

THE UNSEEN WORLD OF THE BIBLE
Session 5: 'Cosmic Geography'
06 November 2022

OBJECTIVES

Define: "Cosmic geography" in biblical terms.

Describe: How the gods got authority over nations.

Explain: What made Israel unique among nations.

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Images: PowerPoint slides

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LESSON THEME

"God wanted a relationship with all humanity. But the rebellion at Babel changed that. God decided to let members of his divine council govern the other nations." M S Heiser, *Supernatural*, p. 48

GOD'S PLAN 'A'

"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule..." Genesis 1:28

What went wrong?

PLAN "A" FRUSTRATED

"I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created ... for I regret that I have made them." [Gen 6:7](#)

PLAN 'B'

"Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth." [Gen 9:1](#) (Not to rule.)

What went wrong?

PLAN "B" FRUSTRATED

"Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth." [Gen 11:4](#)

Ziggurat

"The Sumerians believed that the gods lived in the temple at the top of the Ziggurats... Society offered them many things such as music, harvest, and creating devotional statues to live in the temple."
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ziggurat

(Yahweh refuses to reside in structure not of his own design and purpose.)

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Partially reconstructed facade and access staircase of the Ziggurat of Ur, originally built by Ur-Nammu, circa 2100 BC

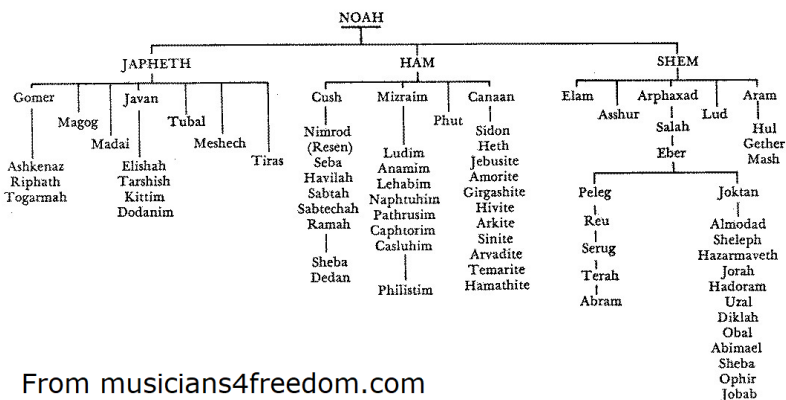
ORIGIN OF 70 / 72 NATIONS

Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, ... had sons after the flood. Gen 10:1

The LORD said, ... "Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

Gen 11:7-8

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF NOAH



From musicians4freedom.com

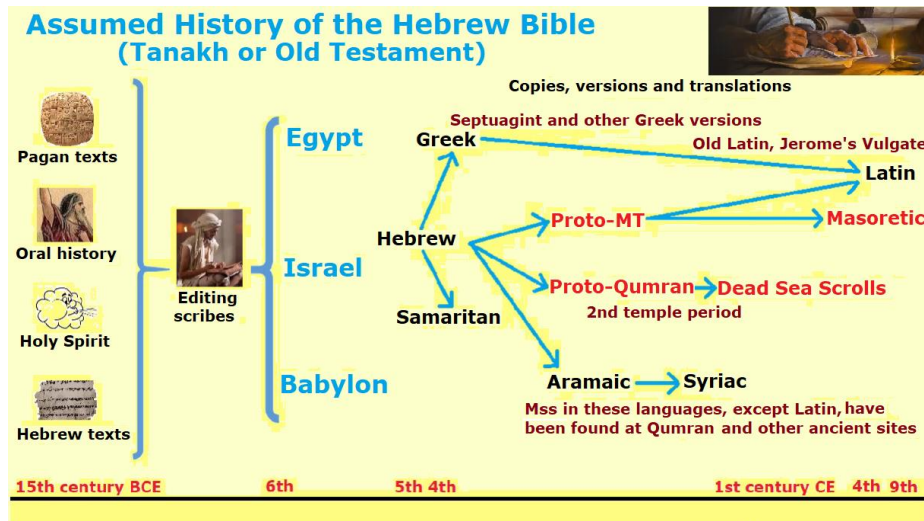
Deuteronomy 32:8-9

8 When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel(*). 9 For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.

(*)NIV note: "Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls (see also Septuagint) sons of God."

Following the rebellion at Babel, Yahweh dispersed humans to become 70+ nations, apportioning them to members of his divine council. He would later choose Israel as his own people.

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The Old Testament has come to us through three lineages, Hebrew from Palestine, Greek from Egypt, and Aramaic from Babylon. Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls from the mid-20th century, existent Greek manuscript were older than Hebrew ones. Since then, some biblical scroll fragments show that the Greek of Deuteronomy preserved a more ancient form of the Hebrew.

