of the most ubiquitous mythological dualities we have ever known and continues to be expressed in many ways to this day."

Response: The movie's claim is just completely false. Horus was never sent to the underworld. Osiris was killed and became the lord of the underworld, while Horus was the king of the living.

Claim: "In general, the story of Horus goes like this: Horus was born on December 25th..."

Response: This is simply not the case. The Bible and Christianity do not claim that Jesus was born on December 25, so any parallels to ancient legends are completely irrelevant. The December 25 date was not adopted until the third century AD under Emperor Aurelian. But when was Horus's date of birth? It was in the Egyptian month of Koiak (which corresponds to November on our calendar).

Claim: "...born of the virgin Isis-Meri."

Response: This statement is also incorrect. Horus was born of Isis. There is no mention of the suffix "Meri" ("Mary") in any Egyptian literature as the film would have us believe. Besides, Isis was certainly not a virgin, but the widow of Osiris, the father of Horus.

Claim: "His birth was accompanied by a star in the East..."

Response: The film just keeps making things up. There is no mention of any stars related to the birth of Horus.

Claim: "...who in turn was followed by three kings to find and honor the newly born Saviour."

Response: First of all, the story of the birth of "Horus" makes no mention of "three kings". In addition, no "three kings" are mentioned in the New Testament. The Bible speaks of "wise men", the number of which is not specifically stated.

Claim: "...and when he was 30, he was baptized by someone named Anoop and so his ministry began."

Response: Again there is no evidence for the claim, this time a baptism of Horus. Nor are there any facts that would indicate any kind of "ministry" of Horus.

Claim: "Horus had 12 disciples who traveled with him..."

Response: Horus did not have 12 disciples traveling with him. It really is that simple.

Claim: "...and he performed miracles, so he healed the sick and walked on water."

Response: While it is true that Horus is associated with some healing "miracles", these cases concern "Horus the Child" and not Horus the Elder or his adult forms.

Claim: "Horus was known by a multitude of names such as The Truth, The Light, God's Anointed Son, The Good Shepherd, The Lamb of God, and many others."

Response: Again, this is simply incorrect. The only forms of the Horus god are (1) Horus the Child; (2) Horus as son of Isis and Osiris ("pillar of his mother"; "savior of his father"); and (3) Horus as sun god ("lord of the sky"; "god of the East"; "Horus of the horizon").

Claim: "After being betrayed by Typhon, Horus was crucified, buried for 3 days and then brought back to life."

Response: False again. There are no records of Horus being betrayed, nor of death by crucifixion. A single account describes an incident in which Horus is torn to pieces and Isis asks the crocodile god to pull him out of the water. That's not really a crucifixion. if we consider that the film sets the story of Horus around 3000 BC, that is several thousand years before the crucifixion method was invented and used!

The Zeitgeist Film - Other Claims

The Zeitgeist movie continues in the same vein with other mythological pagan gods. Zeitgeist film claims that Hindu Krishna was also crucified and brought back to life. But here too the Zeitgeist film completely misses the point. Hinduism teaches very clearly that Krishna died from an arrow from an archer accidentally hitting him in the heel. . After his death, he ascended to be with his Brahman. Surely this can hardly be compared to the Christian concept of the resurrection of Christ.

The Zeitgeist movie claims that Mitras was born of a virgin. But this is incorrect. originated from a stone. It is also claimed that Mitras rose from the dead, but there is no textual evidence for his death and so there can be no resurrection. Mitras was not a teacher and was not followed by twelve disciples, as the Zeitgeist movie claims.

Nor is there any evidence whatsoever for a bodily resurrection of Attis, the Phrygian god of vegetation, nor for the virgin birth of Dionysus or Krishna. (By the way, Krishna was the eighth son of his mother and that makes a virgin birth unlikely).

The Zeitgeist Film – Conclusion

Unfortunately, the Zeitgeist film is circulating over the internet. A large number of people are thus deceived with false information. As Peter writes in his second letter: "Yet false prophets arose among the people at that time, and so will false teachers appear among you also. They will come with destructive heresies, and will deny even the master who ransomed them. With this they work out soon their own demise."

According to their own testimony, the New Testament writers were not following "clever fabrications" when they "proclaimed the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," for they had "seen his greatness with their own eyes" (2 Peter 1:16). They testified not to myths, but to "common sense" about events that "hadn't happened in a place with few people(remote place)" (Acts 26:25-26)