

The Nations, the Tower, and Redemption

Many of the gods of ancient mythology and the idols that the ancients worshiped were real. There is only one God who is worthy to be worshiped but there were gods that people worshiped in rebellion against God. Those were angelic beings. Genesis 10 lists 70 grandsons of Noah. It is rabbinical tradition that after the Tower of Babel each of the nations was assigned angelic beings to watch over them except Israel who was unique among the nations for having God directly watching over them.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, 70 bulls were sacrificed (Numbers 29) representing each nation that dispersed from Babel. The priests of Israel didn't just intercede for Israel but for all the nations. Israel was separated to be a nation of priests, a holy nation. Exodus 19:6

"According to the Rabbis, each of the seventy nations is placed under the protection of a special angel, except Israel, whose protector is God Himself (Gen. R. xxxvii.). On the Feast of Tabernacles, it is said in a Haggadah, seventy sacrifices were offered, one for each nation. "Wo to the nations!" says R. Johanan; "they had suffered a great loss without realizing what they had lost. While the Temple existed the altar [the sacrifices] atoned for them; but now who will atone for them?" (Suk. 55a; Pesik. 193b, 195b)."

[NATIONS AND LANGUAGES, THE SEVENTY - JewishEncyclopedia.com](https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14480-nations-and-languages-the-seventy)

*(This is also in line with what **the Eastern Orthodox and the Ethiopian Orthodox churches teach.**)*

After the Golden Calf incident, God tells Israel to go up and conquer the land but His presence would not be with them: Exodus 33:1-3 "Depart, **go up** from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, **to the land of which I swore** to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' **And I will send an angel before you**, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for **I will not go up in your midst**, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way."

Moses bargains with God to consider His promises replied and that Israel is His nation. "Then he said to Him, **If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.** For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So, we shall be separate, your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." Exodus 33:15-16 **Had God denied Israel His presence and had merely sent an angel to guide them, Israel would have been like the rest of the nations.** Fortunately for Israel, God heard the pleas of Moses.

<https://www.logos.com/grow/really-happened-tower-babel/> Humanity followed after Nimrod; rebelled against God, started worshipping idols and the angelic beings as gods, and tried to stay as one people. The Tower of Babel was made to reach the heavens, the realm of the gods.

The word Babylon comes from the Greek Βαβυλών transliterated into Latin letters. In Hebrew it is בָּבֶל bā·bel. In both the Hebrew and LXX Old Testament it is used in Genesis 10:10 as one of the cities of Nimrod's kingdom and where the Tower was built (Genesis 11:9).

https://biblehub.com/hebrew/babel_894.htm.

Hebrew it is related to the word for "confusion" but in the ancient languages of the Mesopotamia, Bābili meant "gate of the gods". <https://www.worldhistory.org/babylon/>

When God scattered the nations **at the Tower of Babel, He disinherited them. Instead of a direct relationship with them, He placed the nations under the authority of angelic beings including the watchers. (Daniel 4:13-17)** *Translations like the NIV and NLT use "messengers" in that passage. Keep in mind that those translations were made to be more readable, however they sometimes have a looser translation than more formal translations like NKJV, ESV, KJV, and the NASB.*

"And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;" Acts 17:26-27

Rather than seek God out, most of the nations continued to rebel and continued to worship the angelic beings instead of God. In Scriptures, many times when an angelic being appears before a human, that human bows and tries to worship the angelic being. An angelic being that is under God would reject the worship of men however **as time went on many of the angelic beings that were put in charge of the nations started to seek the worship of men.** These angelic beings became demons.

Deuteronomy 32:16-17: "They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods.

With abominations they provoked Him to anger.

They sacrificed to **demons**, not to God,

To **gods** they did not know,

To new **gods**, new arrivals

That your fathers did not fear."

1 Corinthians 10:20 "Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons."

"For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and **against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment:** I *am* the Lord."

Exodus 12:12 In the passage about the Passover an often-missed part of the passage is the fact that God by bringing the plagues is executing judgment on the gods (demons) of Egypt and showing His supremacy. http://www.stat.rice.edu/~dobelman/Dinotech/10_Egyptian_gods_10_Plagues.pdf

God allowed the nations to walk their own way (Acts 14:16). Acts 14: 14-18 "But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in **bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, He did not leave Himself without witness**, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing them."