Ancient script	Modern script	Translation
<u>From about 1st century BCE</u>		
ΥΙΩΝ ΘΕΟΥ	υιων θεου	sons of-God
<u>From about 4th century CE</u>		
ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ ΘΕΟΥ	αγγελων θεου	angels of God

DEAD SEA SCROLL FRAGMENT 4Q37



September 1952 — Dead Sea scroll fragment 4Q37 containing Deuteronomy 32:8

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This biblical fragment, found amongst many more, reads as follows:

Line 1: "con(sider)..." בינו, bînu,

Line 2: "alloted ..." בהנחל, bhnħl

Line 3: "sons (of) gods." בני אלהים, bnî ʾlôhîm

Hypothesis: Jewish theologians who wanted to disassociate Yahweh from pagan gods, modified a few verses, sometimes after 70 CE, whilst producing a standard version of the Hebrew Bible, after repudiating the Greek version, which Jewish Christians studied and incorporated in the New Testament.

Compare [Gen 46.20, 21, 27](#), [Ex 1.5](#)

PLAN 'C'

The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

"I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you." [Gen 12:1-3](#)

YAHWEH WANTED THE NATIONS TO FIND HIM.

"He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him." [Acts 17:26f](#)

YAHWEH FORBADE ISRAEL TO WORSHIP CREATED GODS.

"When you look up to the sky and see ... all the heavenly array — do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the LORD your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven. [Deut 4:19](#)

Cosmic geography: Where Yahweh dwells amongst humans, there alone is holy ground.

THE LEGITIMATE GODS HAVE MESSED UP.

God presides in the great assembly;
he renders judgment among the "gods":
"How long will you defend the unjust
and show partiality to the wicked?" [Psa 82:1-2](#)

"The 'gods' know nothing,
they understand nothing.
They walk about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken." [Psa 82:5](#)

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THE GODS MUST DIE. THE MOST HIGH MUST REIGN.

"I said, 'You are "gods";
you are all sons of the Most High.'
But you will die like mere mortals;
you will fall like every other ruler."
Rise up, O God, judge the earth,
for all the nations are your
inheritance. [Psa 82:6-8](#)

THE ISRAELITES HAVE MESSED UP.

They made him jealous with their foreign gods
and angered him with their detestable idols.
They sacrificed to false gods, which are not God... [Deut 32:16-17](#)

They went off and worshipped other gods and bowed down to them, gods they did not know, gods he had not given them. [Deut 29:26](#)

YAHWEH WILL PUNISH NATIONS AND GODS ALIKE.

The LORD is angry with all nations;
his wrath is on all their armies.
He will totally destroy them...
all the starry host will fall... [Isa 34:2, 4](#)

In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below.
[Isa 24:21](#)

THE GODS RULED OVER NATIONS AND TERRITORIES.

The prince of the Persian kingdom. [Dan 10:13](#)
The prince of Greece. [20](#)

David lamented: "They have driven me today from my share in the LORD's inheritance and have said, 'Go, serve other gods.' [1 Sam 26:19](#)

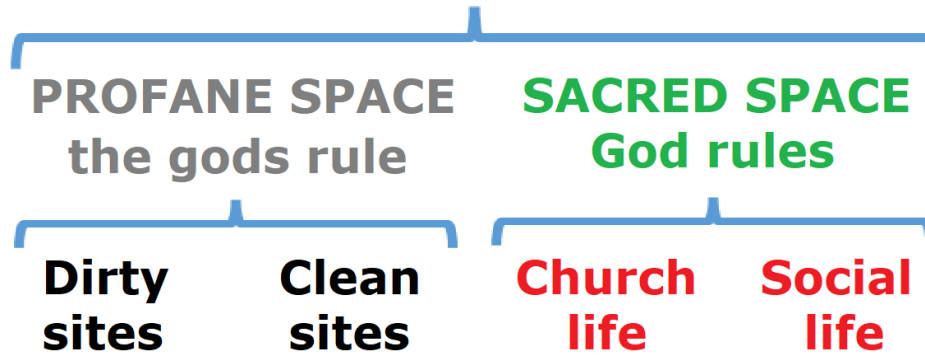
A Syrian requested: "Please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD."
[2 Kings 5:17](#)

NEW TESTAMENT COSMIC GEOGRAPHY

Our struggle is ... against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [Eph 6:12](#)

Put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this... Hand this man over to Satan. [1 Cor 5:2-5](#)

Yahweh



TEN HISTORICAL SACRED SPACES

1. The Mountain and Garden of Eden
2. Abraham and the Israelites
3. The tabernacle amongst the Israelites
4. The temple at the centre of the nation
5. Jesus and his apostles
6. The church at Jerusalem, Judea
7. The churches amongst the Gentiles
8. Christian believers' body
9. Messiah Jesus reigning over the nations
10. Eden restored in New Heavens and New Earth