

BRIDGING WORLD HISTORY

EPISODE #5

Early Belief Systems

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Produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting for Annenberg/CPB

AUDIO	TIME CODE
ANNENBERG/CPB LOGO	01:00:00
OPB LOGO	01:00:15
WEB TAG	01:00:23
<p>NARRATOR: IN THE 1950'S, ARCHAEOLOGISTS INVESTIGATING THE SHANIDAR CAVES OF IRAQ DISCOVERED THE SIXTY THOUSAND YEAR-OLD SKELETON OF A MALE NEANDERTHAL. IN THE SOIL SURROUNDING THE BONES, THEY ALSO FOUND LARGE QUANTITIES OF POLLEN FROM FLOWERING PLANTS SUCH AS GRAPE HYACINTH, YARROW, GROUNDSEL, ST BARNABY'S THISTLE, ROSE MALLOW AND OTHERS.</p>	01 :00:30
<p>CANDICE GOUCHER: Archeology is extremely important in helping historians look at evidence like rock art and burials and evidence from archeological excavations. This physical evidence tells us a lot about what human beings thought of and imagined in the nonmaterial world beyond.</p>	01:00:54
<p>HOST: FROM EARLIEST TIMES, HUMANS HAVE SOUGHT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PLACE IN THE COSMOS AND TO EXPLAIN THE NATURAL WORLD AROUND THEM.</p> <p>WHY DOES THE SUN RISE AND SET? WHY DOES THE MOON WAX AND WANE? WHAT CAUSES THE FLOODS, WINDS AND FIRES THAT THREATEN HUMAN LIFE? WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?</p> <p>THE DESIRE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS LAY AT THE CORE OF HOW RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY DEVELOPED. A POWERFUL NEED AROSE TO DEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COSMOS AND THE HUMAN COMMUNITY.</p> <p>ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT AS FAR BACK AS 20,000 YEARS AGO, ANCIENT HUMANS ATTEMPTED TO COMMUNICATE WITH UNSEEN SPIRITUAL FORCES THEY BELIEVED AFFECTED THEIR LIVES. THE SHANIDAR CAVES OF IRAQ PROVIDE A GOOD EXAMPLE.</p>	01:01:42

<p>CANDICE GOUCHER: How did the pollen get in the Shanidar gravesite? Archeologists really can only speculate and give their own interpretations of what happened. Perhaps flowers were brought to cover the odor of a decaying body, perhaps the pollen appeared accidentally in the soil sample that was used to cover that body, or maybe it was a communal ritual where people came together to celebrate or long for a life after death.</p>	01:02:35
<p>HOST: WHETHER PRACTICAL OR SPIRITUAL, MOST SCHOLARS AGREE THAT ACTIVITIES LIKE THESE WERE COMMUNAL IN NATURE.</p> <p>FROM THE CAVES OF SHANIDAR, TO CAVE PAINTINGS, CARVINGS AND ROCK ART ON EVERY CONTINENT OF THE WORLD, THERE IS A RICH TAPESTRY OF EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT EARLY HUMANS PARTICIPATED IN COMMUNITY RITUALS AND CEREMONIES.</p> <p>MANY SCHOLARS AGREE THAT THE EARLIEST BELIEFS WERE CENTERED ON DEITIES WHO WERE NATURE GODS, SUCH AS SPIRITS OF THE EARTH, SKY, AND RIVER.</p> <p>AS HUMAN COMMUNITIES BECAME MORE COMPLEX, LOCAL, ANCESTRAL, AND TRIBAL SPIRITS PROBABLY BECAME A CENTRAL FOCUS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE.</p> <p>OVER TIME, SOME PEOPLE BEGAN TO QUESTION THE POWER OF GODS AND TO FOCUS MORE ON RELATIONSHIPS AMONG HUMAN BEINGS. HOW SHOULD COMMUNITIES WORK? WHAT DOES THE IDEAL SOCIETY LOOK LIKE? THREE EXAMPLES OFFER PERSPECTIVES ON HOW PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD CAME TO DEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COSMOS AND COMMUNITY.</p> <p>JAPAN'S NATIVE RELIGION OF SHINTO, WHICH DATES BACK TO PREHISTORIC BELIEF SYSTEMS COMMON TO MANY OF THE EARLIEST HUMAN COMMUNITIES; THE EARLY PHILOSOPHICAL AND ETHICAL IDEAS OF THE GREEKS AND CHINESE – FROM SOCRATES TO CONFUCIUS – THAT CHALLENGED EXISTING IDEAS AND SOCIAL ORDERS OF THE TIME; AND THE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF HINDUISM, ZOROASTRIANISM, AND JUDAISM.</p>	01:03:08
<p>HOST: IN THE JAPANESE ARCHIPELAGO, A SET OF BELIEFS AND PRACTICES EVOLVED THAT WERE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PROSPERITY OF EARLY COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>THE TERM "ANIMISM"—FROM THE LATIN WORD ANIMA, MEANING "SOUL"—IS USED TO IDENTIFY THESE BELIEF SYSTEMS.</p> <p>ANIMISTIC BELIEFS WERE COMMON THROUGHOUT THE ANCIENT WORLD - WHEN HUMANS THOUGHT THAT NATURAL OBJECTS LIKE TREES OR MOUNTAINS CONTAINED SOME KIND OF SPIRIT OR CONSCIOUSNESS.</p>	01:04:45
<p>LINDA WALTON: It wasn't until the 8th Century and after the advent of Buddhism that people applied the name Shinto, the "way of the gods," to the indigenous religion of Japan. And the gods then were understood to be the kami, the spirits of nature or anthropomorphic deities, gods and goddesses.</p>	01:05:15