Acts 17:30-31 "Truly, **these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent**, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Strongholds: I don't claim to completely understand **Daniel 9**, but it speaks of spiritual strongholds/ territorial powers/gods. Daniel was fasting for 3 weeks when an angel appears before him and says:

"Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me**, for I had been left alone there with **the kings of Persia**. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come." Daniel 9:12-14

The angelic being had wanted to reveal the meaning of the vision of the days and to come immediately but was delayed by the prince of Persia until the archangel Michael helped him out.

"Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now **I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.**" Daniel 10:20

There were the demonic powers behind the Persian and Greek empires. Ephesians 6:12 "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Awhile back I got into an online argument on Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. Someone was claiming that Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 couldn't have been talking about Satan because the passages said it was a message to the king of Babylon (Isaiah 14) and the prince of Tyre (Ezekiel 28). I pointed out that it was not mutually exclusive for the passages to refer to **both a human ruler and Satan** because the king of Babylon and the prince of Tyre got their powers from the spiritual hosts of wickedness.

"He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666." Revelation 13:16-18 Most Biblical scholars believe that 666 is code for Nero. Nero got his power from the spirit of the anti-Christ. These spirits/strongholds/demons were/are worshipped as gods. In ancient mythology, most of the **gods were limited in power** (ruled only over a certain territory and realm. "In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience," Ephesians 2:2 There are many princes, many lords, and many gods however there is only one King of kings, Lord of lords, and God of gods.

God is drawing the nations back to Him: The Pentecost that happened after Jesus' ascension (Acts 2) is a reversal of the Tower of Babel.

[The Tower of Babel Story: What Really Happened?](#) *By Michael S. Heiser:*

"The wind and fire that accompanied the Spirit in the second chapter of Acts are similar to images in the Old Testament associated with God's presence—the disciples are being commissioned by God in his council like the prophets of old.

The whirlwind is familiar from divine encounters of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1, 11) and Job (Job 38:1; 40:6). This motif is often accompanied by storm imagery, which can also include fire (Isa. 30:30). Having "wind" as an element in describing God's presence makes sense given that the Hebrew word translated "wind" can also be rendered "spirit/Spirit" (ruach)." ... "There are two key terms in the passage that connect it back to Babel in an unmistakable way. The flaming tongues are described as "divided" (Greek: diamerizo), and the crowd, composed of Jews from all the nations, is said to have been "confused" (Greek: suncheo).

The second term, suncheo (v. 6), is the same word used in the Septuagint version of the Babel story in Genesis 11:7: 'Come, let us go down and confuse [Septuagint: suncheo] their language there.'"

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands," Revelation 7:9

Arise, O God, judge the earth;
For You shall inherit all nations. Psalm 82:8

"I will declare the decree:
The Lord has said to Me,
'You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You.
Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations for Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for Your possession. Psalm 2:7-8

[Are Only Few People Saved?](#) There is a certain tension in Scriptures about whether only a select few are saved versus a great multitude. Matthew 7:13-14 Matthew 9:37 In a future post (when I get to it), I will explain why I am an optimist on this issue.

God is already King of kings, Lord of lords, God of gods. This will be revealed to all the nations eventually. In the meantime, we can join this kingdom in restoring the world. God is a merciful God. Two of my favorite stories of redemption are found in the Old Testament. Many people have this idea that God acted wrathfully and without mercy in the Old Testament while in the New Testament He is all-loving. The truth is that God has been consistently merciful and compassionate. See the book of Jonah, where God sends a prophet to warn Nineveh. In Jonah 4, Jonah complains that God had mercy on Nineveh (the Assyrians were one of the biggest enemies of Israel/Judah). 2 Chronicles 33 we see God forgiving King Manasseh. The king had built altars for Baal, he burned alive his sons in the valley of Hinnom, he consulted mediums and spiritists. According to tradition he ordered the prophet Isaiah to be sawn in half (Hebrews 11:37), and his damage to Judah was so great that even his grandson Josiah could not fully reverse it and Judah was taken into captivity as a result. Yet we read in 2 Chronicles 33:12-13: "Now when he was in affliction, he implored the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God."... (v.15-16) Two takeaways I get from 2 Chronicles 33 and the legacy of Manasseh: 1. God's compassion is such that there is no sin too wicked for God to forgive. We can always come humbly before the throne of God in repentance. 2. As long as we have life on this earth, it is never too late to come before God to seek His forgiveness. If Manasseh can come before God near the end of his long and wicked reign as king, we can come before God now. If Manasseh can have his life transformed near the end of his life, then we can too.