

## Lesson 2

Last week we learned that the word “god,” or in the Hebrew *elohim* is a title and not a name. Like President is a title, god is also a title.

[Exo 3:13-14 ESV] 13 Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God [Elohim] of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

The term “god” means a judge; or one who is placed in a position of influencing authority. Why would Moses ask what God’s [Elohim’s] name was if God was His name? Obviously, God is not a name.

Since the word is a title or position and not a name, it means it can be used away from Yahweh.

We also learned last week that God says there are other gods.

Psalms 82 comes front and center as one of the most direct in speaking to the existence of other gods. We see here that God established these other gods. They are created beings under his power.

[Psa 97:9 ESV] 9 For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

The separation between creator God and created gods is divinity.

The word Elohim or god is not determined by a set of attributes. It is merely a title; a position. It is attributes that will separate the gods. Only one god has divine attributes. Foreknowledge, predestination, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence.

[2Pe 1:3-4 ESV] 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

This shows divinity is sinless; not just sinlessness, but incapability of sin. Angels are not sinless (they are capable of sin), therefore, they are not divine.

We tackled verses where God says there are no other gods beside him. We made the point that the use of the word “besides” means “there is none like me,” or “there is none equal to me.”

This presentation that God says there are other gods is not preached from the pulpits of evangelical Christianity. So, let’s err on the side of overkill to stress the point that God says there are other gods.

**Ps. 95:3, Ps. 136:2; Psalm 138:1, Deut. 8:19, Deut. 17:2-3; Deut. 30:17; 2 Kings 17:35, 37-38; Deut. 32:16-17;**

[Deu 32:21 ESV] 21 They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

This verse speaks to idols as being “no gods.” What is being referenced in the above verses are not idols. God says idols are not gods. Yet he says there are other gods, and the ultimate sin of the Israelites as a nation was worshipping these other gods.

If you do not see or won't acknowledge these other gods, then you risk robbing God of His glory.

[Psa 135:5 ESV] 5 For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.

That Psalm is just empty rhetoric if there are really no other gods.

(other verses)

Josh. 24:14; Judg. 2:12, 17; **Judg. 6:10**; Judg. 10:6; 1 Kings 11:4; 2 Kings 17:35, 37-38; 2 Kings 18:33-35; **Ps. 95:3**; Jer. 10:11; Jer. 25:6; Dan. 2:11; 2 Chr. 33:3.

Bring in idols and these other gods.

[Due 12:3-4 ESV] 3 You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place. 4 You shall not worship the LORD **your God** in that way.

[Psa 97:7 ESV] All worshipers of images are put to shame, who make their boast in worthless idols; worship him, all you gods!

God takes this “other gods” stuff seriously.

[Exo 34:14 ESV] (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God)...

[Exo 20:1-6 ESV] 1 And God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD **your God**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD **your God** am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

The first of the Ten Commandments speaks toward real gods, the gods that God made. The second commandment speaks toward gods that man makes; not actually gods at all but gods in the mind of man only.

[Jer 16:20 ESV] Can man make for himself gods? Such are not gods!"

[Act 17:29 ESV] 29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

Show that God made man in His image.

[Gen 1:26-27 ESV] 26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

[Gen 2:7 ESV] 7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

The only image that has ever been formed that has come to life is the images that God has made. He took dust of the earth, formed it into an image, then he breathed life into that image.

Man makes images and nothing happens. There is no life to ever come into the image.

There is one instance where God allows a man-made image to come to life.

Revelation 13:14-15

How did an ancient view an idol; a carved image of wood or stone representing their god? The ancients did not believe that the image of stone or wood was their god. What the ancients instead believed was that the objects they made were *inhabited* by their gods.

This is not much different than what we believe. The bible says we are the image of God. We also believe that the Spirit of that God comes and lives within us; that the Spirit of the God of the universe indwells within His image—the Believer.

Every human bears the image of God. But God only lives in the images that ask Him in.

Deut. 29:25-26

Note with this one that God is talking about "gods that God did not allot to the nation of Israel."

If there are these gods, then what are they *elohim* over? What are they a judge over?

Genesis 9:1, 7

Genesis 11 ("let us go down"). Who is the us? Most modern evangelical scholars say this is a conversation between the Trinity. But the Trinity was already down to earth in verse 5. Why did they

have to go back to heaven in verse 7 to say “let us go down and there confuse their language...” unless the “us” is something more than the Trinity. Try thinking of the “us” as the angelic realm.

[Gen 11:4 ESV] 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens...

Footnote from ESV Study Bible; Genesis 11:2-4. *The Babel enterprise is all about human independence and self-sufficiency apart from God. The builders believe that they have no need of God. Their technology and social unity give them confidence in their own ability, and they have high aspirations, constructing a tower with its top in the heavens. Contrary to God's plan that people should fill the earth, the city-building project is designed to prevent the population from being dispersed over the face of the whole earth.*

Deuteronomy 32:8-9

Deuteronomy 32 describes how Yahweh's dispersal of the nations at Babel resulted in his disinheriting those nations as people unto Himself. This is an Old Testament parallel of what Romans 1 points out where God gives humankind over to their persistent rebellious passions.

The theological message is: Humanity had shunned Yahweh as their God, so Yahweh would shun them as their God and start His restoration of Eden again in another manner. He would turn the rebellious people over to his angelic staff. He would package the people into nations, and he would have his subordinates rule these nations. And it is here that these subordinates become “gods.”

[Deu 4:19 ESV] 19 *And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, **all the host of heaven**, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.*

Deuteronomy 4 is the other side of God's punitive coin. Whereas in Deuteronomy 32 God meted out the nations to the sons of God, here we are told that God “allotted” the gods to the nations.

Daniel 10. In Daniel 10 we see strong angelic beings called the prince of Persia or the prince of Greece. These are nation states and imply that these beings are the gods over those nations.

So, God has established these other gods and has given them positions of power. Their position of power is over the nations.

Psalm 82.

The unfortunate part of the picture is that these other gods became corrupt and ruled corruptly. Were they corrupt when God gave them the nations, or did they become corrupt after they were given the nations? We do not know for certain, but I lean to the position that they were **not** corrupt when God gave them the nations. This is based on applying logic to Psalm 82.

In Psalm 82, God is scolding the gods, the sons of the Most High, for ruling corruptly. What logic is there in God scolding them for ruling corruptly if these beings were corrupt when God gave them rulership over the nations? If they were corrupt when God gave them their authority, why would God think that they then would not rule corruptly?

God's judgment in that passage is only just if the appointed gods were not corrupt at the time of their appointment.

These gods are to be judged for their corrupt rule over the nations. God says that because of their actions, they have been converted from eternal spirit beings into mortal spirit beings; they are to put on the spiritual mortality that men are under and they will suffer eternal death—which is eternal separation from God.

Being in the presence of God is not a guarantee that free-will beings will never stray or act out of self-will.

Verses that speak to God not trusting the heavenly realm. Job 4:17-19; Job 15:14-15.

From this point forward to the end of the Bible, the theme of the Bible story is that God is designing, structuring, and working to bring the nations back to His fellowship. The nations, born out of sin, are the focus of God's earthly redemption.

Revelation 22:1-5.