<p><i>VOICE OF MOTOORI NORINAGA:</i> <i>Kami are, first, deities of heaven and earth and spirits venerated at shrines, as well as the humans, birds and beasts, plants and trees, oceans, and mountains that have exceptional powers and ought to be revered...</i></p>	01:05:40
<p>HOST: THAT IS HOW 18TH CENTURY JAPANESE SCHOLAR, MOTOORI NORINAGA, DESCRIBED EARLY JAPANESE PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUPERNATURAL.</p> <p>ACCORDING TO THIS VIEW, KAMI HAVE CREATIVE POWERS, BUT ARE NOT NECESSARILY OMNISCIENT, OMNIPOTENT OR EVEN IMMORTAL. THE IDEA OF KAMI GOES BEYOND THE SUPERNATURAL, AND CAN MEAN ANY PERSON OR THING WITH EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTERISTICS OR AN UNUSUALLY STRONG PRESENCE.</p> <p>THE EARLY JAPANESE BELIEVED THAT THE KAMI WIELDED POWER OVER EVENTS IN THE REAL WORLD.</p> <p>AS IN OTHER ANIMIST CULTURES, THEY ALSO BELIEVED IT WAS NECESSARY TO INFLUENCE OR PACIFY THESE SPIRITS. TO DO THIS, THEY ENLISTED SHAMANS: WOMEN AND MEN WHO EXHIBITED A SPECIAL TALENT FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD.</p>	01:06:01
<p>LINDA WALTON: Shamans were extremely important figures in early Japan...in the communities of early Japan as they are in other societies that practice shamanism. In the case of early Japan, the role of shaman was really equated in very early times with the ruler with political authority so the two roles, the political and religious authority, were really fused into one figure of the shaman so it's an extraordinarily important position.</p>	01:06:49
<p>HOST: SHAMANS WERE OFTEN POWERFUL INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THEIR CULTURES. IN JAPAN, FEMALE SHAMANS, IN PARTICULAR, PLAYED KEY ROLES IN COMMUNITY LIFE.</p> <p>ONE SUCH SHAMANISTIC QUEEN, SOMETIMES KNOWN BY THE NAME PIMIKO, WAS DESCRIBED BY A CHINESE ENVOY WHO VISITED HER REALM BETWEEN THE 1ST AND 2ND CENTURIES, CE:</p> <p>"FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS THERE WAS NO RULER. THEN A WOMAN NAMED PIMIKO APPEARED ... SHE OCCUPIED HERSELF WITH MAGIC AND SORCERY AND BEWITCHED THE POPULACE. THEREUPON THEY PLACED HER ON THE THRONE."</p> <p>JAPANESE SHINTO TRADITION ALSO TELLS OF A FEMALE SUN GODDESS, AMATERASU:</p> <p>ACCORDING TO LEGEND, AMATERASU WAS THE DAUGHTER OF THE TWO PRIMAL DEITIES WHO CREATED THE ISLANDS OF JAPAN. AMATERASU'S GRANDSON WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE DESCENDED FROM HEAVEN TO JAPAN, WHERE HE BECAME THE GREAT GRANDFATHER OF THE MYTHICAL FIRST EMPEROR JIMMU.</p> <p>SINCE THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL FAMILY TRACED THEIR DESCENT FROM THE SUN GODDESS, IT BECAME KNOWN AS THE "SUN LINE."</p> <p>THE EMPEROR WAS THE CHIEF SHINTO PRIEST. HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR</p>	01:07:19

