

The Divine Council Theology:

Who are the "principalities and powers" of the Christian Scriptures and what have they done to/for you lately? This is a study (in three (3) parts) of those entities in the heavenlies (and on earth, too...let's not forget that) who have so much to do with our everyday existence. How they interrelate to our God and how they operate within the sphere of His laws (or not...) is important for our understanding of the entirety of Scripture. What **they** do will help us understand the Beginning and the End Times.

God, gods and the sons of God (establishing the veracity of a Divine Council in Scripture (Part 1 of 3))

Remember; as we have been seeing in our latest sessions: The prophets did not **promote** a cosmology as a scientific reality (that's something we do with great pomposity and self-importance, BTW...**the earth is 4.9 Billion years old and the closet star (Alpha Centauri) is 4.242 light years away and did we mention that the Universe (as of 22 March 2013) is 13.798 years old**) about the way the "universe" (a concept that would not really compute for them) was structured; they **assumed** the prevalent notion of cosmology as viewed (i.e. - seen with their eyes) in the world around them to teach about God's purpose and intent for His people. The **"powers"** that determine what happens in the world were of more interest to believers (and unbelievers) in the Ancient Near East than the structure of the cosmos. We are about to delve deeply into those "powers". In this way we will understand better how and why things go right and wrong in the world in which **we** live and how we can combat evil and promote God (almost said "good"...).

Biblically there *are* "other gods". That's why the 1st of the "10 commandments" says, "thou shalt have no **other gods** before me" (Exodus 20:3). Look too at the old standard 2 Corinthians 4:4 ("In whom the god of this world (age) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."). The theme carries through the entire Bible even though there are protests by some theologians and preachers/ teachers that the "gods" do not even exist (usually the same people who deny that there were "giants" on the earth after Genesis 6 and we'll get to all this later).

1. **The Divine Council** – Who they are and what they do? We need to look at some Hebrew words to set the stage:
 - a. God – Jehovah (יהוה) or Yahweh for you Hebrew enthusiasts... – 5195 times in BibleWorks (BW) - plus or minus 50 or so from MSS deviations

(and the emanations of the sopherim (scribes), etc.). Some consider that word the "name" of God so let's go with Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) – 634 times in BW (then there are of course the other words...Eloah, Elah, El, El Shaddai, El Roi, El Elyon, etc.). We know there is One, Living and True God (Whom we call the Almighty - 1 Thessalonians 1:9)

- i. The Hebrew for God or gods is the same. Only the context or the actual verbs help in discerning which is which.
- b. There are "gods" (same Hebrew word as God in the paragraph above) – (אֱלֹהִים) – 634 times (Exodus 20:4 and 2 Thessalonians 4:4)
 - i. Psalm 86:8 - Among the gods there is none like you, O Yahweh; neither [are there any works] like your works.
 - ii. Psalm 95:3 - For Yahweh is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
 - iii. Psalm 96:4 - For Yahweh is great, and deserving of exceedingly great praise: he is to be feared above all gods.
 - iv. Psalm 97:7 - All who served images were put to shame; those who boasted in mere idols; even all the gods bow down before him [Yahweh, see v. 5 preceding]
 - v. Psalm 97:9 - For you, O Yahweh, are Most High above all the earth: you are exalted far above all gods.
 - vi. Psalm 135:5 - For I know that Yahweh is great, and that our lord is above all gods.
 - vii. Psalm 136:2 - O give thanks to the God of gods: for his mercy endures for ever.
 - viii. Psalm 138:1 - I will praise you with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise to you.
 - ix. Exodus 15:11 – Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?
 - x. Psalm 58:1 - Do you indeed decree what is right, O gods? Do you judge people fairly? **Sounds like Psalm 82's question from God.**
- c. There are "sons of God" (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים) benei haelohim or (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים) benei Elohim (Gen. 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7) – Israel as "sons of the

living God" (Hosea 1:10); other believers as "sons of God" (Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:14, 19; Phil. 2:15; 1 Jn. 3:1f);

i. Their presence in Scripture (and therefore in our belief system) is sometimes obscured by translation or manuscript evidence

1. "sons of the Mighty" in Psalm 29:1 (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים) benei elim - sons of God;
2. "sons of Israel/ sons of God" - Deuteronomy 32:8 (Hebraic text at Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls) and Greek of LXX (Septuagint) versus Massoretic Text (traditional Hebrew text).

d. There is a Divine Council – Psalm 82:1 (עֲדַת־אֱלֹהִים) adat el; Jeremiah 23: 18, 22 (סֹדֵר יְהוָה) sod Yahweh; Job 15:8 (סֹדֵר אֱלֹהִים) sod Eloah; Psalm 89: 7 (סֹדֵר־קְדוֹשִׁים) sod qedoshim Deuteronomy 32:8,9 (read the context); Job 1 and 2 (read the context) and finally Daniel 7 (context)

i. **Meeting Place of the Council** - The Cosmic Mountain

1. Eden/ the Mountain of God (that waters the earth) Psalm 24 and Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14:13 (mount of assembly; recesses of the north). All ANE cultures teach this (common core belief); Israel is no different (yet it is different...the "myth" is TRUE with Israel...remember, however, it's a "cosmic" mountain, not something that you can touch or see).
 - a. Relate to Mount Olympus (Greeks)/ Mount Meru (Buddhists) and Egyptian Khut (the mountain of glory): This idea comes from the river of truth that all cultures had, but the prophets of Israel got it correct.

