

**The Cosmic Building Inspector
Rebellion Strikes Again
Strike Three**

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In order for us to better understand the scriptures, we have determined that we need to be looking at the mindset of the average Jew living during the time of Jesus and what their view of scripture was. This is based on the crazy notion that for us to fully understand the scriptures, it might be helpful to understand a bit more of the background of the writers as well as those who it was written for at the time it was written in order to better pull out the meaning for today.

Part of that takes us into the history of the era, the countries and normal stuff associate with history, but it also involves a mindset and an acceptance of things which for us in the United States in the 21st Century is hard to do. We tend to read and study the Bible through our 21st century lens of rationalism and science. We completely discount the number one aspect understood and accepted by the Jew of Jesus' time; that this is a supernatural book.

The biblical context includes its supernaturalism. The biblical writers believed in an active, animate spiritual world. That world was home to a lot more than the triune God, angels, Satan, and demons. It included other gods (i.e., the gods of the nations were not merely idols) and territorial spiritual beings that were not demons—and were, in fact, superior to demons. It included what we think of as ghosts, who could appear visibly, and even physically, and communicate to the embodied living world of which they had once been a part (1 Sam 28:3–20). For the biblical writers, divine beings could eat, drink, fight, and

produce offspring with humans (Gen 6:1–4; 18:1–8; 19:1–11; 32:22–32; Num 13:32–33; 2 Pet 2:4–10; Jude 6–7). (Heiser 2017, 16)

Our study is intended to prepare us for a study of the book of Daniel, since we ran into supernatural stuff all throughout our study of the book of Ezekiel. But it will also help us to open up and understand the word more by beginning to understand the worldview of those to whom it was directly written for who did not interpret it through the lens of church history or Calvinism or any other ism you want to throw in there.

We have learned that rebellion did not end with the fall in Genesis, but it did begin there. We have also learned that there was a second outbreak of rebellion so severe, that it resulted in the world having to be destroyed in a flood.

Genesis 6:1–8

Now after the population of human beings had increased throughout the earth, and daughters had been born to them, some divine beings noticed how attractive human women were, so they took wives for themselves from a selection that pleased them. So the LORD said, “My Spirit won’t remain with human beings forever, because they’re truly mortal. Their lifespan will be 120 years.” The Nephilim were on the earth at that time (and also immediately afterward), when those divine beings were having sexual relations with those human women, who gave birth to children for them. These children became the heroes and legendary figures of ancient times. The LORD saw that human evil was growing more and more throughout the earth, with every inclination of people’s thoughts becoming only evil on a continuous basis. Then the LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and he was deeply grieved about that. So the LORD said, “I will annihilate these human beings whom I’ve created from the earth, including people, animals, crawling things, and flying birds, because I’m grieving that I made them.” The LORD was pleased with Noah, however.” (ISV)

We also looked at how the event referenced in Genesis 6:1-4, continues to echo throughout time even up to the present day. Jesus came to reverse what took place as a result of the rebellion in Genesis 3 and 6. He also came to undo another instance of rebellion that we will look at tonight.

Again – terms – sons of God = Divine beings, loyal and those who are not.

“Sons of God” is a common expression for the council of the gods in Canaanite usage (bn ’lm). This expression and related ones, describing the assembly of the lesser deities under the chief god El, are well attested in Ugaritic texts and in Phoenician and Ammonite inscriptions. Antiquity, it is argued, is full of stories in which deities mate with beautiful women by force or persuasion, giving birth to demigods. Originally, it is contended, the intent of the tale was to explain the beginnings of a race of giants. (Mathews 1996, 324)

More likely, as we find in the creation narrative (1:1–2:3) and the Tower of Babel (11:1–9), vv. 1–4 are a refutation of pagan stories that told of a race of superhuman giants. Ancient memory rightly reflected the distant past when fierce tyrants ruled the day, but the author of Genesis by relating the Nephilim to the wickedness of the times and their ensuing judgment showed that they were altogether mortal, not at all superhuman, and subject to the judgment of God. The biblical author not only “set the record straight” but also used it as testimony condemning the wicked generation, which deserved the cataclysmic flood to follow. (Mathews 1996, 324-325)

Moses was aware of the myths being propagated by the pagan cultures surrounding the land to become Israel. Part of what is written in the Torah is a direct attack on those stories, he attacked myth by relating truth.

