

Session 5, 6, 7 & 8- Who are the Elohim? What is their nature, function, and status?

*All Bible references are from NASB unless noted otherwise.

Hermeneutical Principle?

PSALM 82:1 Commentary by John Calvin

“In the second clause of the verse, it is not material whether we read, He will judge in the midst of the gods, or, He will judge the gods in the midst. The first construction, however, is the most easy and natural, That however much the rulers of the world may exalt themselves, they cannot in the least impair the authority of God, by divesting him of his sovereignty over them and of the government of all things, which he will ever retain as his inalienable prerogative. But here, as also a little after, the name gods is to be understood of judges, on whom God has impressed special marks of his glory. To apply it to angels is a fancy too strained to admit of serious consideration.”

Who are the *elohim* (review of categories)?

The unseen (non-human) realm is inhabited by the MANY beings known in the OT as *elohim*. **SOME ARE GOOD AND SOME ARE EVIL.** *Elohim* doesn't automatically mean the good guys!

There are four main Hebrew words that reveal the nature of these various beings are: *El* (singular), *Elim* (plural), *Eloah* (singular), *Elohim* (plural). What does the English word **God** mean? What does the English word **god** mean? Hebrew has no capitals.

Hebrew definitions of *Elohim* word group (*El, Eloah, Elim, etc.*) in OT:

1) **“Yahweh”**- the one and only uncreated, creator God in which there is none like Him. He is known as Yahweh and is species-unique- “Who is like Yahweh” (Psalm 89:6-8; 113:5; 86:8; 29:1; Ex 15:11; 2 Chron 6:14; Isa 40:25; 46:5)? NO OTHER BEING HAS GOD’S ESSENCE OR UNIQUE NATURE as uncreated Creator, etc. Yahweh is the “God of gods”. What does this mean about being “God of gods”?

Deut. 10:17 "For the LORD your God is the **God of gods** and the **Lord of lords**, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.

Ps. 136:2 Give thanks to the **God of gods**, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Dan. 2:47 The king answered Daniel and said, "Surely your God is a **God of gods** and a **Lord of kings** and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery."

Dan. 11:36 "Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the **God of gods**; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

Exodus 15:11 "Who is like You **among the gods**, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"

Psalm 86:8 There is no one like You **among the gods**, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours.

Psalm 95:3 For the LORD is a great God And a great King above **all gods**.

Psalm 96:4-5 For the LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise; he is more awesome than **all gods**.⁵ For all the **gods of the nations** are worthless, but the LORD made the sky. (NET)

Psalm 96:5 For all the gods of the peoples are **worthless idols**, but the LORD made the heavens. (ESV)

Psalm 97:7 Let all those be ashamed who serve graven images, Who boast themselves of idols; **Worship Him, all you gods**.

Psalm 97:9 For You are the LORD Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above **all gods**.

Psalm 135:5 For I know that the LORD is great And that our Lord is above **all gods**.

2) **“god/gods”**- Generally, all **non-human truly existing** beings who live in the abode of the spiritual/unseen realm, but who can access our human physical realm with permission. There are numerous types of beings other than humans in entire Bible. These would include angels, cherubim, archangels, shades, etc. The most important

point to keep in front of us is that the word *elohim* is generally equivalent with *spiritual being*. This includes Yahweh, angels, demons, etc.

See number 4 below for a qualification about dead and disembodied human spirit.

3) “**god/gods**”- false **non-existent** gods who were worshiped by many cultures and were often actualized physically through the use of idols (stone, wood, etc.).

4) “**the spirit of a dead human**”?- There is only one instance of this in 1 Samuel 28:13 where Samuel is called up from the underworld to speak with Saul through the actions of the witch of Endor. Samuel’s spirit is called an *elohim* by the witch. She doesn’t seem to know exactly what came up from her divination, but to call it an *elohim* was appropriate (spiritual being).

NOTE* We need to make sure we understand another hermeneutical principle. This principle recognizes that not everything written in the Bible is true. Often times biblical writers record events with false thinking or teaching. In our text the writer of the book of Samuel was simply recording what the witch at Endor said. Just because she called what we end up knowing is the dead Samuel an *elohim* doesn’t make it true. The doctrine of inspiration and/or inerrancy does not guarantee that everything said in the Bible is true. The doctrine teaches that everything in the Bible was written down accurately as the Holy Spirit wanted in the original documents.

