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Zeitgeist (Part 1)



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg provides a critique of the movie Zeitgeist and its depiction of the Jesus-Myth theory. Zeitgeist claims that Christianity is a myth based on earlier stories about deities across different religions and myths, but the lecture argues that the documentary uses outdated and discredited sources. The movie's argument is that Christianity is heavily influenced by pagan mythologies, but scholars today generally do not see any connection between the two. While other gods have been claimed to have died and been resurrected, the lecture reasons that the actual myths reveal that this is often not the case.

Transcript

I'm going to be talking about the reliability of the Gospels in light of modern media challenges. Now, when I first announced this on the air, I was thinking only about this lecture I'm giving tonight, and then I realized that modern media challenges are much more diverse than that which I'm going to cover tonight. Tonight I want to talk to you about what's usually called the Jesus-Myth theory, which has been presented on what has become an extremely popular Internet movie called Zeitgeist.

Zeitgeist is the German word for, well, Zeit is time, and Geist means spirit or ghost, but scholars use the word Zeitgeist to mean basically worldview or spirit of the times or whatever, spirit of the age. And I'm not sure exactly why this movie was called that, because the movie's subject matter could have been labeled more accurately by something else, but I won't worry about why they chose the label. I'm more concerned about its contents and sharing with you.

How many of you have ever seen this movie on the Internet? Well, not very many. I would suggest that you watch it, though, especially after you've had a chance to hear this. I wouldn't generally recommend everybody to watch it if they don't have the opportunity to hear some kind of a response to it, because the movie speaks as if it's very authoritative.

It speaks as if it's giving historical information, and the average person who doesn't

know anything about the subject matter would certainly get the impression that it is giving historical information, and therefore that Christianity is to be disregarded, because the basic idea of the movie, at least of the first part of the movie, is that Christianity is a myth, that the whole story of Jesus was a myth, based upon earlier mythologies from other religions. This view has been around for over 100 years, but it's been popularized especially through this film lately. It's one of the most viewed movies on the Internet since its production in June of 2007.

The movie is not all about Christianity. There are three parts to it. Part one of the movie is about Christianity, and it discusses the authors, that is, the person who produced the movie at his own expense, and who is presumably the narrator, and who wrote the script, we assume.

His name is Peter Joseph. Whatever else may be known about him is relatively obscure, but he is a man who had enough money to put together a video and get it promoted on the Internet in a big way. Part one discusses Peter Joseph's theories about the origins of Christianity.

That's, of course, what we're talking about here tonight. Part two talks about the 9-11 was an inside job theory. I imagine many of you have heard of that.

There's plenty of Internet and solid DVDs being distributed, indicating that the attack of 9-11 was something that our government had some complicity in deliberately. And then the third part is an expose of the Federal Reserve System and the way that this compromises our financial stability and freedom. Now, all of these are somewhat interesting subjects, and in my opinion, they're not equally valid.

First of all, what is said about the Federal Reserve System, I have no objection to what Peter Joseph says. I tend to have the same concerns about that subject, and I've done a little bit of study on that, and it seems to me that what he says is quite correct about the Federal Reserve, although he does go into this idea of, you know, everyone's going to get chipped and things like that, which is what many Christians also believe. The matter of the September 11th thing as an inside job, as far as I'm concerned, I've heard the propaganda on both sides of that, and I just have to say I don't know what the answer is, nor do I have anywhere near the emotional investment of that subject as I have on the validity of the Christian faith.

If 9-11 was an inside job, you know, I'm not sure what I can do about that, and I don't really expect to do anything about it. I'm not sure what I can do about the Federal Reserve, but I am doing something about Christianity. In fact, everything I do is about Christianity.

My whole life since my childhood has been based on the commitment to the fact that Christianity is not just a good way to go, but is in fact the truth, the only way to go and

be in touch with reality, and that's just the opposite of what this movie wants to tell us. So our interest is in part one, and this documentary, by the way, if you watch it, it's really very poorly documented, very poorly researched. Essentially, it is a propaganda piece for a long-held theory, I mean, along in the sense of about a century and a half.

It was introduced in Europe through, well, promoted pretty much through some French writers, but not entirely. But it's the idea that a lot of pagan religions before Christianity had similar claims about their primary deities as the claims that Christians make about Christ, and the implication is, therefore, Christianity, which came later, must have gotten these similar traits from these religions. And since we all know that these other religions are mythological, no one believes that Mithras was a historical character, or Horus, or Osiris, or, you know, I'm not even sure if Hindus believe that Krishna was a historical character, I suppose they do believe that.

But the point is, some of these deities, most of them we certainly believe to be totally mythological, not historical characters. Even the people of those religions wouldn't necessarily have pressed for the idea of them being historical beings. The point of the myths was not to establish something historical, but something cultural, to establish cultural ideas and so forth through a certain acknowledged mythology.

And therefore, since Christianity, or the story of Christ, is said to have a great number of similarities to the stories of these gods, the assumption is then made, well, I guess the early Christians, whoever they may have been, simply created a Jesus myth, a myth about someone named Jesus who never really lived, and borrowed elements of these other religions that had been around and sort of made an amalgam god for their time and their place that was based on factors that were found in other gods from other times and places. That's basically the view that this movie takes. This is called the Jesus myth theory, or Christ myth theory, and the people who promote it are typically in discussions referred to as Christ mythers, that is people who are promoting the Christ myth.

The antecedents of the Jesus myth hypothesis can be traced to French enlightenment thinkers, Constantine François Volney in the late 18th and early 19th century, and Charles François Dupuy, also of the same general period, and in the 1790s particularly, they promoted this idea. The first academic advocate was the 19th century historian and theologian Bruno Bauer, who lived pretty much, his lifespan is pretty much in the middle of the 19th century, and authors such as Earl Doughty, Robert M. Price, George Albert Wells, have repopularized this theory in the late 20th century. The video, *Zeitgeist*, begins with no picture on the screen and just a voice, actually a number of people speaking, but one of the main people featured in the movie is a guy named Jordan Maxwell.

