During the 14th century BCE, Egyptian pharaoh Amenhotep IV and his wife Nefertiti challenged traditional Egyptian religious beliefs. They tried to replace worship of hundreds of gods with a Sun God they called Aton. The pharaoh built a new capital city dedicated to the Sun God and he changed his name to Akhenaton, one who serves Aton. Many scholars believe this Hymn to Aton is similar in thought and language to Psalm 104 of the Hebrew Old Testament. They believe that these descriptions of the power of two different Gods is an example of cultural diffusion in the ancient Middle East. Read the passages, underline similarities and answer the questions that follow.

1- Which passage do you consider the most similar? Why?

2- In your opinion, are these passages an example of cultural diffusion -- the spread of ideas and beliefs from one cultural to another -- or of parallel development? Explain.

3- If these passages are an example of cultural diffusion, what are the implications for our understanding of the religion of the ancient Hebrews and modern Christianity?