A good OT example:

Genesis 3:4 The serpent said to the woman, "**Surely you will not die,** ⁵ for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and **you will be like divine beings** (*elohim*) who know (plural participle) good and evil." (NET)

A good NT example is:

Acts 12:21-23 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and *began* delivering an address to them. ²² **The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"** ²³ And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

5) “**judges**”? – Some English versions have translated the word “*elohim*” as “judges” in Exodus 21:6; 22:8, 9 (see below). However, OT scholarship is divided over whether this is an accurate representation of the Hebrew *elohim*. Most current scholarship (and more recent translations) rejects the view that the word could or should be translated as “judges”.

I think it is conclusive that the word NEVER represents “judges” and is simply a tradition going back many centuries in the English versions.

These passages below are important for those desiring to see *elohim* representative of humans (judges or rulers). How do we understand these passages? We do not know exactly how the process worked. What we know is that the processes included seeking affirmation or counsel from *elohim*.

As is evident in other passages where the process is revealed in detail with the husband and wife going and seeing the LORD’s counsel through the **priest** (Num 5:11-31; cf. Joshua sought the LORD’s counsel through the **priest** by Urim and Thumim- Num 27:21; King Saul sought the LORD’s counsel by the Urim and Thumim- 1 Sam 28:6; David sought counsel of God through Abiathar the **priest** and his ephod- 1 Sam 23; 30).

The point in all this is that there is no definitive reason to retranslate the Hebrew word *elohim* as anything other than God (normal usage and similar to ESV). There was most likely an intermediary used in the Exodus passages below, but the point is that they were coming to GOD seeking counsel or as a witness. The writer could have used the word priest or judge (like in Numbers or Samuel), but his point was that God Himself was going to be providing His judgment.

The word *elohim* appears 2603 times in Hebrew Bible and 213 times in Dead Sea scrolls and it never explicitly means “judge.” There is a separate Hebrew word for judge (*shaphat*). The evidence for *elohim* to mean judge would have to be so overwhelming to overturn the 2800+ occurrences where it refers to spiritual beings only.

I have heard many people say, “I need to have godly counsel or find out what God wants me to do in this situation, I am going to go talk to the pastor or priest.” Even in English we recognize that the pastor is not God and we don’t call him God, but the pastor is being spoken of as a representative to bring them to God’s counsel.

Notice a comparison between the NASB and ESV below. All underlined words are the same Hebrew word *elohim*.

^{ESV} **Exodus 21:6** then his master shall bring him to God (*elohim*), and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

^{NASB} **Exodus 21:6** then his master shall bring him to God (*elohim*), then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently. (KJV- “judges”)

^{ESV} **Exodus 22:8** If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God (*elohim*) to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. ⁹ For every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, 'This is it,' the case of both parties shall come before God (*elohim*). The one whom God (*elohim*) condemns shall pay double to his neighbor.

^{NASB} **Exodus 22:8** "If the thief is not caught, then the owner of the house shall appear before the judges (*elohim*), to determine whether he laid his hands on his neighbor's property. ⁹ "For every breach of trust, *whether it is* for ox, for donkey, for sheep, for clothing, *or* for any lost thing about which one says, 'This is it,' the case of both parties shall come before the judges (*elohim*); he whom the judges (*elohim*) condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

Exodus 4:16 "Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him.

- Notice that the Hebrew (לְאֱלֹהִים) prefaces the word *elohim* with the preposition (L-) meaning “as”. Moses was not called an *elohim* directly, but the preposition tells us Moses was “like/as” an *elohim* to Pharaoh. This first construction governs the second appearance of similar phraseology in Exodus 7:1.

Yahweh is the *elohim* of *elohim*: Who are the other *elohim*?

Ps. 136:2 Give thanks to the **God of gods** (*elohim* of *elohim*), For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Exodus 15:11 "Who is like You **among the gods** (*elohim*), O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?

Psalms 86:8 There is no one like You **among the gods** (*elohim*), O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours.

We must remember that there is a difference in the way the Hebrew Old Testament writers made reference to the spiritual beings and how they are presented in the Greek New Testament. Biblical scholars often divide the study of spiritual beings (*elohim*) into three categories.¹

- **Nature**- what are the *elohim* like? What is their inherent nature?
- **Function**- what specific tasks or jobs are entailed in the various *elohim*?
- **Status**- what is their rank? What does the hierarchy look like? This is often difficult to know.

¹ For example, see Michael Heiser’s book, *Angels* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2018), 1-56, 116-140.