We also have learned that demons are the spirits of those Nephilim who were destroyed in the flood.

So. what about this third rebellion in Genesis?

Justin Martyr

God, Who made the whole world, having subjected the things on earth to man, and arranged the heavenly bodies for the increase of fruits, and the changes of seasons, and laid down a divine law for these, which He is also seen to have created for man, delivered the care of man, and of things under heaven, to the Angels whom He appointed over them; but the Angels transgressed this order, (Genesis 6:2) and fell into intercourse with women, and begot sons, who are those that are called demons; and moreover they henceforth subjected the human race to themselves; in part, by magic writings; in part, by fears and punishments which they inflicted on them; in part, through their instruction of sacrifices, and incense, and libations, of which they stood in need after they were enslaved by the passions of their lusts; and they sowed among men murders, wars, adulteries, and intemperance, and every kind of vice. Hence also the poets and mythologists, not knowing that the Angels, and the demons that were born of them, did those things to men, and women, and cities, and nations, which they described, referred them to God Himself, and to those whom they considered as sons begotten of Him; and to the sons of those whom they called His brothers, Neptune and Pluto, and to their sons in like manner, for they called every one of these by the name which each of the Angels gave to himself, and to his children. (S. Justin the Martyr 1861, 61)

Justin Martyr not only understood that the Nephilim were the source of the demons that plague mankind, he also clearly knew that the rebellious members of the divine council were the false gods of the pagan world. (Gilbert 2017, Kindle Locations 754-755)

We need to go back to some instructions that were received direct from God right after the flood. First those creatures on the ark.

Genesis 8:15–17

“The Lord God spoke to Noah, saying, “Go out from the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons’ wives with you, and bring out with you all the wild animals, all that are with you, and all flesh from birds to livestock, and every reptile moving on the earth, and increase and multiply on the earth.”” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 8:15-17)

So, the animals on the ark were to spread out over the entire planet. It does appear they had no problem with obedience. Next comes the instructions for man.

Genesis 9:1–7

“And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “**Increase and multiply and fill the earth and exercise dominion over it.** And the trembling and fear of you will be upon all the wild animals of the earth and on all the birds of the heavens and on all the moving things on the earth and all the fish of the sea. I have put them under your hands. And every moving thing that is living will be yours for food; like grassy vegetables, I give you all things. But you shall not eat meat with the blood of life. For indeed, I will seek out your life blood, I will seek it at the hand of all the wild animals, and I will seek the life of the human at the hand of a fellow human. One who sheds the blood of a human shall be shed in place of his blood, because I made humankind in God’s image. **But as for you, increase and multiply and fill the earth and multiply upon the earth.**”” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 9:1-7)

Two times God told Noah and his sons a very distinct instruction. Don’t stay in one place, have lots of kids and fill up the planet. So how did they do on those instructions?

I have included Genesis 10 in your notes for you to review. Suffice it to say, they did okay on part one of the instructions. They had kids.

Genesis 10:1–32

“These now are the generations of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, Japheth; and sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Elishah and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Thorgama. And

the sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim, Rodanim. The islands of the nations were marked off from these on their land, each according to their tongue in their tribes and their nations. The sons of Ham were Cush and Egypt, Put and Canaan. The sons of Cush were Sheba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. Cush fathered Nimrod. He was the first to be a giant on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord God; because of this they will say, "As Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord." And the beginning of his kingdom became Babylon and Erech and Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar. From that land he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh and the city of Rehoboth and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; this is the great city. And Egypt fathered the Lydians and the Nephthalim and the Anemim and the Lehabim and the Pathrusim and the Casluhim, from whom the Philistines came, and the Cretans. Canaan fathered Sidon, his firstborn, and the Hittite and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite. After this the tribes of the Canaanites were scattered around. And the boundaries of the Canaanites were from Sidon until one comes to Gerar and Gaza, until one comes to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Dasa. These are the sons of Ham, in their tribes according to their tongues in their territories and in their nations. And to Shem were born children, even to him, the father of all the sons of Eber, the brother of Japheth the great. The sons of Shem were Elam and Assyria and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. And the sons of Aram were Uz and Hul and Gether and Meshech. And Arpachshad fathered Kenan, and Kenan fathered Shelah. Shelah fathered Eber. And to Eber was brought forth two sons: the name of the first was Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided, and the name of his brother was Joktan. Joktan brought forth Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah and Abimael and Sheba and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab. All these are the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling was from Massa until coming to Ophir, a mountain of the east. These are the sons of Shem in their tribes according to their tongues in their territories and in their nations. These are the tribes of the sons of Noah according to their generations, according to their nations. From these the islands of the nations were scattered about on the earth after the flood." (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 10:1-32)

We will get into exactly how the spreading out took place, because it was not by choice. As you can tell, if you count, there were 70 names from which arise 70 nations. Remember 70. Israel is not on the list. Chapter 10 is called the table of nations.

We learned from the events of Genesis 6 that Eden would not be restored through the rebellion of fallen divine beings or fallen man. But man was not done yet with rebellion

Divine beings in service to Yahweh could defect. Enemies of Yahweh and his rule, from the human to the divine to something in between, lurked over the horizon. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 110)

After portraying the postdiluvian world as made up of related but "scattered" nations (10:5, 18b, 32), the Babel story explains the reason for the dispersed setting (11:4, 8–9). The initial breakup of the postdiluvian people was achieved by the muddling of their language, which foiled the ambitions of the human family. The story provides a striking contrast between human opinion of its self-achievements and God's viewpoint of such endeavors. Human cooperation, when it is fueled by autonomy and directed toward self-interest, is shown by the story to be shallow, impotent hubris. (Mathews 1996, 466)

We saw in Genesis 10 the nations are spread out, now we find out just how that took place.

Genesis 11:1–9

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they

propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth. (ESV)

This is not a story of the cosmic building inspector flunking a building. God is not insecure, something else is going on here. First of all, where is this?

Remember, we have already discussed the north as well as Mount Hermon and Mount Zaphon as well as the Mountain of God which was initially in Eden

Isaiah 14:13–14

"But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" (NASB 2020)

Ezekiel 28:14

"'You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.'" (NASB 2020)

Exodus 3:1

"Now Moses was pasturing the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God." (NASB 2020)

Psalms 68:15–18

"A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; A mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan. Why do you fume with envy, you mountains of many peaks? This is the mountain which God desires to dwell in; Yes, the LORD will dwell in it forever. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, Even thousands of thousands; The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the Holy Place. You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even from the rebellious, That the LORD God might dwell there." (NKJV)

Psalms 2:1–6

"Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.'" (NKJV)

Zechariah 8:3

"Thus says the LORD: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain." (NRSV)

Ezekiel 43:1–5

"Then he brought me to the gate that faced toward the east. I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east; the sound was like that of rushing water; and the earth radiated his glory. It was like the vision I saw when he came to destroy the city, and the vision I saw by the Kebar River. I threw myself face down. The glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate that faces east. Then a wind lifted me up and brought me to the inner court; I watched the glory of the LORD filling the temple." (NET)

The phenomenon itself is identified as *kēbôd 'ēlōhê yiśrā'ēl*, "the glory of the God of Israel." The initial preference for the long form of the expression reflects the significance of the event: the divine patron of the nation is returning; one of the central themes of the salvation oracles of chs. 34–37 is being fulfilled. As in the exodus, Sinai, and tabernacle narratives, the glory is the visible manifestation of the divine

presence, a fact reinforced by Yahweh's own interpretive comment in 44:2. Although Yahweh could have entered the temple area through the northern or southern gate, the choice of the east gate is deliberate, leading in a straight line along the central spine of concentrated sacrality to the holy of holies. (Block 1997-, 578)