<p>THE ANNUAL CEREMONIAL PLANTING OF RICE, AS WELL AS OTHER RITUALS THAT HELPED TO ENSURE THE WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY.</p>	
<p>LINDA WALTON: Even though Shinto was identified very closely with the imperial family beginning at least in the 8th Century it was not really an official state religion until the 19th Century with the Meiji Restoration. And it became so closely tied to Japanese national identity that the emperor was forced to renounce his divinity as a descendant of the Sun line at the end of World War II.</p>	01:08:39
<p>HOST: IN MODERN JAPAN, SHINTO REMAINS UNIQUELY TIED TO JAPANESE CULTURAL IDENTITY. MANY JAPANESE STILL VISIT SHINTO SHRINES TO PARTICIPATE IN WEDDINGS OR ANNUAL FESTIVALS. AND ANCIENT PRACTICES THAT PROTECTED THE COMMUNITY FROM POLLUTION ARE STILL OBSERVED. FOR EXAMPLE, BEFORE PEOPLE PASS THROUGH THE GATE OF A SHINTO SHRINE, THEY SPLASH WATER OVER THEIR HANDS AND FACES AS A RITUAL CLEANSING BEFORE THEY ENTER SACRED SPACE.</p> <p>IN ADDITION TO SHINTO IN JAPAN, ANIMISM AND SHAMANISM DEVELOPED AMONG OTHER CULTURES AND PEOPLES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. ANIMISM AND SHAMANISM, WHEREVER THEY EMERGED, AND WHATEVER FORMS THEY TOOK, THE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES PROVIDED A COMMON BACKGROUND FOR THE EMERGENCE OF DIVERSE RELIGIONS AROUND THE GLOBE.</p>	01:09:11
<p>HOST: BY THE 1ST MILLENNIUM BCE, THE CULTURES OF EURASIA WERE TEEMING WITH RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT REVOLVED AROUND A PANTHEON OF GODS AND MYTHOLOGIES.</p> <p>HOWEVER, DURING THE NEXT THOUSAND YEARS, THESE CULTURES EXPERIENCED A MOMENTOUS THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL SHIFT.</p>	01:10:06
<p>JERRY BENTLEY: Eurasian peoples and Mediterranean peoples began to define the relationship between cosmos and community in new ways. And they began to depend upon philosophical and ethical ideas that challenged traditional values and social orders. It's quite possible that part of the context for this shift was the increasing turmoil and insecurity that came from increasing human interaction, because this was an era when merchants and ambassadors and armies were connecting parts of the world in a way never experienced before.</p>	01:10:24
<p>HOST: IN BOTH THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN AND IN ASIA — GREECE AND CHINA, SPECIFICALLY PEOPLE BEGAN TO EXPLORE IDEALS OF HOW HUMAN SOCIETY SHOULD WORK.</p> <p>IN GREECE, THE TURBULENT, PASSIONATE, AND SOMETIMES ILL-BEHAVED GODS OF HOMER BEGAN TO YIELD TO THE CALM RATIONALITY OF SOCRATES, PLATO, AND ARISTOTLE.</p> <p>THE GREEK GODS WERE TEMPERAMENTAL, AND HUMAN WELFARE DEPENDED UPON APPEASING THEM.</p> <p>AS EARLY AS THE 6TH CENTURY BCE, HOWEVER, SOME ATHENIAN THINKERS WERE ATTEMPTING TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD IN TERMS OF PHILOSOPHIA, OR WISDOM, AS OPPOSED TO THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE</p>	01:11:02