If you're not familiar with him, neither was I, but I was curious to know who he was because he seemed to be one of the main authorities that the movie was based upon, so

I did some internet searching, and got to listen to this guy on some YouTube presentation and so forth. He's a very interesting guy. He believes that aliens put him here, and that he's going to be apparently the next messiah.

He spends a lot of his time debunking all religion and then promoting his own religion. He was treated like an authority in the movie, and he's quoted more than once in the movie. The movie begins, rather, with his voice saying these words.

He says, The religious institutions of this world are at the bottom of the dirt. The religious institutions of this world are put there by the same people who gave you your government, your corrupt education, who set up your international banking cartels, because our masters don't give a blank about you or your family. All they care about is what they have always cared about, and that's controlling the whole blank world.

We have been misled away from the true and divine presence in the universe, which I guess is him, that men have called God. You have to know the truth and seek the truth, and the truth will set you free. Well, that's a very original thing to say, isn't it? A thousand years from now, people will probably attribute that saying to Jordan Maxwell.

By the way, his real name isn't Jordan Maxwell. He has a much more, a very different name. The reason he calls himself Jordan Maxwell, he had called himself Jordanus Maximus, and I read on the Internet why he did that.

I can't remember. It seemed a little silly to me to tell you the truth, but he's Jordanus Maximus, but when he's trying to sound more respectful, I guess he's Jordan Maxwell. Anyway, at the end of the Zeitgeist movie, this is the conclusion they give us.

I want to jump to the end so you can see where their argument is going. I'm going to take you through their argument, but I want you to know where they're going with their argument, what they're trying to prove. This is how they conclude with this statement.

Christianity, along with all other theistic belief systems, is the fraud of the age. So you can tell they're starting with a very objective, unbiased view of the subject. The movie is made in order to convince you that Christianity and all theism is the fraud of the age.

And once you know that's where they're going, you can see how they tried to build their case from the very beginning of the movie. They say it serves to detach the species from the natural world and likewise each other. It supports blind submission to authority.

It reduces human responsibility to the effect that God controls everything, and in turn, awful crimes can be justified in the name of divine pursuit. And most importantly, it empowers those who know the truth, but use the myth to manipulate and control societies. The religious myth is the most powerful device ever created and serves as the psychological soil upon which other myths can flourish.

So this is where the movie is going to take us, at least in the first third. How are they going to get there? They start this way. I'm summarizing their arguments, but in many cases I'm quoting directly, because if you go to their website, they actually not only have the movie, you can go to another link and it'll give you the actual transcript, word for word, of everything that's in it.

So it's kind of easy to lift material for citation and critique. The first argument, where they start their argument, is this. Ancient societies have always venerated the sun.

They personified the sun and stars. Well, yes, that's true. I think we all know that.

But the reason he begins here is he wants to move to the conclusion that the myth of Jesus Christ is an outgrowth of this universal tendency to deify the sun, or as the movie calls it, God's sun, S-U-N. Now they introduce this idea right at the very beginning. All societies have worshipped the sun, or as they put it, God's son.

Well, the term God's son sounds amazingly like a Christian phrase. However, it isn't a Christian phrase, because it's the word S-U-N, and the word God's son, in that respect, has no relationship to Christianity. But of course, Jesus is called God's son, and it just happens to be an accident of the English language.

The sun in the sky and someone who is the male progeny of parents are two words that sound exactly alike. They're called homophones, not homophobes, but homophones, two words that sound alike. But the movie tries to play on that.

Of course, the statement about paganism is true. The chief god in most pantheons is the sun god, although the movie doesn't tell you this. I mean, these are some of the names then.

The Egyptian sun god was Ra, the West African sun god was Liza, the Hindu sun god was Garuda, the Japanese sun god was Amaterasu, the Grecian and Roman sun god was Apollo, and before Apollos, it should have been Apollos there, the Grecians worshipped Helios as the sun god, the Incas, Inti, the Celts, Lug, and so forth. It's quite true, of course. All ancient pagan societies worshipped the sun.

But what they're going to try to say is, so did whoever it was that started Christianity. It's just for them, Jesus was the sun god, or God's son, S-U-N. That's where they're going with this argument.

They haven't gotten there yet. I'm just giving you a heads up. However, the observation is irrelevant to the origins of Christianity, which arose out of Judaism.

The Hebrews knew well enough about pagan worship of the sun, but their prophets denounced such superstitious and demonic practices. For example, in Deuteronomy, when the Hebrew nation was founded, Moses said to them in Deuteronomy 4.19, Lest

you lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and all the host of heaven, you should be driven to worship them. He says this is something he's afraid may happen, and he's giving them instructions to prevent that from happening, to prevent them from worshipping the sun, and the moon, and the stars, as other pagans did.

Deuteronomy 17.3 says, They have gone and served other gods and worshipped them, either the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded. In 2 Kings 23.5, when King Josiah was making his reforms and sweeping paganism out of Judah, it says that he expelled the idolatrous priests that burned incense to Baal, and to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. So the Bible acknowledges that the pagans worshipped the sun, moon, and stars.

This doesn't have any impact on the origins of Christianity, because Christianity arose out of Judaism, and Judaism, from the very beginning, condemned these pagan practices. Then it shows this picture, and it tells us this picture is called the cross of the zodiac. Actually, astrologers don't call this the cross of the zodiac, they call it the zodiac wheel.

But the movie calls it the cross of the zodiac, because it wants to capitalize on the cross that's in the middle of it. As you can see, you've got the twelve houses of the zodiac around the rim, and it's divided into the different solstices, and so forth. And in the very center of it is a picture of the sun itself.

