



**Conflict of Visions: Traditional Churches v. Progressive Schools; Moral Bankruptcy Produces Nihilistic Children: *Gilgamesh Epic*: “Eat, Drink, & Be Merry”**

- 25) The science courses in academia today are subtly teaching students to distrust the divine revelation of Scripture. In churches that subscribe to *sola Scriptura*: Scripture alone, children are taught that Jesus Christ created the universe *ex nihilo*: out of nothing.
- 26) However when they attend school they are taught that the universe has perpetually existed, thus imputing to it eternal life, and that it has attained its current status through billions of years of cosmic evolution during which life has spontaneously emerged on Planet Earth through “natural processes” and from which mankind evolved through “natural selection.”
- 27) Added to this is the fanatical over-emphasis on the environment plus the assertion that the earth—the creation—is the source of life which must be protected with a virtual religious fervor.
- 28) Together the impression is left on young minds that there is no God since the universe itself has always existed and life simply emerged out from it through “natural processes.”
- 29) Man thus is thought no better or worse than any of the other species of animals or even varieties of plants. Since man evolved from the creation then he has no soul and therefore no moral nature.
- 30) If it is assumed there is no inner governor that regulates moral behavior then sexual trends are easily excited by instruction that concentrates on the physical components of sex while ignoring the spiritual.
- 31) Consequently, sex education results in an increase in sexual activity rather than diminishing it. Missing in the instruction is the sanctity of the marriage and identifying this institution as the only environment for sex.
- 32) Even worse, verbicide has redefined “marriage” as a multiplicity of consensual arrangements all emphasizing physical sexual relationships with no acknowledgment of the damage such deviancies do to a person’s soul much less society.

PRINCIPLE: Obscurantism results in promiscuousness so that morality becomes ambiguous.

- 33) The soul, whether admitted to or not, contains the conscience and self-justified deviant behaviors build up garbage in the soul so that a guilt complex develops and resultant self-reproach can lead to sociopathic behaviors.

PRINCIPLE: Government schools do not know how to deal with this. By ignoring the soul, counselors stress behavior modification absent biblical standards from the laws of divine establishment. From this has emerged a “new morality” enforced by political correctness. What is missing is rebound and spiritual growth.

- 34) Depression is a component in this process since the idea of an eternal future is rejected. Nothing is thought to exist outside the universe and thus there is no Creator and life has no meaning beyond the moment.
- 35) This leads to the conclusion that life is short, in most ways meaningless, and with no obvious purpose. Soon a depression sets in which motivates a frantic search for happiness.



- 36) When this search proves fruitless then sublimations are sought in a futile attempt to deny the inevitable consequence of being alive.
- 37) This is the conclusion that a godless worldview must reach and is best described as nihilism: a viewpoint that traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that existence is senseless and useless. It is a doctrine that denies any objective ground of truth and especially of moral truths. [MWCD, 11th ed.]
- 38) To what end does all of this lead? Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die.
- 39) This philosophy finds its source in ancient Mesopotamia in the city of Uruk \u028a' ruk\, the home of Nimrod, about a hundred miles southeast of Babylon.
- 40) It is located in the land of Shinar near Babel where the Tower of Babel was built. Later ziggurats, or temples, were modeled after this structure. The oldest extant ziggurat is found in Uruk and dates from the latter part of the fourth millennium B.C.
- 41) The convoluted ideas of the people of Shinar developed from their inability to deal with the specter of death. It is from this preoccupation that a philosophy of hedonism developed.
- 42) Background on one particular personality of the time is provided by:

**Radmacher, Earl D. (gen. ed.). *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), 789:**

**Death and Life.** Ancient people reflected on the inevitability of death. (Such) reflections are found in the Gilgamesh \u026a' gil' ga-mesh\ Epic, the adventures of Gilgamesh, king of Uruk around 2600 B.C.

The Gilgamesh Epic, composed in Akkadian, has been preserved in two major versions, one from late in the Old Babylonian period (1750-1600 B.C.) and a second by Neo-Assyrian scribes (750-612 B.C.). The Neo-Assyrian version contains a scene in which Gilgamesh, in his search for immortality, passes by Siduri, the divine alewife (who is tending her beer stand on the seacoast). Her advice (in the Old Babylonian version) on the futility of his quest is quite similar to the advice of Ecclesiastes: "Live joyfully" (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

Siduri begins by reminding Gilgamesh that it is impossible for humans to find eternal life, which the gods have reserved for themselves. Her advice to Gilgamesh is to eat, make merry, and rejoice in the feasting while he can. She tells him to enjoy the daily rounds of life: wear clean clothing, bathe himself, play with his children, and enjoy his wife. That is all, she tells him, that is allowed by the gods. Old age and death will overtake everyone. Gilgamesh continued on his search, but found that Siduri's words reflected reality.

The writer of Ecclesiastes offers readers much the same advice: eat and drink with joy, wear clean ("white") garments, attend to your body ("oil on your head"), and enjoy your wife (Ecclesiastes 9:7-9). The passage in the Gilgamesh Epic shows that these ideas of Ecclesiastes were known in the ancient Near East as early as the Israelite and Judean kingdoms. Siduri's speech proves that the idea of resignation to mortality was pondered in the ancient Near East in almost the same terms as it was by the preacher of Ecclesiastes.

- 43) What's the point of this tale? The unbeliever who has no hope and fears death devises a solution that enables him to satiate all the senses with pleasure in an effort to create happiness in the short time he has left before Ralph Stanley tunes up to sing.
- 44) To eat, to drink, and to make merry is the solution that betrays the unbeliever's realization of the inevitable.
- 45) On the other hand a believer is able to do these things with a relaxed mental attitude with great thanksgivings to God for his grace and provisions in life.