<p>DAY.</p> <p>A PIVOTAL FIGURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY WAS SOCRATES, WHO LIVED BETWEEN 470 AND 399 BCE.</p>	
<p>JERRY BENTLEY: Socrates had a powerful urge to understand human beings and human affairs. But unlike others who addressed those same issues and drew their inspiration from religious traditions, Socrates wanted to understand human beings and human affairs through the rigorous use of human reason.</p>	01:11:53
<p>HOST: SOCRATES, AS RECORDED THROUGH HIS DISCIPLE, PLATO, SUGGESTED THAT HUMAN BEINGS HAD "AN OBLIGATION TO STRIVE FOR PERSONAL INTEGRITY, BEHAVE HONORABLY TOWARD OTHERS, AND WORK TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF A JUST SOCIETY."</p> <p>AFTER SOCRATES' DEATH, PLATO ELABORATED HIS MENTOR'S IDEAS INTO A "SYSTEMATIC VISION OF THE WORLD AND HUMAN SOCIETY." IN HIS TREATISE <i>THE REPUBLIC</i>, PLATO DESCRIBED THE CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL COMMONWEALTH RULED BY A PHILOSOPHER-KING. ARGUING THAT PHILOSOPHERS WERE BEST ABLE TO UNDERSTAND ULTIMATE REALITY, PLATO ADVOCATED AN INTELLECTUAL ARISTOCRACY IN WHICH THE PHILOSOPHICAL ELITE WOULD RULE SOCIETY.</p> <p>LATER, ARISTOTLE, A DISCIPLE OF PLATO, EXTENDED THIS PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITION BY PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE VISION OF THE WORLD. CENTRAL TO HIS THOUGHT WAS THE IDEA THAT PHILOSOPHERS COULD RELY ON THEIR SENSES TO OBSERVE THE WORLD, AND REASON TO SORT OUT ITS MYSTERIES.</p> <p>SO, AS THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS SOUGHT TO UNDERSTAND BOTH THE NATURAL WORLD AND THE HUMAN WORLD IN NEW TERMS, THEY CREATED SOME OF HISTORY'S MOST LASTING IDEAS ABOUT HOW HUMAN COMMUNITIES SHOULD FUNCTION.</p>	01:12:13
<p>JERRY BENTLEY: The Greek philosophers were tremendously influential over the long run, but in their day they were a tiny minority of Greek society. Most Greeks were not highly educated, after all, and they didn't spend time discussing philosophical ideas with Plato and Aristotle in the marketplace. For most people, their cultural life continued to revolve around religious traditions, and it was the Olympian Gods, such as Zeus and Aphrodite and Apollo, who were more important.</p>	01:13:38
<p>HOST: THE MEDITERRANEAN WAS NOT THE ONLY REGION STRUGGLING WITH NEW CONCEPTS DURING THE FIRST MILLENNIUM.</p> <p>IN CHINA, NEW NOTIONS OF COSMOS AND COMMUNITY WERE ALSO TAKING HOLD. IN THE 6TH CENTURY BCE. CONFUCIUS SOUGHT TO DEVISE CODES OF CONDUCT THAT COULD GUIDE HUMAN COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>BUT HE WAS RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS THE SPIRIT WORLD. THE TEACHINGS OF CONFUCIUS WERE RECORDED BY HIS DISCIPLES.</p>	01:14:09
<p><i>VOICE OF CONFUCIUS' DISCIPLE:</i> Ji Lu asked about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master said, "While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?" Ji Lu added, "I venture to ask about</p>	01:14:37