Old Testament other *elohim* besides Yahweh

Nature

1. **“Spirit” (Hebrew *ruach*)-** the main consideration is that *elohim* are not inherently physical nor made of physical elements like mankind (Gen 2:7).
1 Kings 22:19 Micaiah said, "That being the case, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the **heavenly assembly** standing on his right and on his left. ²⁰ The LORD said, 'Who will deceive Ahab, so he will attack Ramoth Gilead and die there?' One said this and another that. ²¹ Then a **spirit** stepped forward and stood before the LORD. He said, 'I will deceive him.' (NET) See also 1 Samuel 16:14-16; 18:10-11.
Judges 9:22 Abimelech commanded Israel for three years. ²³ God sent a **spirit** to stir up hostility between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem. He made the leaders of Shechem disloyal to Abimelech. (NET)
2. **“Heavenly ones” (Hebrew *shamaim*)-** this another designation that their nature is other worldly and live in the spirit realm which is often referenced as heavenlies (cf. Eph 6:12).
Psalm 89:5 Let the **heavens (or heavenly ones)** praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness in the **assembly of the holy ones!** ⁶ For who **in the skies** can be compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings (literally, “sons of God”) is like the LORD, ⁷ a God greatly to be feared in the **council of the holy ones**, and awesome above all who are around him? (ESV)
3. **“Stars” (Hebrew *kokavim*)-** this designation is quite consistent in both the OT and NT (Rev 1:20; 12:4). The main focus is that this description points to the celestial nature of the *elohim*. The emphasis also includes the nature of the brightness and non-human elements.
Isaiah 14:13 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the **stars of God**, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.
4. **“Holy Ones” (Hebrew *qedoshim*)-** the word for holy in both Hebrew and Greek is multifaceted. It has at its root the idea of being sanctified or set apart. This set apartness allows for the concept of being holy or set apart from sin.
Psalm 89:5 The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the **assembly of the holy ones**.
Psalm 89:7 A God greatly feared in the **council of the holy ones**, And awesome above all those who are around Him?
Zechariah 14:5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the **holy ones** with Him!

Function (or job description)

1. **“Angel” (Hebrew *malakh*; plural *melakhim*)-** the basic sense of Hebrew word is messenger or someone who does a task. It is very important to understand that never in the OT is a Cherub, Seraph, Watcher, Son of God, etc. called an angel. This is where we get a difference between the OT and NT designation of angel. In the OT “angel” or messenger is never a designation of status, rank, or hierarchy. A malakh (angel) can be a human messenger sent by another human (Gen 32:3, 7; Deut 2:26; Neh 6:3; 2 Sam 11:19) or a human messenger sent by God (Hag 1:13; 2 Chron 36:15; Mal 2:7). Interestingly, John the Baptist was labeled an “angel” (messenger) as a fulfillment of the word *malakh* in Malachi 3:1 (Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27). The prophet Malachi literally means “my messenger” or “my angel”. Another interesting fact is that angels are never depicted with wings.
Genesis 19:1 Now the two angels (*melakhim*) came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them and bowed down *with his* face to the ground.
2. **“Ministers” (Hebrew *sheret*)-** this simply is a word designating the function or action of serving. It refers to whatever Yahweh asks His servants to do. (**Aramaic *shemash***)- **Daniel 7:10**.
Psalm 104:4 He makes the winds His messengers (*melakhim*), Flaming fire His ministers (*sheret*). This verse is quoted in Hebrews 1:7 in reference to NT “angel” language.

3. **“Watcher” (Aramaic *ir*)-** this is an unusual word that only appears in the Aramaic portion of the book of Daniel. Daniel is 12 chapters, but from 2:4-7:28 is written in biblical Aramaic with the rest in Hebrew. The word for watcher appears only three times (Dan 4:13, 17, 23). Interestingly, the task of watcher is connected directly with the “Sons of God” description in the book of 1 Enoch 10-15 (the sins of the Sons of God in Genesis 6:1-4 are labeled as sins of the Watchers in 1 Enoch). In the book of Daniel, a watcher is also labeled “holy one,” but in the book of 1 Enoch they have rebelled from their holy and lofty heavenly place and position. Some scholars connect the idea of watcher with administering over the nations as seen in Deuteronomy 32:8-9, Psalm 82, Job 1-2, and Zechariah 1:10-11.
Daniel 4:17 The sentence is by the **decree of the watchers**, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.' (ESV)
4. **“Host” (Hebrew *tzaba*) and “Mighty Ones” (Hebrew *gibborim* and *abarrim*)-** One of the most common phrases Christians are familiar with from the Bible is “LORD of Hosts.” This also could be understood as “armies” or those ready to do war at Yahweh’s commands or serve at His discretion from His Commander in Chief position.
Psalm 78:25 Man ate the food of the mighty ones (*abarrim*). He sent them more than enough to eat. (NET)
Psalm 103:20 Bless the LORD, O you his angels (*melakhim*), you mighty ones (*gibborim*) who **do his word, obeying the voice of his word!** (ESV)
Psalm 148:2 Praise Him, all His angels (*melakhim*); Praise Him, all His hosts (*tzevaot*)!
5. **“Mediator” (Hebrew *melitz*)-** the nuance of this is as a mediator/interpreter is connected with the other function of angel/messenger. An interesting NT parallel is the idea that angels mediated the giving of the Law to Moses (Gal 3:19; Acts 7:53; Heb 2:2). Where do we find this recorded in the OT? (Deuteronomy 33:1-4 LXX, not MT).
Job 33:23 "If there is an angel (*malakh*) as mediator (*melitz*) for him, One out of a thousand, To remind a man what is right for him.
6. **“Cherubim” and “Seraphim”-** it is well known not only in biblical passages, but also in ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and other Near Eastern literature that the gods have guardian beings who stand in close proximity to the god’s throne. Most all of them are a sort of hybrid beings (chimeras). In the Bible these beings are always represented as guarding the presence of God (Ex 25:20; 37:9; Isaiah 6:2; Ezek 1:10) or sacred space specially protected by God such as the way to the tree of life in the garden of Eden (Gen 3:24). These beings are depicted as having wings. Interestingly, the word for seraphim in the singular is also translated as snake (Num 21:6, 8; Isa 14:29). This leads many to recognize the similarities in that snakes or serpents were often seen as throne guardians in other Near Eastern literature. The cherubim and seraphim are never labeled as angels in the OT.
Genesis 3:24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the **cherubim** and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.
Isaiah 6:2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

