

Understanding The Old Testament Week 3: What does g-o-d mean? Babel and The Divine Council

Note 1: What I am NOT saying in this class: you NEED to know this information to be saved, or somehow be superior to others. This class is simply to help us understand our OT better so we can know Jesus better.

Note 2: some of the points we address in this class may not seem like a big deal to us, but to some they are.

Apologetics - reasoned arguments or writings in justification of something, typically a theory or religious doctrine.

1 Peter 3:15 ESV

¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

We must understand the bible was written thousands of years ago. Some things don't hold up to our modern standards. Standards of historical details and writings. Somethings will seem barbaric, it was the world they lived in, they probably would think a lot of the things we do now are barbaric.

Note 3: If an idea or argument makes the Bible indefensible as inerrant or inspired we need to throw that argument out, because it is self defeating.

What is the word g - o - d? Hebrew: elohim.

God is a title we use to talk to/about Yahweh but God is not His name: Yahweh is. **Exodus 3:11-15 LEB**

Yahweh (Hebrew YHWH יהוה) is the personal name of God and it means something like "I am who I am", "I am that I am", "I will be who I will be" **Jesus as "I AM": John 8:58-59 ESV; John 18:3-8 ESV**

The actual word g - o - d or elohim in the Bible simply means a spirit being. We must be careful not to define the bible by our modern definition of a word. [Note that g - o - d doesn't necessarily refer to Yahweh in English either]

Elohim in the Bible:

Always capital G: Yahweh (Gen 1, literally thousands of times)

Never capital G, always lowercase g: Angelic Beings: The Divine Council, The Sons of God, etc. (Psalm 82:1, 6, Gen 35:7, Job 1, Job 38); gods and goddesses of other nations (Judges 11:24; 1 Kings 11:33); Demons (Deu 32:17);

The deceased/disembodied spirit of the humans (1 Sam 28:13)

Elohim (English g - o - d) is a **definition of location**, not a definition of attributes. This is why the Bible often calls Him: God Most High. **Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 57:2; Daniel 3:26**

Yahweh stands alone, He alone is the creator, He alone has no beginning or end, He alone is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. He alone holds all things together. He alone is judge over heaven and earth.

When we see small g - o - d in the Bible it is not claiming there are being who are the same as capital G - o - d.

THIS IS NOT POLYTHEISM. This is Yahweh, the ONE TRUE GOD partnering with His Heavenly Host. Polytheism is a perversion of this. The Pagan Pantheons of gods came from this reality, which was perverted by the angels who fell to remove Yahweh as the only true God.

If angels are called sons of God and we are sons [and daughters of God] how is Jesus different. Jesus IS GOD = John 1; John 3:16

John 3:16: Only (some translations 'only begotten'): ton monogenes - only of the same kind; unique in kind.

In simpler terms no angel or human or other being at all IS Yahweh, or is the same as Yahweh is as a being. Jesus IS the same because HE IS Yahweh. He is the only begotten Son, the only of the same kind as Yahweh.

You will be able to go on a website and find someone saying that saying what I am saying tonight is polytheism and it's evil and demonic. Those people have a fundamental misunderstanding of the Biblical text and are actually making the Bible indefensible as an inspired inerrant text.

God's Divine Council: Members of the Heavenly Host (angels) act as a council in the Heavenly places.
Psalm 82:1; Psalm 89:5-8

The Divine Council in action: **1 Kings 22:1-8, 15-23; Daniel 4:4-5, 17**

Babel: Genesis 10 - Table of Nations: 70 Nations in Hebrew. Greek Septuagint 72 nations (2 of them were split into 4 nations due to them being split at the time of translation).

Babel is called Babylon in the rest of the Bible. It is often used as a the city of Evil or representative of the world again Jerusalem, Yahweh's city and against Yahweh Himself. (Rev 18 for example)

The disinheritance of the nations. Genesis 11:1-9; Deuteronomy 32:1-8 ESV; Psalm 82

Deuteronomy 32:8 Septuagint - ⁸ When the Most High distributed nations as he scattered the sons of Adam, he set up boundaries for the nations according to the number of the angels of God.

Affirmed in the NT: **1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-2; Ephesians 6:11-12**

Other OT passages: Daniel 10:13; Psalm 95:3; Psalm 96:4; Exodus 12:12; Exodus 15:11; Exodus 18:11; Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 32:16; Psalm 81:9

If the false gods of the nations are non-existent beings it isn't much praise to Yahweh, the One True God, to be greater than literal nothing. Yahweh, then, also promises to judge literal nothing if the fallen angels who are gods over the nations are not real beings.

Regathering of the nations: Psalm 82:8 **John 20:9; Acts 2:24; Acts 2:32.** Greek word for Resurrection: Anistemi.
Psalm 82:8 Septuagint

Genesis 12: The Call of Abraham

Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV)

¹Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 12:7 (LEB)

⁷And Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” And he built an altar there to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.

Gen 12:10-20- Abraham, deceiver?

Maybe, maybe not depending on who you ask. Remember: The Bible is not shy in telling us the low points of its main characters; God uses imperfect people. The important thing is we believe in Him and be obedient to His Word and the Holy Spirit.

Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 1: Genesis 1–15:

“After the great expectations aroused by the first episode in the Abraham cycle, this second one surprises us by the unheroic performance of the hero... It was the LORD who saved Sarai from the plight in which her husband’s cleverness had landed her (v 17), and Abram’s silence in the face of Pharaoh’s remonstrations shows that the author did not approve of his conduct. This is confirmed by comparing this tale with the similar ones in Gen 20 and 26. It becomes plain that for an individual to acquire both wealth and offspring is a mark of divine blessing: one without the other is not. Here, despite the promises of vv 1–3, Abram acquires wealth (v 16), but no children. This does suggest that the writer is not here endorsing Abram’s conduct or holding it up for imitation. The echoes of the garden of Eden story also point in the same direction. The justice of the royal anger is underlined by the way Pharaoh asks the same question after the offense that the LORD asked Adam, and Pharaoh expels Abram from his land just as God expelled Adam from his garden. What then is the purpose of this story? Von Rad sees it as an illustration of the fulfillment of God’s promise despite Abram’s weakness; Zimmerli, as an example of the frailty of God’s elect; Westermann, that even in apparently hopeless situations God can deliver.”