

Lesson 4

Last week we saw where God established other gods. It was at the Tower of Babel and was done in response to humanity's sinful rebellion at the Tower of Babel. Because of this, God divided and segmented humanity by language and nation. The creation of the nations and languages is God responding to a sinful rebellion.

In this process, God disinherited humanity. He ceded His direct control and authority over these new nations to his helpers within the spiritual realm; this being what is probably the top rung of the angelic hierarchy.

It would appear God assigned an authoritative angel to each of the nations.

Daniel 10:10-21 (Note the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece).

Since God gave the nations over to the rule and judgment of these angelic beings, God labels these angelic beings "gods" due to their power and influence.

Last week we also saw that God surrounds Himself with an angelic council. It was angels within this council that God handed over the control of the nations. They are to rule and judge over the nations as representatives of God's council. They are to manage the spiritual influence upon the nations and to report upon such back to God.

God is not above using the angelic realm to be active within and responsible to carry out God's decrees and desires. It would appear God will allow the angelic realm autonomy in how they function in the process of carrying out God's commands and decrees.

"Here are the boundaries, here are the goals. Now go make them happen."

This should come across with the combination of Psalm 82 and Deuteronomy 32 where God takes the rebellious peoples at Babel, confuses their languages and segments them up into nations, then He gives them to the angelic realm to oversee and nurture them.

I pointed out that I believe the angels who were appointed as "gods" were not in rebellion against God when they were assigned the nations.

But the angelic realm has been granted their free will just like the human realm has, and that means that the angelic realm is vulnerable to making choices apart from God; in this case, going against the will of God and instead following their own will.

It would appear the gods took a fancy to being in power over the nations and hijacked humanity's natural instinct of worship toward a greater being. They hijacked the worship that should go to Yahweh.

We see in Psalm 82 where the gods are being called out by Yahweh over their methods of management and are thus being judged for it.

God says they didn't rule in His style. Instead, the gods gave partiality to the wicked. They allowed the exploitation of the weak and vulnerable.

For this, Yahweh brought upon the gods a severe judgment; they would be transformed from eternal immortal beings to eternal mortal beings. They would become subject to the same fate of the class that they ruled over, namely humanity, and namely suffering eternal death (eternal separation from God).

As the book of Hebrews says of Christ that "You made him for a little while lower than the angels...", meaning Christ was God transformed into humanity, and humanity is lower than the angelic realm, therefore, in Psalm 82, God's judgment on the rebellious gods is to in the end make them lower than their natural state. He lowered them to the level of humanity.

In the end, faithful humanity and rebellious angels will switch places. Faithful humanity will be made higher than the angels ([1Co 6:3 ESV] 3 *Do you not know that we are to judge angels?*), and rebellious angels will suffer eternal death or eternal separation from God just like rebellious humanity will.

Because of the rebellious actions of portions of the heavenly host, the unseen realm is an arena of contention. The fallen angels know that God has decreed their ultimate end. In the meantime, they must fight tooth and nail to not let this happen. Their fighting is in the spiritual realm but is also targeted at the earthly realm.

Paul understood the depth and gravity of this spiritual contention and told Christians it was the most important thing they needed to focus upon in their struggle to live the Christian life.

[Eph 6:10-12 ESV] 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Because of the rebellion at Babel, God disinherited or separated Himself from direct fellowship with humanity. But God has not spurned humanity completely. He will allow humanity to return to His fellowship. He will even make an effort to reach out and facilitate this.

Humanity is now split up and disunified. Humanity is now programmed and built to not cooperate, to not live in harmony, to not communicate, to not think as one blood.

So, in the process of God making this division, God now has a "problem." How is he going to communicate Himself to all of these diverse people groups?

His solution is to make one more nation of people. This will be a nation of people whose creation is made by God independent of the action of Babel. In other words, this is a national birth that is not the product of sin.

This will be the world's only nation not born from a sinful act. Instead, it will be a nation born sinless by an act of God.

Following the model of the angelic presence in the spiritual realm, God is creating this sinless nation as a tool for Himself. Just as Hebrews 1:14 says of the angelic realm, *Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*, so God's creation of his new nation will also be designed to serve the same function; to be God's human representatives.

The purpose of what will become the nation of Israel will be for that nation to be God's shining beacon back to the sinfully-created nations of the world to come back to the creator God. To see that this new nation's God is the only God where things get done; where the blessings and successes of this nation will be so blatantly powerful and unquestionable that the nations will see that only the God of that nation is a real god.

The welfare, success, and worship of the nation of Israel is to be held up in contrast to the welfare, success, and worship of all the other nations who have been turned over to the angelic realm;; a.k.a., the other gods.

It will be through the devotion, followed by blessings, which will then translate into ultimate success of the nation of Israel that will be the visible manifestation of the Creator God. Through this, the nations will be so impressed and influenced as to believe in, and return to, the Creator God.

This creation of the nation of Israel was begun through the calling of Abraham by God.

Genesis 12.

Note in verse 2 that God says He will make out of Abraham a great nation. But nowhere in the Bible do we see where God made of them a distinct language.

Review Genesis 10 where it specifically says the nations are given their own language. But we never see that same combination (nationhood and language) bestowed together upon the nation of Israel.