<p>death." He was answered, "While you do not know life, how can you know about death?"</p>	
<p>HOST: CONFUCIUS WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE WORLD'S MOST ENDURING ETHICAL SYSTEM, WHICH DEVELOPED IN CHINA SHORTLY BEFORE SOCRATES WAS BORN.</p> <p>LIKE THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS, CONFUCIUS LIVED IN A CHAOTIC WORLD. AFTER PROSPERING FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE ZHOU REALM HAD DISINTEGRATED INTO A CLUSTER OF INDEPENDENT WARRING STATES BY THE 6TH CENTURY BCE.</p> <p>IT WAS IN THIS SETTING THAT CONFUCIUS SOUGHT TO RESTORE ORDER TO CHINESE SOCIETY. HE VIEWED THE EARLY DAYS OF THE ZHOU AS A GOLDEN AGE OF SOCIAL ORDER; AND HE IDEALIZED THE ZHOU INSTITUTION OF THE "SAGE-KING" AS A MODEL FOR HIS OWN TIMES.</p>	01:15:03
<p>JERRY BENTLEY: A lot of elements of the basic Chinese world-view were in place long before Confucius arrived on the scene. And these elements included the notion that there is a supreme power, the notion that humans are meant to serve nature spirits and ancestors, and also the idea that there is divine sanction for the political order. So Confucius took all of these elements and he blended them together and codified them into a system that would provide order for the human community.</p>	01:15:44
<p>HOST: CONFUCIUS' TEACHINGS ARE CONTAINED IN THE ANALECTS, THE RECORD OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS STUDENTS. IT IS STILL WIDELY READ TODAY AS A GUIDE TO THIS ANCIENT CHINESE THINKER'S IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO ACHIEVE HARMONY IN SOCIETY.</p> <p>CONFUCIUS BELIEVED THAT CORRECTLY MANAGING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS WAS THE KEY TO SOCIAL HARMONY.</p> <p>HE ARGUED THAT GOOD GOVERNMENT DEPENDED ON THE ETHICS, MORALITY, AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OF ALL INVOLVED.</p> <p>HE TAUGHT THAT IF PEOPLE WERE DILIGENT IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR ASSIGNED ROLES, SOCIAL HARMONY WOULD BE ACHIEVED.</p> <p>HE FAVORED A HIERARCHICAL SOCIAL ORDER IN WHICH PROPER BEHAVIOR WAS DEFINED ACCORDING TO ONE'S STATION IN SOCIETY. CONFUCIUS SUMMED UP HIS UNDERLYING VISION WITH THIS THOUGHT: "LET THE RULER BE A RULER AND THE SUBJECT A SUBJECT; LET THE FATHER BE A FATHER AND THE SON A SON."</p> <p>THUS CONFUCIUS ATTEMPTED TO RECONCILE THE HUMAN COMMUNITY WITH THE COSMOS BY MAINTAINING SOCIAL HARMONY, RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON HARMONY BETWEEN GODS AND MEN.</p>	01:16:19
<p>HOST: AROUND THE SAME TIME THAT NEW PHILOSOPHICAL AND ETHICAL TRADITIONS WERE RISING IN EURASIA, THE PEOPLES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND INDIA ALSO EXPERIENCED A MOMENTOUS SHIFT IN THE WAY THEY DEFINED COSMOS AND COMMUNITY.</p>	01:17:33

