

“The Divine Council and a Deuteronomy 32 Worldview”

Let’s turn in our Bibles, this morning, TWO places... Psalm 82... & Deuteronomy Chapter 32...

We have been enjoying a study series, lately... called ‘**ROUTE 66**’... Each week, we have taken a different book of the Bible and presented an OVERVIEW...

And we’ve been MOVING at a pretty good pace... But—this morning—like ANY good road-trip... We’re gonna VEER-DOWN a side road and take a look at something pretty interesting...

We’re talking, this morning, about **The ‘Divine Council’** and having ‘**A Deuteronomy 32 Worldview.**’ – Now, this study was ORIGINALLY part of our REWIND SERIES last year...

And—at THAT time—the STAGE had been SET for us by looking at TWO TOPICS... ‘The Table of Nations’—in Genesis Chapter 10... And ‘The Tower of Babel’—in Genesis Chapter 11

I MENTION those studies to say... IF YOU ARE UN-FAMILIAR WITH THOSE PASSAGES... I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you GO BACK, and CHECK THEM OUT...

BECAUSE... We don’t have time THIS MORNING to ESTABLISH all the things in THOSE STUDIES... BUT... having just finished The Book of Deuteronomy LAST week, I think it is TIMELY and RELEVANT to consider this topic again...

Now... this is NOT going to be “Bible Study Light.” – If you ATTEND here, that’ll come as NO SURPRISE to you... But—if you are visiting, this morning—it may be a LITTLE JARRING...

But I want to BEGIN by **ESTABLISHING** a couple of PARAMETERS... FIRST: THIS is NOT the name of our God. – This is the Hebrew word “ELOHIM.” – And, this is a WORD that denotes certain things IN OUR **MIND**...

A guy you’ll hear me refer to a few of times, this morning... Dr. Michael Heiser writes: *“When we see the word G-O-D, we instinctively think of a divine being with a unique set of attributes—omnipresence, omnipotence, sovereignty... But this is not how a Biblical writer thought about the term. Biblical authors did not assign a specific set of attributes to the word elohim.”*

A LOT of times, what **WE** do is **CONFLATE** **this** word... with **THIS** word. – THIS word **IS** **our** God’s PERSONAL NAME... And in Isaiah 46:9, Yahweh says: **“There is none like me...”**

So, we might say Yahweh is *“species unique.”* – He is **COMPLETELY** HOLY... He **alone** is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent... No BEGINNING, no END... NOT a created being

But the **ACTUAL TERM**... “GOD”... or, ‘ELOHIM,’ in the Hebrew... that is not HIS NAME... And, that’s important...

Because—in just a few minutes—SOMEONE is going to **THINK** I am saying THIS... That YAHWEH is ONE GOD amongst a **PANTHEON** of **OTHER** GODS...

And that's **NOT** what I'm saying... What I **AM** going to say is THIS... OUR GOD—Yahweh—is **ALONE**... “species unique”... but Who “rules over” a bunch of **OTHER CREATED BEINGS**... that the Bible ALSO refers to with the **SAME HEBREW WORD** “*elohim*.”

Sometimes they are called ANGELS, sometimes DEMONS... sometimes PRINCIPALITIES and POWERS... RULERS, or DOMINIONS... “*The Bible... refers to a half-dozen different entities with the word *elohim*. By any account, the attributes of those entities are **not** equal to Yahweh.*”

For instance: in Judges 11:24, the false god **Chemosh** is referred to as an *elohim*... In 1st Kings 11:33, the word *elohim* refers to: **Ashtoreth**, and **Milcom**... In Deuteronomy 32, it refers to “**demons**”... The spirit of the deceased **Samuel** in 1st Samuel 28:13 is called an *elohim*

Paul even refers to Satan as “**the god of this age**”... and, the word “god” in that Verse—“*theos*”—is the Greek equivalent of “*elohim*.”

Now, ARE **ANY** of those passages saying that **ANY** of these BEINGS are somehow EQUAL to YAHWEH? – Of course not! – And yet the same word is used to describe the **TYPE** of being that they are as Yahweh IS... “*The Old Testament writers understood that Yahweh was an *elohim*—but no other *elohim* was Yahweh.*”

ANOTHER thing to establish is that YAHWEH—**NEEDS** NOTHING... He is COMPLETELY SELF-SUFFICIENT... In Acts 17, Paul speaks of: “**God... [Who] does not dwell in temples made with hands... AS THOUGH HE NEEDED ANYTHING...**”

HOWEVER... God LOVES to SHARE AUTHORITY... We see this ALL THE WAY BACK in Genesis Chapter 1... God says: “**Let Us make man in Our image... [and] LET THEM HAVE DOMINION...**” over the earth...