And they say this is one of the most ancient images known to man, and then they put it with this picture. Now, as you can see, where the sun is in the first image, the head of Jesus is, in the second one. And they say, you see, this Christian imagery of a cross with a circle around it, that's not a Christian image at all, that's a pagan image.

And they show many cathedrals and churches and so forth, apparently from around the world, that have crosses of that type with a circle around it on their buildings. Interestingly, they don't show any pagan structures that have this symbol, and yet they're telling us this is a pagan image. The truth of the matter is that the so-called cross of the zodiac, or more properly called the zodiac wheel, among those who really know something about astrology, has no relationship to the cross in Christianity, which every Christian knows, and even a researcher who's not a Christian should know, without giving it too awfully much thought, that the cross in Christianity is about the way Jesus died.

It's about the method of execution of the Messiah. He was crucified on a cross. So, of course, the cross as a symbol of Christianity is not related to the zodiac at all.

It just happens to be that the zodiac wheel happens to divide into four parts, and the lines that divide it look like a cross. Well, you know, it seems like there must be an awful

lot of images and symbols and so forth throughout history where two lines cross each other at 90-degree angles. That doesn't mean they are the foundation and the origin of Christian symbolism, although the movie, without any documentation, without any proof, just states that this is the case, says that the cross in Christianity came from the zodiac cross.

Now, in response to this, we have to realize there would be nothing remarkable about any society acknowledging the sun as the light of the world. You see, they said in the movie, the sun was personified as the representative of God, the unseen creator, God's son, unquote, or quote-unquote, and the light of the world, the savior of mankind. Well, you recognize some of those expressions we use of Jesus.

He's the savior of mankind. He's the light of the world. We don't call him God's son, S-U-N, but I don't think the narrator has studied Christianity enough to even know that.

Because, to tell you the truth, we'll find that he hasn't really studied the pagan religions he quotes from very well either. I don't think he knows much about Christianity or any of the religions that he tries to give details about, because he is not accurate about anything he says about any of them. But the average viewer has no idea that this is true in all likelihood.

But that the pagans would call the sun, or the sun God, the savior of the world, or the light of the world, is that really so remarkable? The sun in the sky is the light of the world. It wouldn't take too many generations of pagans to figure that out. It probably wouldn't take too many generations of pagans living on their own to figure out that the sun also is the sustainer of life, that it is the sun that makes the crops grow.

It is the savior. It is that which sustains life for humankind. The truth is, I doubt that these pagan religions ever used these expressions.

Just because the documentary says so, almost makes me think it didn't, because almost everything else it says is fabricated. But if the pagans did use these expressions, would that be all that surprising? I mean, I think it's quite predictable that they might. However, we'll see this documentary is very careless about its research which intends to create convenient facts from thin air, meaning we might reasonably question, in the absence of any documentation, whether these actual titles were actually commonly used in pagan religions as they are in Christianity.

Though apparently meant to be serious, the reference to God's sun, S-U-N, is an instance, of which many more will follow, of the documentary's author revealing either his own rational deficiency or else his disrespect for the intelligence of his audience, whom he apparently hopes to deceive by the use of this term. It's obvious that Jesus, in the Bible, is never referred to as God's son, S-U-N, nor in Christian lingo. Though the term God's son, S-O-N, which sounds identical in modern English, is a term commonly

used of him, apparently our guide in this movie wants us to assume there is likewise a similarity in the original language, Egyptian and Hebrew and Greek, as there is in English.

Unfortunately for him, there is none. Does Mr. Joseph know this? Probably, but he must hope the viewers are sufficiently dull to miss that fact. Now, having made these points, that the sun has been worshipped by all the pagan religions and represented by the Zodiac cross, as they claim, as the term they use, which is not really used, astrologers don't use that expression, but I guess we're not supposed to research any of this.

We're not supposed to try to find out if any of it's true. We're supposed to accept this narrator as if he's, maybe like he's done the research. What we will find is he apparently has done zero research, because you don't have to look very far to find almost everything he says is not true.

But one of the things he lays a lot of stress on is, as I mentioned, alleged parallels between certain pagan deities and details of Jesus' life, many of which demonstrate his ignorance of pagan deities, he discusses, as well as his ignorance of the details of the biblical accounts of Jesus' life. The first one he talks about is Horus, sun god of Egypt, 3000 BC. Now, you can see this depiction of Horus looks an awful lot like traditional depictions of Jesus.

The long hair and all. But actually, it doesn't look very much like Jesus to me. It doesn't even look like a human being to me.

But here's what we're told about Horus. He had an enemy named Set, or Seth. Doesn't Set sound a lot like Satan? They suggest.

Okay, you've got the conflict between Set and Horus. In Egyptian mythology, you've got the conflict between Satan and Christ in Christianity. It's a dead ringer.

Then you've got Horus was born December 21st of a virgin, Isis Mary. Now, I haven't been able to find the Mary part of Isis in the research, but it sounds a lot like the Virgin Mary to me, but unfortunately, it seems to be a fabrication. His birth was accompanied by the appearance of a star in the east.

He was adored by three kings. At age 12, he was a child teacher. At age 30, he was baptized by Anab, the baptizer.

He had 12 disciples. He performed miracles like healing the sick and walking on water. He was known by various titles like the Truth, the Light, the Lamb of God, the Good Shepherd.

And then he was betrayed by somebody and crucified, and three days later, he resurrected from the dead. Now, look at that lineup. I mean, if that isn't a summary of

the main structure of the stories of Jesus, what are you going to find? And when people see this, they say, wow.

Is that true? Now, I know people do. I've talked to people who saw the movie and said, oh, it seems so hokey. It is hokey.