<p>ONCE AGAIN, THE TURMOIL RESULTING FROM INCREASED CONTACT BETWEEN PEOPLES FORCED COMMUNITIES TO CHALLENGE EXISTING IDEAS AND SOCIAL ORDERS. AND AS A RESULT, THE FIRST MILLENNIUM BCE GAVE RISE TO HINDUISM IN INDIA, ZOROASTRIANISM IN PERSIA, AND JUDAISM IN PALESTINE.</p> <p>THESE NEW IDEAS WOULD EVENTUALLY PROVIDE THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS FRAMEWORK FOR THE BEGINNINGS OF TODAY'S MAJOR RELIGIONS: BUDDHISM CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM.</p> <p>DURING THE 8TH AND THE 7TH CENTURIES BCE, INDO-EUROPEAN INVASIONS OF INDIA RESULTED IN TUMULTUOUS DISRUPTION AND MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE LAND.</p> <p>THE INDO-EUROPEANS BROUGHT WITH THEM NEW NOTIONS THAT MELDED WITH INDIGENOUS THOUGHT, LEADING TO THE CREATION OF WHAT WE NOW CALL HINDUISM.</p> <p>THE DOMINANT CULTURE OF THE INVADERS WAS STEEPED IN THE TRADITION OF THE VEDAS — A COLLECTION OF RITUAL HYMNS THAT PORTRAYED INDO-EUROPEANS AS HEROES WHO TRIUMPHED OVER THE INFERIOR "ALIEN" PEOPLES THEY CONQUERED. IT ALSO LAID OUT THE COSMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN SOCIETY.</p> <p>BETWEEN 800 AND 500 BCE, VEDIC TEACHERS DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF SPECULATIVE TREATISES. CALLED THE UPANISHADS, THEY POSTULATED THAT THE UNIVERSE IS COMPRISED OF ONLY ONE REALITY, PERSONIFIED BY AN ALL-INCLUSIVE BEING CALLED BRAHMAN.</p>	
<p>RICHARD BULLIET: Most scholars believe that Hinduism is based on a combination of ideas coming out of the Vedic religion and indigenous gods and practices that were there before the Vedic people arrived. So it is proper I think to consider Hinduism as evolving from Vedic religion with the Upanishads being an important, pivotal point.</p>	01:19:25
<p>HOST: HINDUISM DEVELOPED SEVERAL KEY CONCEPTS THAT BECAME IMPORTANT IN THE LATER EVOLUTION OF INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT, SPECIFICALLY BUDDHISM.</p> <p>FOR EXAMPLE, THE NOTIONS OF SAMARA - RECURRING CYCLES OF EXISTENCE; DHARMA - OR DUTY; AND KARMA - THE RESULTS OF ONE'S ACTIONS; PROVIDED THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS.</p> <p>AROUND THE SAME TIME THAT BUDDHISM BEGAN TO EMERGE IN INDIA, PERSIANS WERE DEVELOPING A NEW THEOLOGY. ITS BASIS WAS THE ENDLESS STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.</p> <p>AROUND THE EARLY 6TH CENTURY BCE, AN INDO-IRANIAN PRIEST KNOWN BY HIS GREEK NAME OF ZOROASTER BEGAN PREACHING IN WHAT IS NOW EASTERN IRAN. AMID THE UNSETTLING CONFUSION OF FREQUENT BORDER RAIDS AND WAR, ZOROASTER—ALSO CALLED ZARATHUSTRA—PROPOSED A DUALISTIC VISION - A GOD OF GOOD AND A GOD OF EVIL.</p> <p>AHURA MAZDA, OR "WISE LORD" REPRESENTED ETHICAL GOOD, WHILE THE GOD AHRIMAN EMBODIED DARKNESS AND FALSEHOOD.</p>	01:19:54