ii. **Heavenly Hierarchy** within the Divine Council:

1. What the world calls "Angelology" is deeper in the Bible - (angels are actually "messengers" of the gods (it's what the word means in Greek and Hebrew), then there are (according to Paul) "principalities" and "powers". There are many more Biblical types ("dominions" (Colossians 1:16; possibly Daniel 7:25??), "princes" (Ezekiel 28:2; Daniel 10:13; 10:12; 12:1), "authorities" (1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Peter 3:22), "glories" ("dignities" in most translations, but the Greek is "glories") (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8), "thrones"

(Daniel 7:9; possibly Colossians 1:16); "this age rulers of darkness" (Ephesians 6:12)

- a. Leviathan - The Dragon (Earliest Guy and shows up all over the Hebrew Scriptures and Revelation 12)
 - b. Nachash (serpent) - The Shining One (He's in the Garden; sly, but not fully an Jerk)
 - c. Job 1,2 - The satan (an "officer" in the Council; like a prosecutor doing his job...pointing out where people are not obeying God and being a jerk about it). We'll cover the history of "Satan" in our next session
- iii. Job 38:7 (read context; verses 1-11); they are there at creation
- iv. The "us" sections - Genesis 1:26; 3:22 and Isaiah 6:8 (read 1-8)
1. The Council members show up early on in Genesis 1 ("let us create man") and where Eden is planted ("has become as one of us"). God is "walking around in the cool of the day" and there are humans too. There's the Nachash and "flaming sword" dudes.
- e. Some ***did not*** follow the rules (those in heaven)
1. Genesis 6: 1-5 (nephilim ("giants" not "fallen ones" (via Aramaic)) are the by-product of the unions of "sons of God" and "daughters of men")
 - a. They (they who?) "left their first estate (appropriate dwelling/ place assigned to them (KNOX))"; are put into chains of darkness (cf. - Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4)
 - b. Jesus preached to them in his resurrected body (1 Peter 3:18-20)
- f. Some did their appointed jobs ***poorly*** (those on earth...what appointed jobs???)
- i. (Psalm 82 - READ ALL) via Deuteronomy 32: 8 via Genesis 10,11 Just before the Tower of Babel and the ***dividing*** of the 70 nations (**Deuteronomy 32:8,9 versus Genesis 10**); what a HUGE deal the choosing of Israel was...

1. Specifically, a Niphal form of parad is used in Gen. 10:5 ([פָּרַד] vb. **divide**) and the Hiphil occurs in Deut. 32:8. This links the two contexts.
- ii. The "certain man clothed in linen" in Daniel 10: 1-21 – versus the "prince of the kingdom of Persia and the prince of Greece" with help from "your prince" (cf. – "Michael the great prince" (Daniel 12:1)). The word "angel" is used in Daniel (so he did know the word), but it isn't in this context.
- g. Some are loyal to the "one true God":
 - i. Michael the "the great prince of the people" (Daniel 12??)
 - ii. Gabriel -
 - iii. angel of Yahweh -
 - iv. Seraphim, etc
- h. Link to "principalities and powers"
 1. Isaiah 24:21 ("In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below"); stars fall (ANE cosmology)

There is never a good reason to be scared of what the Bible says. Often we hold "beliefs" that are manufactured by well-meaning Christian teachers who are 180 degrees out of line with the Truth (think: the Trinity, the Dead are alive (what?), Christians are "spiritual Jews" (Wait a minute, I thought Christians were...well...Christians), Jesus is the King sitting on the throne (Hmmm, wasn't that "seated at the right hand of the Father), the manifestations ceased at the end of the Book of Acts time period (Ain't no miracles, no how?) and many other supposed bedrock issues in Christendom).

We are about to embark on a treasure hunt (or a proverbial peeling back of the Scriptural Onion) regarding the Divine Council of Yahweh. The subject relates to God Himself, those currently in the heavenlies with him and on earth (often called "gods" and "sons of God") and those members of the council who have distinguished themselves by aberrant behavior (also called "gods" and "sons of God"). Hmmm...who are these dudes?

We will distinguish between these "Heavy-Hitters-of-the-Heavenlies" and those lesser beings: the "messengers of the gods" (aka - angels). We will eventually want to know what Paul meant when he used the phrase

"principalities and powers", "might" and "dominions" in the Christian Scriptures and this can only be determined by how the Hebrew prophets developed the terms...if at all.

(I Robot (movie); Dr. Landsing: "You must ask the right questions"...)

Again and again I'll repeat, "If there's something queer about the way something is said in the Bible you should stop and ask questions. The queer things are usually VERY important."

- **JAL's 2011 teaching:**

- **"Who the Devil is Satan?" (October 2011)**

<http://thelivingtruthfellowship.org/jtltf/bible-teachings/audio-links/46-wwf/274-who-the-devil-is-satan>

- **"This is War" (September 2012)**

<http://thelivingtruthfellowship.org/jtltf/bible-teachings/audio-links/46-wwf/258-the-biblical-motif-this-is-war>