But I wouldn't even address it seriously, except that I've received three emails in the past two weeks from people saying, I saw this horrible movie. I don't know if it's true. Could you answer it? That's why I'm talking about it tonight, so we'll have some kind of answer to get.

The next god they go to after Horus is the Phrygian god Attis from about 1200 B.C. What do we know about him? Well, he was born of a virgin, born December 25th, we're told, crucified and buried for three days, and resurrected. Sounds very close to what we just heard about Horus and what we hear about Jesus in the Bible. How about this one? Krishna of India, 900 B.C. Now that's him on the left.

That's his consort on the right there. Now, Krishna, they say, was born of a virgin, born December 25th. There was a star in the east announcing his birth.

He was resurrected after he died. Similar basic pattern. How about Dionysus of Greece? Now, you might know him as Bacchus, the god of wine among the Romans.

The Greeks called him Dionysus, the Romans called him Bacchus. What do we know about that guy? Well, he was pretty ugly, if the pictures are accurate. But besides that, born December 25th, born of a virgin, traveling teacher, performed miracles like turning water into wine.

He's the god of wine, what do you expect him to do? He was known by titles King of Kings, God's Only Begotten Son, and Alpha and Omega. And he was resurrected from the dead. Now, is this starting to look like a pattern? We've got Horus, we've got Attis, we've got Krishna, we've got Dionysus slash Bacchus, we've got Mithras.

Mithras, by the way, is the only pagan religion of the ones mentioned that could conceivably have come into contact with the early Christians. Mithras was a Persian religion, Mithraism, dating from about 1200 BC, but at a certain point in time, it was adopted in Rome, or at least in the Roman Empire. And so it was a popular mystery religion in the Roman Empire at a later date, in the same general region where the apostles were preaching and so forth, and therefore it is suggested that Mithraism may well have influenced those who created the Jesus story.

What do we know about Mithras? Well, born December 25th, of course, born of a virgin, of course, had 12 disciples, performed miracles, was dead for three days, and resurrected from the dead. Well, I mean, what if all this is true? What if all of these ancient religions that predate Christianity, and some of them even predate Judaism, had

all of these features that we have associated with the story of Jesus? Well, at the very least, it would suggest that the story of Jesus is not very original, and the thesis of this particular film is that not only is it not very original, it's not even true. It's just as much a myth as the others, and it's just borrowing from these other ancient myths.

C.S. Lewis died about 1963 and was a professor at Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the early part of the 20th century, actually at a time where this Jesus myth stuff was popularly discussed in the academy. It was pretty well debunked, but it had not been well known to have been debunked by then. It's been thoroughly debunked now.

But C.S. Lewis read a book called *The Golden Vow*, which we'll mention in a moment, written by Fraser, who wrote that in the 1800s, and he's the one who put out multi-volumes making these claims originally, that these ancient religions had these similarities to Christianity. Many scholars were taken in by this, and I'm not saying Fraser lied, I don't know where he got his information, but it just wasn't accurate. But no one knew it wasn't accurate because in the 19th century there had been almost no research done on ancient Egyptian religion, for example.

The mystery religions were very much still a mystery to Western historians, and things like that, it was an explored field. Fraser was one of the first people to write such things, and people figured he knew what he was talking about. And so when C.S. Lewis was going to school, or even when he was a child, he read *The Golden Vow*, and he felt that these things were true.

He was an atheist, of course, until he was an adult, and then he became a Christian, but as a Christian he still believed, because that's what he'd been taught, that these dying, rising gods, as they called them, were characteristic of these pagan religions. C.S. Lewis dealt with this issue in his own mind. Interestingly enough, he had been an atheist, became a Christian, and even though he thought these myths actually taught these things, because he didn't know better, he wasn't bothered by it.

He said he'd be surprised if it wasn't so. He believed Christianity was the true fact. In fact, in his book *God and the Dog*, he wrote an essay called *Myth Became Fact*.

He said the story of Jesus is the true facts of the case. The mythology of the pagans was simply God's vague revelation to them of things that Jesus would eventually be like. Just like God gave the Jews types and shadows and even prophecies of what the Messiah would be like, Lewis thought that God gave pagans what he called good dreams, dreams about a God who would die for the people and rise again.

Not that any of these pagan dreams were true stories, but that they were preparatory for eventually them to hear the true story of Jesus. That's what Lewis thought. But we now know, of course, that it was unnecessary to even take that approach as a Christian, because, well, I'll tell you why.

Let's look at what we know. Oh, by the way, we're told that he was referred to as the truth and the light, Mithras, and that he was worshipped on Sunday. Judging from the reference notes at Zeitgeist's website, most of these details about Horace et al.

are drawn from the works of Sir James George Fraser in his books *The Golden Bough*, and from the works of poet and self-taught Egyptologist Gerald Massey, who is also essentially late 19th century, and from Dorothy Murdoch, whose online name is Acharya S. She's got a website where she goes into all this stuff a lot, but she gets a lot of it from the other two names that are on that list. These sources have been discredited and ignored for nearly a century due to subsequent scholarly research and archaeological discovery, so that the claims in Zeitgeist do not reflect the views of modern scholars, trained Egyptologists, cultural anthropologists, or historians. Notably, Zeitgeist does not cite nor rely at any point on any ancient documents for the religions discussed, and exhibits little awareness of the contents of the Bible itself.

In other words, Zeitgeist is just repeating what it got from these 19th century books. It doesn't go back further. It doesn't cite any sources from the ancient religions themselves, and therefore it errs.

I looked up Gerald Massey because he's mentioned a lot in terms of this Jesus myth theory on the Wikipedia, and among the things that I found about him, it says some writers have drawn parallels between Jesus and Horace, notably Gerald Massey in the late 19th and early 20th century. However, Massey was not a trained Egyptologist, and his work was never recognized in the field of Egyptology, and his ideas were seen as fringe theories that lacked critical support. Massey was also a theophysist, whose theories often support his theosophical concepts and ideas.

