

Lesson 3

The purpose of this class is to bring forth and teach the underlying spiritual foundation of the Bible. The evangelical Christian church has not been very good at this. Therefore, in the process of revealing this spiritual foundation, we will show things from the Bible that will rub against the standard Christian grain. It may feel like petting a dog in the wrong direction.

In this process across the next how many weeks, there will be several large elephants that will enter the room. These are the teachings that run counter to standard Christian biblical teaching, but they must be confronted. The Bible does not need to be shied away from or protected from itself. So, we will meet the elephants head on.

The first one we encountered last week. That is, that God, the creator of the universe, says there are other gods. Standard Christian teaching is that there is only one God and there are no other gods.

Yes, there is only one divine God, but that does not mean that there can't be non-divine gods. What we learned is that God is not a name. Instead, god, or elohim, is a title just like President is a title. President is a title; Trump is his name. God is His title; Yahweh is his name.

To quickly put these other gods in perspective, these gods are beings created by God. They are not in any way equal to the creator God of the Bible. Most would classify them as angels. And if you know anything about the angelic realm, it is built upon a hierarchical structure. Some angels are more powerful than others; just like in the army, some ranks are more powerful than others.

In this context, God has given certain angels strong authoritative powers, to the point where Yahweh calls them gods.

There is no god equal to or independent of the creator God. There is no god who can counter anything that the creator God does, decrees, predestines, or commands.

But, these lesser gods are powerful. They have superiority over humanity.

So, if we have these other gods, and they are given an identifier as a god because they have been given the power to rule over or to judge, what is it that they are a judge over?

Deut. 29:25-26

Note with this one that God is talking about "gods that God did not allot to the nation of Israel." So, at the least, there is a geographical or a nationalistic component associated with these gods. They are assigned to nations, and nations often find themselves settled in geographic locations. Yahweh says that He did not allot the nation of Israel to any of these gods.

So, where and when were nations allotted to these gods? Let's start with where the nations were created.

Tower of Babel Incident

Genesis 9:1, 7

Genesis 11 ("let us go down")

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

Read footnote in ESV Study Bible. Genesis 11:2-4.

[Footnote] *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

Here we see that because of the people's God-rejecting action at Babel, God disinherited the people. In other words, God walked away from direct fellowship with these people. "If you don't want me as your God, then I do not want you as my people" is largely what God is saying.

"The statement in Deuteronomy 32:9 that "the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage" tips us off that a contrast in affection and ownership is intended. Yahweh in effect decided that the people of the world's nations were no longer going to be in relationship to him. He would begin anew. He would enter into covenant relationship with a new people that did not yet exist: Israel." *Unseen Realm*, pg. 113.

We have to address the discrepancy at the end of verse 8.

The Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls read "sons of God." The Masoretic Text reads "sons of Israel." Remember, the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls are older than the Masoretic Text. They are actually closer to the original Hebrew.

Also, from their exposure to other textual writings of the time, the Second Temple Period Jews, who brought about the Septuagint, were very supernatural world sensitive. It was they who interpreted the conversion from the Hebrew into the Greek to read "according to the number of the sons of God." They understood the spiritual undertone below these verses.

Also, this action occurred before the nation of Israel was even called into existence. Therefore, "according to the number of the sons of Israel" doesn't jive with the context of the time period.

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 since they didn't want to worship the Creator and instead wanted to worship the creation.

The theological message is: Humanity had shunned Yahweh as their God, so Yahweh would shun them 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, give them their own language, so the nations would not re-bond, and he would have his angelic subordinates rule these nations. And it is here, having been given the authority over the nations, that these angelic subordinates become "gods."

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

We need to identify who is being spoken to in Psalm 82.

Psalm 82.

Many preachers when they preach on this Psalm will make these "gods" to be nothing more than earthly rulers. They completely remove the spiritual aspect of this Psalm. They do that, whether consciously or not, because it fits their filter that there are no other gods but Yahweh.

This Psalm screams that it is addressing spiritual beings and not earthly beings. But the Christian pulpit works very hard at trying to take this spirituality away.

Let's start with identifying who is being spoken to.

[Psa 82:1 NKJV] 1 A Psalm of Asaph. God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods.