The Son of man at His appearing will gather Israel again and judge all the nations. Jehovah will then govern the earth with Jerusalem as His earthly centre. Of this the return of the Shechinah is the symbol. When it left, the Jews ceased to be the recognized people of Jehovah; when they are taken up again under Messiah and the new covenant, the glory comes back. (Kelly 1876, 232-233)

In both the tabernacle and the temple, God's glory was "enthroned" on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies (Ex. 25:22; Ps. 80:1; 99:1), but the millennial temple will have no ark and no mercy seat. However, the temple will still be God's throne (Ezek. 43:6-7) and the Messiah will reign as both King and Priest (Zech. 6:9-13). (Wiersbe 2000, 190)

In Genesis 10 we are introduced, in the table of nations, to an interesting individual.

Genesis 10:8-12

"Now Cush fathered Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city." (NASB 2020)

We pick up on a few things from the NASB version. The International Standard Version gives us a bit more information.

Genesis 10:8-12

"Cush fathered Nimrod, who became the first fearless (gibbor) leader throughout the land. He became a fearless (gibbor) hunter in defiance of the LORD. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a fearless (gibbor) hunter in defiance of the LORD." His kingdom began in the region of Shinar with the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. From there he went north to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, and Calah, along with Resen, which was located between Nineveh and the great city of Calah." (ISV)

Between what we see in Genesis 10 and 11, we pick up the point that two of God's very specific commands to Noah and his kids, were not being followed. They were not spreading out, they were building a city, and in the plain of Shinar, something that would not go unnoticed to the reader, especially one who is reading this post exile.

This is the beginning of a theme which runs throughout the scriptures, one of two cities.

Nimrod (nim'-rod) = Rebel; a rebel; to be rebellious; (root = to be rebellious; to be contumacious). Valiant; strong; he that rules. We will rebel. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 185)

By the way, Webster's says the definition of contumacious is stubbornly disobedient.

The Nephilim are cast as "mighty warriors" (gibborim) and "men of renown"—literally, "men of the name (shem)." (Heiser, The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible 2015, 110-111)

Gibbor – that is what the Nephilim were called.

Genesis 6:4

“There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty (gibborim) men who were of old, men of renown.” (NKJV)

This is an incredibly interesting neighborhood. Nahum Sarna has the following about the neighborhood listed here in Genesis 10.

Babylon - The famous city on the River Euphrates, about 50 miles (80 km.) south of modern Baghdad, Iraq. The oldest Sumerian name for the city was ka-dingir-ra, which was understood to mean “the gate of God.” It was translated into Akkadian as bab-il. According to Enuma Elish, the Mesopotamian creation epic, the gods themselves built the temple there for the god Marduk at the beginning of time. The choice of Babylon to head the list of cities here is most likely determined by the next episode, in chapter 11.

Erech - The Sumerian city-state Uruk, now Warka on the east side of the Euphrates, about 40 miles (64 km.) up the river from Ur in southern Iraq. The Sumerian King List gives this city as the seat of the second dynasty of kings after the flood, the third monarch of which was Gilgamesh.

Accad - The Sumerian King List reports that Uruk was defeated, and its kingship carried off to Akkad. This city, called agade in Sumerian, became the center of the kingdom of Akkad founded by the famous Sargon (ca. 2300 B.C.E.), who established a dynasty that lasted about 150 years. The site of this city, somewhere on the Euphrates, has not been located. Eventually its name came to embrace the whole of northern Babylonia as opposed to Sumer in the south. “Akkadian” now signifies the Semitic Assyrian and Babylonian languages.