Some of the other promoters of this are also part of theosophy. Gerald Massey's writings influenced Alvin Boyd Kuhn, and later the ordained Anglican priest and lecturer Thomas Harper, who presented his own case in the book *The Pagan Christ*, in which he argued that all the essential ideas of both Judaism and Christianity came primarily from Egyptian religion. W. Wargask has written that Egyptologists have rejected many of the specific claims made by Harper and Massey as fallacious, pointing out that there is no evidence, for example, of a virgin birth for Horace, and that Harper's main source, Alvin Boyd Kuhn, was a theosophist whose books were mainly self-published, and that his other sources were, in the main, not ancient Egyptian texts, but out-of-date authors.

That's also from the Wikipedia article on Gerald Massey. So what do the actual ancient records of these pagan religions reveal in relation to the claims presented in this documentary? Well, it so happens that since the 19th century, there has been some real scholarship that's looked into these things. They really have read the reliefs and the manuscripts and so forth that have come to us from these ancient religions, and we do know some things about them.

Some of them remain still in shrouded mystery because there's not a whole lot of documents for some of them. But let's talk about those that were allegedly born December 25th. The documentary says Horace, Attis, Dionysus, and Mithras were all born December 25th.

Well, first, the Bible nowhere associates this date with Jesus at all. There's no parallel here with anything in the Bible, even if they were all born on December 25th. Jesus wasn't.

The Bible doesn't claim that he was. Even Christians didn't claim he was until the 4th or 5th century after Christ. So even if all of these deities were, in fact, said to have been born December 25th at the winter solstice, which wouldn't have been too surprising since the astronomical year, an astrological year, influenced these religions, it would have no bearing on anything that the Bible says about Jesus or that Christianity talks about Jesus until centuries later when Christianity began to merge with paganism somewhat.

But still, these claims are not true. Egyptian mythology gives various dates for the birth of Horace, including December 25th, but also July 15th, and some say his birth was celebrated in the month of Koyak, which is October, November. So there's a variety of dates of Horace's birth given.

December 25th is one of them. As far as Attis is concerned, there's no mention of this date having any relation to Attis. He's associated, actually, with the annual return of spring in the Attis religion, so it's totally a fabrication to say that he had anything to do with December 25th.

There's no record of this date being significant for Dionysus. Like Attis, Dionysus was associated with the annual return of spring. And finally, Mithras, yes, Mithras, I think that can be established.

Mithras was said to have been born December 25th. So we've got Horace. One of the possible birth dates in mythology for him was December 25th, and Mithras almost surely was associated with December 25th, which may be why Christianity once became paganized, adopted that date also for the birth of Jesus.

But it has nothing to do with the veracity of the Gospels, which don't tell us a thing about December 25th. There's no overlap there with true Christianity at all. How about the born of a virgin? According to this movie, Horace, Attis, Krishna, Dionysus, and Mithras were all born of virgins.

Is that true? Well, okay, what do we know about these guys? Horace's mother was Isis, who was not a virgin or a woman. She was a goddess. And Isis was married to Osiris, which is a strong indication she probably was not a virgin, even in the mythology,

because she was a married woman, a married goddess.

After Osiris was killed, Isis puts him back together again, and he had been hacked into pieces by Set. Remember the bad guy was Set in this story. He had hacked Osiris into 14 pieces and spread the pieces around the world.

Well, the widow, Isis, found all the pieces except one, the reproductive organ. But she put all the other pieces together, and he lacked a reproductive organ, so she fashioned one herself for him. By the way, almost all these pagan religions are very sexually oriented.

And then she had relations with her dead husband and produced Horace. And so this is not exactly the same thing as a virgin birth. Now, what about the legend about Attis? Well, according to the legend, Agdistus, who is a hermaphrodite monster, both male and female, arises from the earth as a descendant of Zeus.

Agdistus gives birth to the Sangarius River, which brings forth the nymph Nana, who either holds an almond to her breast or becomes impregnated by the almond, or sits beneath a tree where an almond falls on her lap and impregnates her, and thus Attis is conceived. I don't know. I guess a woman would still be a virgin after she's impregnated by an almond.

It doesn't have an awful lot of parallels with the Christian story, as near as I can tell. How about Krishna? We all have heard of Krishna, of course. A virgin birth is never attributed to Krishna, as his parents bore seven previous children together.

Critics claim Krishna was born of a virgin, Maya, but according to Hindu texts, he was the eighth son of Princess Devaki and her husband Vasudeva. Here's an actual quote from the Krishnaic literature, the original from the Mahabharata. It says, speaking to Krishna, the book says, you have been born of the divine Devaki, that's his mother, and Vasudeva, his father, for the protection of Brahma on earth.

No possibility of that being a virgin birth. There's no claim of it being a virgin birth. Had a dad and a mom.

Now, as far as Dionysus is concerned, there's two birth accounts. See which of these most resembles the conception of Jesus. The first account is that Zeus impregnates a mortal woman, Semele, much to the jealousy of a goddess named Hera.

Hera convinces Semele to ask Zeus to reveal his glory to her, but because no mortal can look upon the gods and live, Semele is instantly incinerated. So Zeus then takes the fetal Dionysus out of her womb and sews him into his own thigh until his birth. Okay? The other alternative is that according to another tradition associated with the Greek Orphic mystery cult, Dionysus was born of an incestuous union between the serpentine Zeus and his daughter Persephone.

Persephone also was born from such a union between Zeus and Rhea. So neither of these suggest a virgin birth at all. Zeus is the dad, and according to the mythology, he impregnates a goddess or a human in sort of what we would call more or less a normal manner.