That's GOD **SHARING** AUTHORITY... Doesn't **HAVE** to... But, He **DOES**...

To the APOSTLES... Jesus gives: “**power and authority over all demons...**” – In Matthew 19, Jesus says: “**In the regeneration... you who have followed Me will... sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.**” – With the CHURCH... during the Millenium

God will **SHARE AUTHORITY** with US... 2nd Timothy 2:12, Revelation 3:21, 5:10 and 20, Verse 6... 22:5... ALL speak of us **REIGNING with Him** or **SITTING ON THRONES**...

Christians are even called... “**sons of God**”... Romans 8:14, 8:19, Galatians 3:26 ALL refer to us as “**sons of God.**” – Luke 20:35 says: “**those who are counted worthy to attain... the resurrection... are equal to the angels and are sons of God...**”

So, this is YAHWEH... Who is “species unique”... Who doesn't NEED ANYTHING... CHOOSING to SHARE AUTHORITY with US... **MY** question is...

If we can accept **THIS**... Why should we have SUCH A HARD TIME BELIEVING that God is doing the SAME THING RIGHT **NOW**... with the CURRENT ANGELS?

And, this is where we come to the idea of ‘**The Divine Council.**’ – This is taken from Psalm 82—in the English Standard Version of the Bible—where the Psalmist writes: “**God has taken His place in the divine council... in the midst of the gods He holds judgment...**”

The word “gods” in this Verse is the Hebrew ‘*elohim.*’ – And—off to the side—SOME translations have a footnote which reads: “*Elohim, mighty ones; that is, the judges.*” – Which would be a reference to HUMAN LEADERS... like Samuel or Gideon...

Douglas Stuart—in the New American Commentary of Exodus—says: “*The idea that ‘elohim’ could mean ‘judges’ or ‘[human] leaders’ at even a single place in the Old Testament has always been conjectural... The term has always referred to an entity from the spiritual realm.*”

So, I think—instead—what we see in this passage... is OUR GOD—YAHWEH... (“species unique”)... PRESIDING OVER a “council,” or a “congregation” of OTHER... LESSER BEINGS who are ALSO REFERRED TO as ‘*elohim.*’

So—the LITERAL TRANSLATION of this Verse is: “**God [Elohim] has taken His place in the divine council... in the midst of the [elohim] He holds judgment...**”

See, the word “elohim” can either be SINGULAR or PLURAL... It’s like the word SHEEP...

When we see the word SHEEP, do we mean a SINGLE sheep, or a GROUP of sheep? – Well, that’s DETERMINED by looking at the LANGUAGE AROUND it...

If I said: “*The sheep is in the road.*” – You would know I meant a SINGLE SHEEP... But if I said: “*The sheep ARE in the road.*” – You’d know I meant MORE than one sheep...

So, in this Verse, we KNOW that the FIRST ‘Elohim’ is SINGULAR, because it says: “**He holds judgement.**” – And, we know the SECOND *elohim* is PLURAL, because they were just called a COUNCIL in the first half of the Verse...

We might say it’s the difference between GOD with a capital “G”... versus “god” with a LITTLE “g.” – You’ve got ‘ELOHIM’ with a CAPITAL ‘E,’ standing amongst a congregation of ‘elohim’ with LITTLE ‘e’s.’

See, when we read our Bibles, and see references to God being the “**Most High,**” but we ALSO read of a “**host of heaven,**” or “**heavenly host**” —it’s talking about THIS VERY THING...

One author writes: “*The word host refers to a great number of individuals, or an army. Modified by the word heavenly, ‘hosts’ becomes a great number of angelic beings forming a celestial army under God’s command. One of God’s titles is “LORD of hosts.” In Hebrew... [it means] ‘Lord of the heavenly armies.’” Psalm 148 and 103 equate the term “angels” with “heavenly hosts.”*”

Psalm 89 asks: “**Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around Him?**” – That’s YAHWEH and His council... The **MOST HIGH** and the **HEAVENLY HOST**...

Now... the question becomes: Do we SEE ‘examples’ of this in scripture? – Well, let’s start with a couple of OBVIOUS ONES... Job Chapters 1 and 2... (which we ALSO recently studied)...