[Psa 82:1 NLT] 1 A psalm of Asaph. God presides over heaven's court; he pronounces judgment on the heavenly beings:

[Psa 82:1 NIV] 1 A psalm of Asaph. God presides in the great assembly; he renders judgment among the "gods":

[Psa 82:1 NASB] 1 A Psalm of Asaph. God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers.

[Psa 82:1 RSV] 1 A Psalm of Asaph. God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:

The point to gather from all these translations is that God is addressing spiritual beings in a spiritual assembly. How does this Psalm then magically transform into talking to earthly beings? Such a transition is not true to the text or the underlying language.

Note from this that God has a council of heavenly beings that he assembles to help Him govern His creation and His universe.

Daniel 7:9-10; Daniel 4:13-17, 24; 1 Kings 22.

“The takeaway is that God rules over the heavenly realm and the earthly realm with the genuine assistance of his imager-representatives. He decrees and they carry out his commands. These points are clear. What is perhaps less clear is that the way God’s will is carried out and accomplished is open— imagers can make free decisions to accomplish God’s will. God decrees the ends, but the means can (and apparently are at times) left up to the imagers. *Unseen Realm*, pg. 54.

The push back or the question I regularly get when revealing this is, “why does God need an advisory council?” The answer is, He doesn’t.

“So why does He have one?” I would say it is to use what He has created. You bring forth children. Could you have existed and run your life without children? Of course. But there is some kind of love expression that is released when you have children and you interact with them. Probably the same with God. There is a love expression released when He creates beings who are capable of giving love in return. There is a satisfaction with interacting and using them.

Let’s come back to Psalm 82.

God has a heavenly council. This Psalm starts out saying that God has convened a heavenly council.

We are identifying them as heavenly beings. God’s question to them is “why have you judged corruptly?” So, God has given these heavenly beings judgment powers.

Another telling verse is verse 6. The word “sons of the Most High.” Again, many preachers teach this chapter by saying that this is about earthly rulers. That then would mean that the earthly rulers would have to be sons of the Most High. That, however, they are not.

In the Bible, there are five people or entities who are given the distinction of sons of God, or by extension could be labeled as sons of the Most High.

In the Bible, there are five individuals/groups that can carry the label “sons of God.”

1) Jesus Christ

[Luk 9:35 ESV] 35 *And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is **my Son**, my Chosen One; listen to him!"*

[Jhn 3:16 ESV] 16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his **only begotten Son**...*

2.) Adam

[Luk 3:38 ESV] 38 *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of **Adam**, the son of God.*

3.) The nation of Israel

[Deu 14:1 ESV] 1 "You are the **sons of the LORD your God**. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead.

[Hos 11:1 ESV] 1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called **my son**.

4.) The New Testament Church

[1Jo 3:1 ESV] 1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be **called children of God**; and so we are.

[Rom 8:16 ESV] 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are **children of God**,

[Gal 3:26 ESV] 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all **sons of God**, through faith.

5.) Angels

[Job 2:1 ESV] 1 Again there was a day when the **sons of God** came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

[Job 38:4, 7 ESV] 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ... 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the **sons of God** shouted for joy?

What is the key that designates a "son of God? "

John 1:11-13

[Jhn 1:13 ESV] 13 who were born, **not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God**.

A "son of God" is a being or entity that is directly created sinless by God Himself. It does not mean they cannot become sinful, (see Adam and the angels), but when they were created, they were created directly by God and without sin.

Now, in this time frame, who of these five "sons of God" can this be? Adam by now is dead. Jesus, at this time, was not yet declared the Son of God. Israel was not yet called into existence, and the Church wasn't created until the New Testament.

That only leaves the angels as to who could be the sons of the Most High spoken to here.

So, the point is that to be a "son of the Most High," humans by themselves do not qualify. Humans are born of the flesh. Therefore, they are sons of man. Therefore further, this cannot be speaking to earthly rulers. But angels were created as sons of the Most High, so therefore, they qualify. Because of that, this is who is being identified.

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 this passage is severe. These immortal, spiritual beings are going to be transformed. Because of their corruption, their fate will be that they will cease to be immortal spiritual beings. Instead, they will become mortal spiritual beings. They will be 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.

This is a harsh judgment and is really 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.

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.