In Mithraism, with Mithras, there's no mention of a virgin birth. The earliest reliefs, which are of course carved out of rock, and that's where we get the earliest information about Mithras, from reliefs, they depict a fully mature Mithras emerging from a rock. So he's like a human male coming out of a rock as if he's born out of a rock.

That's how Mithraism depicted the origins of Mithras. Now how about those who were, well, only one, Horus, Horus is said to have been, his birth was accompanied by a star from the east. Well, the Egyptian records tell of no star that heralded Horus' birth, but if the Egyptian records don't, where are we going to get it? He was an Egyptian god.

This is apparently entirely made up by either Peter Joseph who made the movie, or his sources who apparently made it. There's no ancient source to support that. Adored by three kings, Horus is said to have been adored by three kings at his birth.

Well, that may be well and good, however, Jesus wasn't. There's no mention in the Bible of three kings adoring Jesus. There are the Magi, but they're religious leaders, not kings, and there's no reason to assume that there were three of them.

The Bible does not hint at this. Anyway, there's no document saying that Horus had three such visitors either. So neither Jesus nor Horus was visited by three kings, so I guess that would be a similarity between the two.

That's probably the closest similarity we've found so far. Horus is also said to have been a boy teacher at age 12. However, unfortunately for the documentary, this is true of Jesus, but no known record says such a thing about Horus.

How about baptized at age 30? Jesus by John the Baptist, Horus by Annap the Baptizer. That sounds similar. However, Horus was never baptized in any of the Horus stories.

Horus stories. Some of them were horror stories too, as you can tell. The movie claims that John the Baptist is actually Annap the Baptizer.

This individual, Annap the Baptizer, is never mentioned anywhere in any known Horus account. Now, you've got to ask this question. It might be forgivable that somebody's not an expert on ancient Egyptian religion.

I'm not. But Peter Joseph isn't. I can't blame him for not being an expert.

But one has to ask, where is he getting his information? Since he doesn't have correct information, where is it coming from? Does he have any interest in reliability in what he

says, or is he just a propagandist who doesn't mind making stuff up if it suits him? Dionysus is said to have been a traveling teacher. Well, that's probably true, but not a religious teacher. Dionysus was said to have traveled far and wide, whereas Jesus concentrated his ministry in Judea.

Dionysus went to teach the secrets of the vine, that is, how to make wine, and to spread his religious rites. He was never believed to be a spiritual teacher, more like a teacher of how to make wine. Jesus never taught his disciples how to do that.

He just did it and never told them how it worked. Horus and Mithras, we're told, both had twelve disciples. Well, we know Jesus had twelve disciples, but according to the Horus accounts, meaning the ancient ones, Horus had four semi-gods that were his followers.

That's not twelve. There was some indication of sixteen human followers and an unknown number of blacksmiths that went into battle with him. Horus did not have twelve disciples.

Since he was considered to be the sky, the twelve houses of the Zodiac were associated with him, but were not disciples of his. The number of Jesus' disciples was based on the twelve tribes of Israel, not the houses of the Zodiac. So the fact that the god Horus was the sky god.

In fact, the sun and the moon were considered to be two eyes of Horus. So, since he's the whole sky and the Zodiac signs are in the sky, yeah, he was associated with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, but never are they depicted as, in any way, disciples of his or part of him. How about Mithras? Did he have twelve disciples? Well, Mithras did not have twelve disciples.

And two of the reliefs to the left are there. I actually used to have a picture of it here, but it's not on the slide. Mithras is surrounded by twelve signs of the Zodiac.

No explanatory inscriptions accompany the original reliefs, which means we're not told that the twelve signs of the Zodiac represent disciples of his. That's an assumption that is being made by the film. How about workers of miracles? Horus, Krishna, Dionysus, Mithras.

Well, it's not unusual for gods to do that kind of thing in mythology, so it shouldn't be surprising. It is more unusual for historical characters to do it, making Jesus very unusual indeed, and unlike the others. They were myths.

Walking on water. This is said to have been done by Horus. Jesus did walk on water.

There's no record that Horus did. Even Gerald Massey does not maintain that Horus did. Massey uses wild conjecture to connect the story of the fish man, Oannes, not Horus, to Jesus.

Oannes came out of the sea during the day and went back into the sea at night. And since Jesus walked on water, that's like a clear parallel to Gerald Massey. How about turning water into wine? Dionysus said to that, well sure, he's the god of wine.

Dionysus is the god of mythology who gave King Midas the power to turn whatever he touched into gold. Likewise, he gave the daughters of King Aeneas the power to turn whatever they touched into wine, or corn, or oil. Considering Dionysus was the god of wine, this should not be a surprise to us.

And yet Jesus never taught his disciples how to turn water into wine. There's no parallel. The only difference is that Jesus turned water into wine because he is the true vine.

And turning water into wine is what vines do. He is the true vine, and he proved it by turning water into wine. But he never taught it as a you know, a skill to his disciples.

There's not really a parallel there. How about those special titles these guys were known at? By the way, it's not remarkable for gods to be known by special titles. But Horus and Mithras are said to have been called the Truth and the Light.

Well, Jesus is called by both those titles in the Bible. Was Horus called that? And Mithras? There's no record of these titles being used of Horus that can be found. Though the names are not an exact match, one researcher found the term Warrior Angel of Light used of Mithras.

But this is associated with the Iranian Mithras, not the Roman Mithras of Mithraism. See, the Jews never had any contact with Iranian Persian Mithraism. It actually came to the Roman Empire late in the first century and became popular in the second century.

Too late to influence the Gospels writing, but even this is not an exact match, so the Iranians called Mithras the Warrior Angel of Light. That's actually a closer verbal similarity to what the Bible calls the Devil, the Angel of Light. He appears as an Angel of Light.