Calneh - The only name in this list that never appears in Akkadian inscriptions. It cannot refer to the city mentioned in Amos 6:2 and called Calno in Isaiah 10:9 because that is situated in northern Syria, not in Mesopotamia. A widely accepted suggestion is to read ve-khullanah, “all of them being ...,” which is also an ancient Samaritan tradition. The advantage of this interpretation is that verses 10–12 list exactly seven Mesopotamian cities, another example of the heptad pattern in the Table of Nations.

Shinar - The land of Babylonia, embracing Sumer and Akkad and bounded on the north by Assyria, modern southern Iraq. This name was not used in Mesopotamia itself but is frequently found in one form or another in Egyptian, Hittite, Mitannian, and Amarna texts to designate the Kassite kingdom of Babylon (ca. 1595–1160 B.C.E.). (Sarna 1989, 74)

The land of Shinar is Sumer and Erech is Uruk. Uruk was so important to human history that Nimrod’s homeland is still called Uruk, five thousand years later! We just spell it differently— Iraq. (Gilbert 2017, Kindle Locations 978-979)

The remaining locations in the list from Genesis 10 are cities that will also be problems for Israel in the future as they are all connected with Assyria. Nineveh = Mosul

One more thing about Nimrod, but we need to read from the LXX (Septuagint) to pick up on it.

Genesis 10:8–11

“Cush fathered Nimrod. He was the first to be a giant on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord God; because of this they will say, “As Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord.” And the beginning of his kingdom became Babylon and Erech and Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar. From that land he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh and the city of Rehoboth and Calah,” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 10:8-11)

The LXX of Gen 10:8–9 considered Nimrod to have been a giant and translates ‘before Yahweh’ by enantion kyriou tou theou, which Philo (Quaest. in Gen 2, 82) and subsequent tradition interpreted as ‘in opposition against God’. (Uehlinger 1999, 629)

Genesis 11:4

“And they said, “Come on, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower whose head will be as far as the heavens, and we will make a name for ourselves before we are scattered over the face of the whole earth.”” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 11:4)

The connection to Genesis 6 shows up, a gibbor wants to make a shem, just like in Genesis 6. Just like we saw in the story of creation, we once again see a reference to the council of God.

Genesis 11:5–7

“And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.”” (ESV)

At Babel, the nations of the world, all of one language at the time, had jointly and directly disobeyed God by all going into a single city.

A key expression, repeated five times, is “all the earth,” for the entire human race is presumed to be sinful. The postdiluvian generations, having learned nothing from history, have proved themselves to be disappointingly out of harmony with God. (Sarna 1989, 81)

They want to approach God on their conditions, not His. They are building a manmade mountain in order to commune with divine beings, ostensibly some of the same type who came down to Mount Hermon.

Its function, it is generally agreed, was to symbolize a mountain. The sacred mountain played an important role in most religions in ancient times. Rooted in the earth, with its head lost in the clouds, it was taken to be the meeting point of heaven and earth and, as such, the natural arena of divine activity. On its heights the gods were imagined to have their abode. Constituting the obvious channel of communication between the celestial and terrestrial spheres, the sacred mountain was looked upon as the center of the universe, the “navel of the earth.” (Sarna 1989, 82)

Here the author uses anthropomorphic satire, to satirize what puny man is trying to do. No matter how high man towered, God still has to come down to see it and to get a better look. This shows that God is interested in the affairs of men, but God is so high and man is so puny that God had to come down to get a better look. What He came down to see is the city and the tower, which the children of men built. The word for men here is “adam” meaning “mankind” or “humanity.” Based upon the tense here, the city and the tower were actually completed. (Fruchtenbaum 2008, 223-224)

The first problem was: This is what they begin to do, meaning this is only the first act of rebellion in this one place; if left to themselves, more such acts will follow in this one place. The second problem was: Now nothing will be withheld from them, which they purpose to do, meaning they will purpose to sin in many other ways as well. While no one can thwart the purpose of God, nothing will be able to thwart the purpose of man unless this initial project, which is an act of rebellion against the divine rule, is stopped. The roots of the two words, thwart and purpose are used elsewhere only in Job 42:2. The rabbis interpret this verse as meaning: “With such unity, they will enthrone idolatry for all time so that no man will be able to turn to the worship of the true God.” (Fruchtenbaum 2008, 224)

That is not the whole story though. There is more and once again the scripture is the best commentary on scripture. In Deuteronomy 32, Moses is giving his farewell speech and in it he provides some history and some prophecy.