They describe **“a day... when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD... and Satan came among...”** – God asks Satan: *“Have you considered My servant Job?”* – Where Satan is like...

“Of course Job is righteous... That’s because you’ve BLESSED him. But let me TAKE AWAY everything he has... and he’ll CURSE you.” – God says: *“Have at it.”*

Okay, this **SEEMS** to be... a specific **DAY**... when an ASSEMBLY of **“sons of God”**—have a MEETING where they’re DISCUSSING the AFFAIRS OF MEN... A ‘Divine Council.’

A BETTER EXAMPLE is probably 1st Kings 22... Where the Lord has determined it’s time for the wicked king AHAB to DIE... Micaiah says: **“I saw the LORD sitting on His throne... and all the host of heaven standing by... And the LORD [asks], ‘Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?’”**

KEEP IN MIND THE PARAMETERS we’ve established... Yahweh is “species unique”... He doesn’t NEED ANYTHING... And yet, here is this SELF-SUFFICIENT GOD... CHOOSING to “share authority” with a “divine council”...

Now, God’s ALREADY DETERMINED what He’s going to do... But He’s CHOOSING to involve the Host of Heaven in the PROCESS...

We read: **“one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner.”** – And: **“Then a spirit came forward and [said to] the LORD... ‘I will persuade him.’”** – God asks: **“In what way?”** So [the spirit] said, **‘I will go... and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’** And the LORD said, **‘You shall persuade him, and... prevail. Go... and do so.’”**

Some people see Divine Council Isaiah Chapter 6... where Isaiah sees: **“the Lord sitting on a throne... [and] Above it stood seraphim... one cried to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts...”**

But the Lord asks: **“Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?”** – Some people see in that QUESTION the idea of God... **inviting the input** of a Divine Council...

In Daniel Chapter FOUR, when JUDGEMENT is PRONOUNCED against Nebuchadnezzar... He’s TOLD the: **“decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones...”** – Daniel calls the watcher **“a holy one, coming down from heaven...”**

That Aramaic word ‘*ir*’—for WATCHERS—means “*angels*” (we know that from Mesopotamian archeology)... AGAIN; some people see the idea of ‘The Divine Council’... **“The Most High rules in the kingdom of men,”** but the **“decision is by the decree of the watchers...”**

And these are just a FEW examples... Now, the OBVIOUS question becomes: *“Why does God need a council?”* – This author writes: *“God doesn’t need a council. But it is scripturally clear that He has one. The question is similar to... what does God need with people? The answer is the*

same: God doesn't need people... God doesn't need us for evangelism. He could save all the people He wanted just by thinking about it. He could terminate evil in the blink of an eye... Instead, He works his plan for all things on earth by using human beings."

So, the WEIRD thing is... MOST Christians have NO TROUBLE believing: We're going to REIGN and RULE with Christ... He's going to SHARE AUTHORITY with US, we're going to SIT UPON THRONES, we're going to be LIKE SONS OF GOD... over the NATIONS...

We'll BELIEVE **THAT**... But we're HESITANT to believe **THIS**... about the **"sons of God"** in the Old Testament... So, let's come back to where we started in the beginning...

Psalms 82... "God"—Capital G... ELOHIM—"takes His place in the divine council... in the midst of the gods"—LITTLE 'g'— **"He holds judgment..."** – Let's LOOK at what He's SAYING to these **LESSER** supernatural beings... Verse 2, He says...

"How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?" – So, there's a **REBUKE** here... He says: **"Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."** – So, this is what they SHOULD have been doing... But they're NOT...

In Verse 6, Yahweh says: **"I said, 'You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you... nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince."**

This is probably one of the most MIS-INTERPRETED PASSAGES of the Bible... And, it's MAINLY because Jesus QUOTES from this passage in John Chapter 10, and people MISINTERPRET what Jesus SAYS **there**... Here's the occasion...

Jesus has made the claim **"I and the Father are one"**—John 10, Verse 30. – And the JEWS CLEARLY UNDERSTAND what He is saying... Right? – They pick up stones to KILL Him...

And—in His DEFENSE—Jesus says: **"is it not written in your law, 'I said you are gods..."**—So, He's quoting from Psalm 82, Verse 6...

Now some people claim... that what Jesus is saying... is that He has a right to claim that He's God because—in Psalm 82—God had said to "mortal men"... to 'human leaders'... that **they** were gods... But that would completely defeat what Jesus is saying!