But Jesus is never called the Warrior Angel of Light in the Bible. How about these titles? Lamb of God and Good Shepherd. Those certainly sound like Jesus.

He was called by those titles. Was Horus? We're told he was. No record of these titles being used of Horus can be found.

How about King of Kings? God's only begotten son. Alpha and Omega. We're told that Dionysus was called by these names.

Well, besides the fact that no documentation is provided to show that these titles ever were applied to Dionysus, King of Kings was a common, generic title for great kings. Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel's chapter, he said, oh, Nebuchadnezzar, you are

a king of kings. A great king who ruled over other kings would be called the king of kings.

Yeah, Jesus was called that too, of course. We don't know if Dionysus was, but even if he was, it's a generic kind of a title for a king. How about Only Begotten Son? We don't have record of Dionysus being called that, but it seems unlikely since Zeus had many relationships with women and fathered several other children before he fathered Dionysus.

Why would he be called the only son? Alpha and Omega. Dionysus had a distinct beginning of his existence in the mythology. Not likely that this title was used of him.

At least it can't be documented that it ever was. How about Crucified, Dead for Three Days? Horus, Attis, Krishna, and Mithras were told all of these were crucified. Now, by the way, crucified doesn't just mean killed.

Crucified means nailed to a cross. It'd be amazing if, in fact, all these gods were nailed to crosses since the Romans were the ones who practiced this. Horus was in ancient Egypt before there were any Romans.

Attis was in Phrygia. Krishna in India. That any myths would have these people being, these gods being crucified would be, indeed, remarkable.

However, there's no crucifixion of Horus in the ancient Egyptian Horus mythology. As far as Attis goes, how does he die? He castrates himself beneath a pine tree after he is made to go insane before his wedding by Agdistus when he, she, that's Agdistus the hermaphrodite monster, becomes enamored with him. His blood flows onto the ground from his severed organ and brings forth a patch of violets.

I guess that's a resurrection. Critics try to associate Attis' death beneath a tree with Jesus' death on a tree. That's as close as the parallel gets.

The guy castrates himself, dies from loss of blood. He did it under a tree. Jesus died on a tree.

Who could hope for a closer match? How about Krishna? Though Jesus mythers claim that Krishna was crucified, this is mentioned nowhere within the Hindu texts. Instead, we are told exactly how Krishna died. He was meditating in the woods when he was accidentally shot in the foot by a hunter's arrow.

The hunter thought he was a deer. I'm not sure which deers you've ever seen that were blue, but maybe he thought he was a deer that was in hypothermia or something like that. The hunter thought that Krishna was a deer, shot him accidentally in the foot.

The point, the mythers like to point out that there's a similarity between Jesus being wounded in his feet and Krishna being wounded in the foot. The story relates, however,

more to the death of Greek mythology's Achilles than anything else. I don't know very many people who would die just from a wound in the foot unless infection set in or something like that, but Achilles in Greek mythology did.

Jesus didn't die from a wound in the foot. Jesus died from crucifixion. The Mahabharata, the Krishna, the Hindu book that tells us about Krishna, tells the story of his death.

The fierce hunter of the name of Jara, or maybe it's Yara, then came there desirous of deer. The hunter, mistaking Krishna who was stretched on the earth in high yoga, he mistook for a deer, pierced him at the heel with a shaft and quickly came to that spot capturing his prey. So that's how Krishna dies.

However, Krishna did come back to life, we'll see. We'll get there later. Now, how about Mithras? Though critics claim that Mithras was crucified, there's no mention of this in the reliefs or text.

There's actually nothing to document it. It's just made up. So, none of these gods that are claimed to have been crucified and dead for three days, none of them were crucified as far as we know and none of them were said to be dead for three days and then rising from the dead.

There's no basis for saying that any of these Pagan deities were crucified. How about resurrected? The claim is made that Horus, Attis, Krishna, Dionysus, and Mithras were all resurrected. Well, there's no resurrection of Horus in the ancient Egyptian records.

As far as Attis goes, in one version, Agdistus is overcome with remorse for her actions. Remember when she drove Attis mad and he castrated himself, he bled to death. Agdistus is overcome with remorse for her actions and requests Zeus to preserve the beautiful corpse of Attis so it never decomposes.

There's no resurrection. His corpse just doesn't decompose. In another account, Agdistus and the great mother, or Sibylle, carry the pine tree back to a cave, that's the pine tree under which he castrated himself, where they both mourn the death of Attis.

Again, no resurrection, but the resurrection story doesn't surface until much later when Attis is transformed into a pine tree. So, there's really no parallels here to the death and resurrection of Jesus. How about Krishna? Jesus Smithers claims that Krishna descended into the grave for three days and appeared to many witnesses, but no evidence of this exists whatsoever.

Instead, the actual account says that Krishna immediately returns to life after he's shot in the heel and dies. He comes right back to life and he speaks only to the hunter. He doesn't appear to people.

He speaks to the hunter and forgives him for his actions. Here's the actual quote from

the Mahabharata text. He, the hunter, touched the feet of Krishna, the high-souled one, comforted him, and ascended upwards, filling the entire welkin with splendor.

Krishna reached his own inconceivable region. In the mythology, Krishna comes back to life immediately. He dies and immediately comes back to life, forgives the hunter, and then goes up in the sky.

That's probably the closest thing that we find in any of these myths that resembles something like the story of Jesus, but it's of course quite different. How about Dionysus? He's the product of Zeus and Persephone. Hera becomes insanely jealous, tries to destroy the infant by sending the Titans to kill him.

Zeus comes to the rescue, but it's too late. The Titans had eaten everything but Dionysus' heart. Zeus then takes the heart and implants it into the womb of Simile.

This is how Dionysus is said to become born again. Because his heart, after the rest of his body had been eaten, was put into a womb and born again through a mother. It's not quite the same thing as the resurrection from the dead.