"The site of Ugarit was discovered in 1928 and excavated in the decades that followed. One of the major finds was a library containing thousands of clay tablets, roughly 1,400 of which were in an alphabetic language (now called Ugaritic) **that was closer to biblical Hebrew than any other ancient language. The vocabulary and grammar are in many instances virtually identical.** Scholars have learned a lot from this library, about both Ugarit and the content of the Old Testament." *Unseen Realm*, pages 45-46.

Since the Israelites are not singled out as being given their own language, we have to conclude that the Israelites picked up their language base (Hebrew) from another nation-group; one of the languages bestowed in Genesis 10.

The reading from *The Unseen Realm* leads one to conclude that the Hebrew language has its base in the Canaanite language. After all, it was amongst the Canaanites that their founding fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) settled.

Before we explore God's call to Abraham some more, I would like to lay a particular foundation. This will not only touch upon God's call of the nation Israel through Abraham, but also harken back to who was being spoken to in Psalm 82.

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.

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 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. We know this isn’t speaking to Jesus. 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, as unfortunately too many Christian pastors and commentators teach, this cannot be speaking to earthly rulers. Angels were created as sons of the Most High, so therefore, they qualify. Because of that, this is who is being identified.

So, in no particular order, the individual/groups who qualify as the sons of God are Jesus, Adam, Israel, the Church, and angels.

What I want you to do is to put the sons of God in the chronological order of their creation or establishment.

That result would be:

1. Angels
2. Adam
3. Jesus
4. Israel
5. The Church

[Heb 1:5 ESV] 5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"?

This verse, quoted from Psalm 2, establishes the communication between “Father” and “Son.” “Today” means this action and dialogue happened inside of the time domain. “Today” is a time word, not an eternity word. So, this conversation happens within the time domain; in other words, sometime after Genesis 1:1. In other words, Jesus was not the Son of God in eternity past. His role as the Son of God was established within the time domain.

So, when inside the time domain?

[Heb 5:5-6 ESV] 5 So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; 6 as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

Since these passages mention Melchizedek with the creation of the Son of God, the establishment of the Son had to have happened after we meet Melchizedek.

[Jhn 8:56-58 ESV] 56 *Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.*" 57 *So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?"* 58 *Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."*

Did Abraham meet Jesus?

John 1:1, 14 establishes that Jesus is the Word of God.

[Gen 15:1-5 ESV] 1 *After these things the **word of the LORD** came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."* 2 *But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"* 3 *And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir."* 4 *And behold, **the word of the LORD came to him:** "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir."* 5 *And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."*

We see that the Word first came to Abraham in visionary form. Shortly thereafter the Word came in physical form. Jesus dialogued with Abraham. They walked outside together.

Further along in that chapter, in Genesis 15:17 is where Jesus as the Son is established.

Jeremiah 34:18 Example of "cutting a covenant."

In these ancient cultures, serious covenants were made. One type was a promissory covenant. Here a superior party makes a promise to a weaker party. The covenants fulfillment is not based on the weaker party's performance. The promise is good no matter what the weaker party does. The greater party is called the Suzerain, and the lesser the Vassal.

Suzerain (upper-sovereign): a superior feudal lord to whom fealty (loyalty) is due.

JP Torah Commentary: *In the ancient world, **kinship terms were often employed to describe treaty relationships**. Thus, where the contracting parties were on equal terms, they would describe themselves as "brothers," but a vassal would refer to the suzerain as "**father**" and the suzerain would speak of his dependent as "**son**" or as having "borne" him.*

So when the smoking oven and the burning torch (representations of two figures within the Godhead) walked the aisle of the covenant, I truly believe that when they go to the end, the smoking oven turned to the burning torch and said, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."

Types of ancient New Eastern covenants: Obligatory covenants and Promissory covenants.

(CTS: Chafer Theological Seminary)

CTS Journal: *The promissory covenants bound the suzerain (master) to the vassal (servant) unconditionally.*

CTS Journal: *The ancient legal tradition called for witnesses—typically, a long list of gods or elements (mountains, rivers, etc.) which were probably considered to be gods. If the need arose, the gods were called to “enforce the covenant.”*

Then under Promissory, there are two subsets: patron and grant. The Abrahamic covenant was a grant covenant.

CT Journal: *God bestowed this on Abraham as a gift. However, blessings came because they were found faithfully serving after the making of the covenant. (Ex. Abraham was awarded the blessing of the land; Gen. 22:16, 18; 26:5).*

CT Journal: *Usually, the suzerain specifies what he will do to the vassal who disobeys the stipulations and what blessings he will bestow on him for obedience. The gods act not only as witnesses but also “as guarantors that the stipulations of the treaty will be carried out, as ‘lords of the oath.’” They are to pursue relentlessly all who break their oath, but reward those that adhere to the terms of the treaty. And so together with the list of the gods goes the list of blessings.*

[Heb 6:13-19 ESV] 13 *For when God made a promise to Abraham, **since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself**, 14 saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” 15 And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. 16 **For people swear by something greater than themselves**, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. 17 **So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath**, 18 **so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.** 19 *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul**

CTS Journal: *Perhaps the reason God’s covenants begin with and place heavy emphasis on blessings is that He sees grace as a better motivating factor for service than fear.*

CTS Journal: *God took all precautionary measures to bridge a communication gap by patterning His covenants after ancient Near Eastern covenants. His people were able to understand the meaning and relevance of the covenants because they had a similar structure as other ancient Near Eastern covenants. Furthermore, by preserving an enormous amount of evidence from the ancient Near East, God also took precautionary measures to bridge the gap of understanding in today’s world.*