Again, Dr. Michael Heiser writes: *"How is (the 'mortal view') a coherent defense of John's Christology by having Jesus use Psalm 82:6 to say that He can call himself the son of God [if] every other Jew can? The "mortal view" does nothing to advance John's goal of portraying Jesus as the... unique son of God. How does the "mortal view" explain the reaction of [Jesus'] audience? If Jesus is citing a text that all of them could use... why would Jesus' use of it elicit such a response? Jesus is making the point that there are other, non-human 'sons of God'... By referencing Psalm 82, Jesus is tweaking his opponents by claiming to be more than human, that [He] is divine and distinct from other divine sons of God."*

Now... the question comes up: *"If Jesus is saying there are OTHER sons of God, what about the description of Jesus being the only begotten son of God?"*

The PHRASE “**only begotten**” is somewhat of an UNFORTUNATE translation. It does NOT mean “begotten” in a BIRTHING sense...

The Greek word is ‘*monogenes*,’ and, it comes from TWO Greek words: *monos*, meaning only, and the noun “*genous*,” meaning “*class, or kind.*” – So, the term LITERALLY means “one of a kind,” or “unique.”

“The validity of this understanding is borne-out by the New Testament itself. Hebrews 11:17 calls Isaac Abraham’s “monogenes.” But Isaac was not the only begotten son of Abraham—in a created sense. Abraham had fathered Ishmael earlier. The term must mean that Isaac was Abraham’s “unique” son, for he was the son of the promise. Just as Yahweh is an elohim—but no other elohim are Yahweh—Jesus is the unique Son. No other sons of God are like Him.”

My POINT is: **IF** we MIS-INTERPRET Jesus’ USE of the quote from Psalm 82... it then **CONFUSES THE INTERPRETATION** of the original context...

IN Psalm 82, YAHWEH... is presiding OVER a “council” of **lesser** elohim... and He TELLS them that they have FAILED at their assignment... That they’re going to DIE... LIKE MEN... And FALL like OTHER princes...

But, when did this happen? – When did this “judgement” take place? – Now we come to Deuteronomy Chapter 32... Let’s look there together...

Now, while you’re turning there... I’ll—ONCE AGAIN—REFER you to a study we did LAST year called “***What Happened at Babel.***” – Go check that out some time... It SEEMS that...

In the same way the “**sons of god**” involved themselves in the affairs of men at the time of Noah... to CORRUPT the human gene pool, and PREVENT the “seed of the woman” from being born... a SIMILAR THING happened at Babel...

But, THIS TIME, the “sons of God” are attempting to corrupt man’s WORSHIP of YAHWEH... We **KNOW**—from HISTORY—that BABEL is the BIRTHPLACE of all kinds of weird—demonic—rituals and practices...

Often referred to as the “**mystery religion**” of Babylon... A blend of idolatry, sexual practices, drug use, mother-goddess worship, astrology...

And what’s GOING ON at BABEL... is **SO BAD** that God comes down... And CONFUSES THE LANGUAGES of the people, and scatters them “**abroad... over the face of... the earth.**”

And—in Deuteronomy Chapter 32—when Moses is recounting Israel’s history for them, he recalls this occasion, and says something interesting... Deuteronomy Chapter 32, Verse 7... I’m gonna read this from the English Standard Version (I’ll explain why in just a moment)...

Moses says: “**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.**” – Verse 8: “**When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He divided mankind... He fixed the borders**”—or territories—“**of the peoples, according to the number of the sons of God.**”

Now—if you’re reading the King James Version, or the New King James, or the NIV... the New American Standard—they will finish Verse 8 by saying... God **“set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel.”** – The NIV includes THIS footnote: *“Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls (also Septuagint) say ‘sons of God.’”*

In fact, the footnote in the **NET** Bible is VERY good. – It says: *“Sons of God is undoubtedly the original reading; the MT and later versions of the Septuagint have each interpreted it differently. MT assumes the expression ‘sons of God’ refers to Israel, while the LXX assumes the phrase refers to angelic being. The phrase is also attested in Ugaritic, which refers to the high God El’s divine assembly. According to the latter view, the Lord delegated jurisdiction over the nations to His angelic host, while reserving for Himself, Israel, over whom He rules directly.”*

So, this is what we call a **TEXTUAL VARIANT**... **MEANING**... Not all of our ancient manuscripts are the **SAME**... And so, we have to do **TEXTUAL CRITICISM**...

This is where we **COMPARE** all of the ancient manuscripts to make the **MOST INFORMED DECISION** about what’s being said...