After Dionysus completes his teaching, his followers and religious rites, he descends to Mount Olympus to be with the other deities alive and well. His infant rebirth, like that of Attis, is symbolic of the vegetation cycle, not of atoning for sin. Here we have a guy who doesn't rise from the dead.

His heart is preserved after he's dead and somehow gets to go through gestation again and a woman is born again. Though the truth is a dead guy is living again later, it's not exactly parallel in any way to the resurrection account. In fact, no death and no resurrection is associated with Mithras at all.

We are told that he completes his earthly mission and then is taken to paradise in a chariot, alive and well. Thus, there's nothing resembling the resurrection of Jesus in any of these pagan myths. One has to wonder, why did these people think there was? Or did they think there was? Or did they not care? Zeitgeist claims other pagan saviors including Buddha, Odin, Zoroaster, Baal, Indra, Tammuz, had these attributes as well.

Besides these five or so that they give these details about, they summarize that a whole bunch of others too had these as well. But we have to assume that the ones they gave examples of are the ones they have the best documentation for. And you can see that the documentation is not impressive.

Edwin Yamauchi, who's a professor of history at Miami University, is an expert on these pagan ancient religions. He says, on the popular level, Sir James Fraser, who wrote *The Golden Bough*, gathered a mass of parallels in his multi-volume work called *The Golden Bough*, which was published in 1906. Yamauchi continued, he discussed Osiris of Egypt, Adonis and Syria, Attis of Asia Minor and Tammuz of Mesopotamia, and concluded that

there was a common rising and dying fertility god.

That is, Fraser concluded that in his book. Unfortunately, much of his work was based on misreading of the evidence, but nevertheless, this helped to introduce these ideas to popular culture. Jonathan Z. Smith contributed the entry Dying and Rising Gods to the Encyclopedia of Religion.

He said, the category of dying and rising gods, once a major topic of scholarly investigation, must now be understood to have been largely a misnomer based on imaginative reconstruction and exceedingly late, highly ambiguous texts. He also says, the category of dying and rising deities is exceedingly dubious. It has been based largely on Christian interest, he means anti-Christian interest, of course, and tenuous evidence.

A liberal scholar who does not believe in the miracles in the Bible, Thomas Bosslooper wrote a book about the virgin birth. He doesn't believe in it, but in his book he said, contemporary writers invariably use only secondary sources to verify such claims. He's talking about the pagan claim.

The scholars whose judgment they accept rarely produced or quoted the primary sources. Sweeping generalizations based on questionable evidence have become dogmatic conclusions that cannot be substantiated on the basis of careful investigation. This is actually Thomas Bosslooper's assessment of the pagan myths about virgin births of the pagan gods.

Ronald Nash, a Christian writer in his book *The Gospel and the Greeks*, said, during a period of time running roughly from about 1890 to 1940, scholars often alleged that primitive Christianity had been heavily influenced by Platonism, Stoicism, and pagan mystery religions and other movements in the Hellenistic world. Largely as a result of this series of scholarly books and articles written in rebuttal, allegations of early Christianity's dependence on the Hellenistic environment began to appear much less frequently in publications of Bible scholars and classical scholars. Today, in the mid-1980s, when he wrote his book, most Bible scholars disregard the question as a dead issue.

Yet, Zeitgeist alleges, quote, the literary similarities between the Egyptian religion and the Christian religion are staggering. Now, what happens on the screen is a list scrolls down very rapidly of two columns, one showing things about Horace, one about Jesus. And I had to pause it several times and look really close, because it's hard to read, to see what these parallels were.

They run about 200 parallels across the screen. They scroll them very quickly. So I thought, well, what are these parallels that are scrolling? There certainly are a lot of them.

And here's what I found. I'll just give you a sampling. Here's some of the parallels between Horace's story and Jesus' story.

The two mothers of child Horace were sisters. The two mothers of the child Jesus were sisters. Interesting.

The outcast mother with her seven sons I'm not sure which outcast mother with her seven sons is referred to here. In the Horace myth, perhaps Isis, and then Mary Magdalene with her seven devils. These are the staggering parallels between Horace mythology and Christianity.

You've got two mothers of the Christ child Jesus who are sisters. I have no idea what that's supposed to mean, but it parallels with the two mothers of the child Horace who are sisters. How about Isis is taken by Horace and adultery was set, and in the Bible you read of a woman taken in adultery.

Which must be exceedingly rare in history. Set, the enemy, the foster father of the child Horace, and Joseph whose name sounds like it has something like set in it. Jo-set? The foster father of child Jesus.

Now these are gathered from a list of like 200 of these amazing parallels here. How about Set and Horace, the twin opponents, and Jesus and Satan, the twin opponents. Did you know in Christianity that Satan and Jesus were twins? Hermes the scribe and Hermes the scribe.

Now I just, in case you're not aware, there is no Hermes the scribe in the Bible. There is a second century document called the Shepherd of Hermas, and I assume that's the Hermes the scribe that's mentioned here. And in Horace religion there was Hermes the scribe.

Gosh, how can you deny the dependence of one of these religions on the other when these parallels are so exact? How about this one? The seven souls of Ra, the Holy Spirit, and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Well, first of all, Ra is not the Holy Spirit, and secondly, there are more than seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, so I'm not sure exactly which seven they have in mind. How about this one? The seven hawks of Ra, the Holy Spirit, compared with the seven doves of the Holy Spirit.

Now I've been reading the Bible all my life, and Christian history, and I don't have a clue what is referred to as the seven doves of the Holy Spirit. And yet these are the parallels that are so staggering between Egyptian religion and Christianity. So if these are the staggering parallels, I think we've got to say there's not much parallels at all.

We're going to take a break about ten minutes.