Deuteronomy 32:7–9

“Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he

divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage." (ESV)

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 describes how Yahweh's dispersal of the nations at Babel resulted in his disinheriting those nations as his people. This is the Old Testament equivalent of Romans 1:18–25, a familiar passage wherein God "gave [humankind] over" to their persistent rebellion. The statement in Deuteronomy 32:9 that "the LORD's [i.e., Yahweh'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. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 113)

God, who still wants to bring Eden to earth and dwell with His creation, sees the rebellion of man. He also sees that man wants to approach God on their conditions, not His.

As odd as it sounds, the rest of the nations were placed under the authority of members of Yahweh's divine council. The other nations were assigned to lesser elohim as a judgment from the Most High, Yahweh. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 114)

Did God know that the members of His council would then rebel and instead of ruling faithfully over the nations, insist on being worshipped themselves? Of course, He did, He is God. We see that exact item referenced in Deuteronomy 4:19-20

Deuteronomy 4:19–20

"And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage. But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be His people, an inheritance, as you are this day." (NKJV)

How well did these members of the heavenly hosts, the divine council do? They failed; they began to demand worship from those who they were placed in charge of. We do get a glimpse of the action every so often in the scriptures.

In Ezekiel 28 we see the power behind the throne in Tyre. In Isaiah 14 with Babylon. We also see other examples.

Psalms 82:1–8

God takes his stand in the divine assembly; among the divine beings he renders judgment: "How long will you judge partially by showing favor on the wicked? Interlude Defend the poor and the fatherless. Vindicate the afflicted and the poor. Rescue the poor and the needy, delivering them from the power of the wicked. They neither know nor understand; they walk about in the dark while all the foundations of the earth are shaken. "Indeed I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. However, as all human beings do, you will die, and like other rulers, you will fall.' Arise, God, to judge the earth, for all nations belong to you." (ISV)

Daniel 10:12–13

"Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was standing in my way for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia." (NASB 2020)

Daniel 10:20

"Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am leaving, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come." (NASB 2020)

Romans 8:38–39

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (ESV)

Ephesians 6:12–13

“For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” (NRSV)

And here is the primary news flash we need to keep aware of as we study this, these powers, these fallen divine beings, these false gods are still around. Why are there continuing issues with Israel now being back in the land and the Temple Mount? Why so much fighting between Sunnis and Shias and Kurds and etc.?

What happens immediately after God divorces the nations?

Genesis 12:1–3

“And the Lord said to Abram, “Go out from your land and from your kinsfolk and from the house of your father into whatever land I will show to you. And I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you will be blessed. And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse, and in you all the tribes of the earth will be blessed.”” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 12:1-3)

God still intends to bring Eden back to earth, and He will use a people of His choosing to do so

Galatians 3:26–29

“For you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.” (NASB 2020)

Paul’s rationale for his own ministry to the Gentiles was that it was God’s intention to reclaim the nations to restore the original Edenic vision. Every person in every nation was given the opportunity to repent and believe in the risen Christ (Acts 17:30–31) (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 120)

The rebellion we see in Genesis 3, 6 and 11 shows up throughout the scriptures. We tend to think in terms of our reading events that took place in the past without realizing that these events continue to affect us today.

We live in a fallen world post flood. Every time we see a rainbow we remember God’s promise to never again destroy the world with a flood. The battle is real and it is ongoing.

Romans 13:11–14

“Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” (ESV)

Next week we look at the Patriarchs as well as Moses.

Your reading assignment is:

Acts 7:2 – 4

Genesis 12

John 8

Exodus 3

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