<p>ZARATHUSTRA BELIEVED THAT FOR HUMANS, LIFE WAS A CONSTANT MORAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE FORCES. EVENTUALLY A COSMIC BATTLE WOULD RAGE BETWEEN THE TWO GODS AND GOOD WOULD ULTIMATELY PREVAIL.</p>	
<p>RICHARD BULLIET: Unlike the Hindus who believe that you are reborn in another cycle, Zoroastrians believe that after death you are held accountable for the actions of your life and you are judged to go either to a heaven or hell—to eternal bliss or eternal torment—and this is a belief that they perhaps passed on to Judaism and Christianity.</p>	01:21:19
<p>HOST: DURING THE SAME ERA, THE 6TH CENTURY BCE, A SIMILAR VISION OF GOOD AND EVIL HAD EMERGED AMONG HEBREWS IN PALESTINE.</p> <p>ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT HEBREW PROPHETS WAS SECOND ISAIAH. HE LEFT A RICH LEGACY OF TEACHINGS ABOUT ONE GOD WHO CONTROLS THE DESTINIES OF ALL PEOPLE. HIS WORDS, FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH, ILLUSTRATE THE BOND THE ISRAELITES HAD WITH THE GOD OF JUDAISM.</p>	01:21:48
<p>BIBLE: <i>I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me, there is no God; I gird you, though you do not know me, that men may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, there is none besides me.</i></p>	01:22:17
<p>HOST: JUDAISM CLAIMED AN EXCLUSIVE GOD—YAHWEH—WHO WOULD TOLERATE WORSHIP OF NO OTHER GODS.</p> <p>A CORE HEBREW BELIEF WAS THE NEED FOR JUST AND MORAL BEHAVIOR AMONG HUMAN BEINGS. SUCH BEHAVIOR WAS THE RESULT OF OBEYING YAHWEH’S LAWS, WHILE TRANSGRESSION OF HIS LAWS LED TO PUNISHMENT.</p> <p>AT LEAST TWO HISTORICAL EVENTS WERE INTERPRETED AS YAHWEH’S PUNISHMENT FOR THE HEBREW’S MISBEHAVIOR: THE 8TH CENTURY BCE. CONQUEST OF ISRAEL BY ASSYRIA, AND THE 6TH CENTURY CAPTIVITY OF HEBREWS IN BABYLON.</p>	01:22:34
<p>RICHARD BULLIET: The central idea of God in Christianity and Islam and in Judaism is the idea of a creator of the earth, that has no peer. He’s all powerful, ubiquitous, simply the one great monotheistic God.</p> <p>For the Muslims, it is unimaginable that he could be thought of in terms of the Trinity and they focus on the unity of God.</p> <p>For Christians, the idea of a God who has three different forms becomes necessary because of the life of Christ.</p> <p>For Judaism it is one creator God, it’s a creator God of the entire world but that God has a chosen people and so He’s particularly the God of the Jews.</p> <p>So you do have three different religions that concur on the idea of a single great creator divinity. This is the great monotheistic moment in Semitic religion but they conceive of that divinity in different ways.</p>	01:23:09

<p>CANDICE GOUCHER: An example of the way that the big picture of world history yields insight into the patterns and processes of the past is the study of rock art. The evidence of early rock art –paintings and engravings -- from Australia to Africa to the Americas shows a recurring pattern of cross-hatchings, spirals, and zig-zag lightning shapes. Archaeologists suspect that these designs all conform to the visual imprint from something called phosphenes – which are chemicals produced in the human brain during trance experiences. This has led some archaeologists to interpret the figures that are part-human and part-animal to be the recorded journeys of shamans because the strange anthropomorphic figures are associated with the universal symbols and shapes of phosphenes.</p> <p>Through the record of trance, we can document some of the earliest spiritual longings – those that extend beyond the realm of the physical body, and the material world we can see around us. Ancients in most world communities sought understandings of themselves in a larger context. In a way constructing history is also about making meaning out of a largely unseen world. Like world historians today, the ancients sought to connect with the unseen -- creating invisible threads of continuity and meaning that wove together their present and past.</p>	01:24:42
<p>HOST: FROM THEIR EARLIEST ORIGINS, INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES HAVE STRUGGLED TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AND THEIR PLACE IN IT.</p> <p>THROUGH RITUALS AND SHAMANS, OUR ANCIENT ANCESTORS TRIED TO INTERACT WITH THE WORLD OF THE SPIRITS. THESE EARLY ENDEAVORS MAY ONLY HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTS TO WARD OFF MISFORTUNE.</p> <p>BUT OVER TIME, THE FORCES OF CULTURE AND NATURE INTERACTED WITH RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES. AND HUMANITY RESPONDED WITH NEW WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COSMOS AND COMMUNITY.</p>	01:26:22
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SPECIAL THANKS	1:27:33
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A/CPB LOGO	1:27:55
1-800 ORDER TAG	1:28:10
END	1:28:25