And, I would say—even if we just **READ** the text **“sons of Israel”**—**CONTEXTUALLY**, it doesn’t make much sense...

If I were to read: **“Remember the days of old... When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam... He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel.”**

When did THAT happen? – When were the **BOUNDARIES** of the world’s nations **EVER** established according to the number of the children of Israel?

AND... if we read into the **NEXT** Verse, it says: **“[But] the LORD’s portion is His people... Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.”**

So, it seems **REDUNDANT**... to say **“God DIVIDES the... nations according to the sons of Israel... but the Lord’s portion is... Israel?”** – **JACOB**... What does that MEAN?

But to read it **THIS** way: **“When the Most High... divided mankind, [and] 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.”**

So, it **SEEMS** like what we **HAVE**... is AT Babel, the Lord essentially *“disinherits the nations.”* – He says: *“You guys don’t want me... So, I’m gonna hand you over to these other gods—these ‘lesser beings,’ these rebellious elohim, [with a little ‘E’]... you guys can have them... But I’m gonna select ONE PEOPLE GROUP... My portion is Jacob... and through THEM I’m gonna start to fulfill my promises. – I’m gonna prove my work—My **SUPERIORITY**—on the earth to the nations... and to the rebellious gods that I am giving territoriality to over those nations...”*

So—in Deuteronomy Chapter 4—Moses warns the people: **“Beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars... [and] 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.”

And so, in Egyptology, you have the SUN GOD—RA... In ISLAM, people worship the MOON GOD... STAR WORSHIP—ASTROLOGY—is still prevalent in the world today...

So, this ISN'T the Lord saying “*don't worship nature.*” – These are **SYMBOLS** which represent... the rebellious ‘elohim’... The “**host of heaven**” who were NOT DOING their job...

And **TO** whom the Lord gives TEMPORARY RULERSHIP over the nations at Babel... So, this is where we get the idea of “territorial spirits”—from a passage like Daniel Chapter 10...

Here's a QUICK SYNOPSIS would be... Daniel has been praying for 3 WEEKS... An angel shows up, and says: “*I was sent to help you.*” – “**From the first day... you set your heart to understand... your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.**”

“**BUT,**” he says: “**The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days.**” – NO SCHOLAR, or COMMENTATOR, I've read believes this is a reference to a HUMAN LEADER

“**The prince of the kingdom of Persia**” refers to ANOTHER ANGELIC BEING... on PAR with the ANGEL ADDRESSING DANIEL... [but] WHO HAD... **TERRITORIALITY** OVER the geographic region of PERSIA...

ESPECIALLY since the angel says: “**Michael, one of the chief princes,**” had to come and “**help me, [because] I had been left alone...**” – And: “**when I have gone forth... the prince of Greece will come.**” – In Daniel Chapter 12—MICHAEL himself is referred to as:

“**The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people...**” – Which would be the people ISRAEL. – SOME see the “**prince of Rosh**” in Ezekiel 38 as “*territorial spirit.*”

Satan is called “**the prince of the power of the air**”... Of course, JESUS is the “**the Prince of PRINCES...**” – He's over ALL of them...

But this is where Paul GETS the idea of PRINC—IPALITIES... Same thing with **DOMINIONS**... When the New Testament talks about Jesus being seated “**far above all principality and power and might and dominion...**”

This is all LANGUAGE to represent “spiritual entities”... who have some kind of RULERSHIP—or TERRITORIALITY—over... geographic regions...

Now... MOST people have probably HEARD this concept before... What we DON'T DO... is ask: “*When did this HAPPEN? – When were these princes—these rebellious spirits—given territoriality over different geographic regions?*” – It SEEMS it happened at BABEL... This is why God is CONSTANTLY warning His people NOT to worship the FALSE GODS of the nations—like Baal & Ashtoreth... the word used to describe them is ‘elohim’...

This is why we READ of YAHWEH demonstrating His power over other gods.... It gives **CONTEXT** to the Exodus... It gives **CONTEXT** to Elijah's Mount Carmel victory... or the Ark of the Covenant toppling-over the statue of Dagon... in 1st Samuel Chapter 5...

You see, don't **THINK** of these "other gods" in sort of a 'fairy tale' sense... There is **REAL SUPERNATURAL POWER** behind the 'false gods' of the world...

Otherwise, God's CLAIM to have POWER over them means absolutely NOTHING... If God says He is MORE POWERFUL than CAPTAIN AMERICA, what difference does THAT make? – Because Captain America ISN'T REAL...

And—if God is just somehow claiming SUPERIORITY over something IMAGINARY—how does that make Him GREAT? – In fact, that would REDUCE HIM IN POWER...

You see, these "false gods" of the nations are REAL, SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES... They are the '*lesser elohim*,' that the NATIONS were given-**OVER**-to **TEMPORARILY** at Babel.

But, EVENTUALLY, the LORD's gonna take BACK the nations... God's portion was JACOB... But, He promised that—in Abraham's "**SEED**"—all the... **NATIONS**... of the earth would be BLESSED... [and that "seed," of course, is Jesus (Galatians 3:16)].

If we come BACK to Psalm 82. – We read: "**God has taken his place in the divine council... in the midst of the gods He holds judgment...**" – He's REBUKING them...

They're gonna be STRIPPED of their RULERSHIP... He said: "**You are gods, sons of the Most High... nevertheless, like men you shall die, and [fall as one man, O princes].**" –

But, the LAST PHRASE of Psalm 82 is IMPORTANT... It says: "**Arise, O God, judge the earth... for you shall inherit... ALL THE NATIONS!**"

Scholarship is DIVIDED... but MANY PEOPLE point-out that the word "**arise**" in Psalm 82:8 is the SAME WORD for "*resurrect*." – And it **MAY** suggest...

That THE WORK—of the Lord BRINGING THE NATIONS BACK to Himself—HAPPENS in connection with the RESURRECTION... And, I think there's MERIT to that.

Start reading the Bible through this lens... It's AMAZING how many times the idea of "**the NATIONS**" is mentioned in the Book of Revelation...

It's why Jesus says: "**If I am lifted up... [I] will draw all peoples to Myself.**" – On the cross—Jesus "**disarmed principalities...**" – Why: "**The gospel must be preached to all the nations.**"

I think this is where we get the idea of Jesus **DESCENDING** into the heart of the earth, to preach "**to the spirits in prison...**" – He's DECLARING victory to them... He's letting them know that YAHWEH accomplished His work—He PROVED His PROMISES, He's dealt the "final blow" against the '*lesser elohim*' in **reconciling the nations to Himself...**

When you start LOOKING FOR IT, you find the NEW TESTAMENT OFTEN CONNECTS the RESURRECTION with the **DEFEAT** ... of RULERS, and PRINCIPALITY and POWERS...

It's why EASTER—which we CELEBRATE in just a few weeks—is such a **BIG DEAL!**

But, what does this mean for **US?** – Like, other than this being, sort of, a Biblical episode of **THE OUTER LIMITS**... What's the take-away? – I would say—ONE—this should cause the Great Commission to move front-and-center in our Christian life... To: **“make disciples of all the nations...”**

That's not just “spiritual activity” that God SUGGESTS we be INVOLVED in... It's part of God's LARGER PURPOSE in CASTING DOWN “false god” in the eyes of man... and reconciling ALL NATIONS to Himself...

SECONDLY... I would say: It does SEEM there is going to be a **“great up-ending”** that takes place... Where we go from **THIS** – in the Old Testament...

These **“sons of God”**... seated upon **“thrones”**... WITH WHOM the Lord **SHARES AUTHORITY**... and who are given **RULERSHIP**... over the **NATIONS**...

To **THIS**... Where NOW—because of the **RESURRECTION**—you and I have been born again... And WE are going to be **“sons of God”**... and **WE'RE** going to sit upon thrones... The Lord will SHARE AUTHORITY with **US**—SPECIFICALLY over the **NATIONS**...

THIS . . . **SHOULD EVOKE THIS**... from the Old Testament!

But YAHWEH—the SPECIES UNIQUE GOD—has... for MILLENIA... been demonstrating His power, His might, His sovereignty... over—not **ONLY** the nations of men—but every ‘false god,’ the ‘lesser elohim,’ the ‘sons of God,’ who **REBELLED**... And TO WHOM He gave temporary dominion-ship over the nations...

Through the church... God is reversing ALL of this, and ushering-in an entirely **new order**... And you and I get to be a PART of that!

And I would say that—as we continue through more and more Books of the Bible—let this begin to serve as sort of a FRAMEWORK for the things we study...

Once we DO, you start to see references to Yahweh, the Most High, the host of heaven, the false gods, the nations, all over the place... There is LOTS going on in the unseen realm!

You guys have been VERY PATIENT this morning...