Status (hierarchy and functions of the divine council and heavenly host- OT *elohim*)

- Old Testament scholars recognize that it often is very difficult to discern hierarchy with any level of specificity. In other ancient Near Eastern literature there are four tiers of hierarchy.
 - The Creator God (whoever he is named to be); In the OT, this is clearly Yahweh.
 - The most high God’s immediate family of derived gods (“sons of God” which is often numbering 70- cf. Deut 32:8-9; Gen 10-11) which serve as a divine council;
 - Artisan or craftsman type gods;
 - Lowest servant type gods (angels/messengers).

OT scholars highlight the similarity to this structure as found in the Hebrew Bible, but also note that #3 is not really expressed with any level of clarity.
- We have already been introduced to various passages making reference to a divine council of beings who Yahweh has created to help administer His plans and purposes. Yahweh does not need a divine council, but indeed has chosen to have one. In the OT (and other Near Eastern literature) there are various names for this divine council:
 - Psalm 82:1** *A psalm of Asaph.* God stands in the **assembly of El** (Hebrew *adat el*); in the midst of the gods he renders judgment. (NET).

This phrase only appears here in the OT, but in Ugaritic (north Syria) literature representing the Canaanite religious beliefs, this exact phrase appears expressing the idea of the high god “El” presiding over his divine council. There were around 1500 cuneiform tablets/texts discovered (since 1929) which provide great background information to the politics, history, culture, and religious beliefs of the Canaanites who lived prior and contemporaneously with Israel.

B) **Psalm 89:7** A God greatly feared in the **council** (Hebrew *sod*) **of the holy ones**, And awesome above all those who are around Him?

Jeremiah 23:18 "But who has stood in the **council** (Hebrew *sod*) **of the LORD**, That he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened? (see also Jer 23:22; Job 15:8; Amos 3:7)

C) **Psalm 89:5-6** The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the **assembly** (Hebrew *qahal*) **of the holy ones**. ⁶For who **in the skies** is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD?

D) **Isaiah 14:13-14** "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise **my throne above the stars of God**, And I will sit on the **mount of assembly** (Hebrew *mo'ed*) In the recesses of the north. ¹⁴I will ascend **above the heights of the clouds**; I will make myself **like the Most High**.'

Again, it is fascinating to see that the Bible is not written in a vacuum, but in a specific culture, time period, and geographical context. This verse in Isaiah 14:13 matches up perfectly with other Ugaritic religious ideas where the high god “El” conducts his divine council with his 70 sons (stars) on a mountain top in the far north.

E) **Daniel 7:10** A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The **court** (Aramaic *din*) **convened** and the books were opened. (NET)

Daniel 7:26 But the **court** (Aramaic *din*) **will convene**, and his ruling authority will be removed– destroyed and abolished forever! (NET)

3. The apostle Paul, after making reference to the heavenly adversaries (Eph 3:10) notes that God does have a heavenly family and earthly family (Eph 3:15). God’s original creation of the host of heaven (and specifically the divine council) to participate in His eternal purpose for humanity (Eph 1:11; 3:11) is evident in the OT.

We observe that the OT divine council of heavenly beings participate in various endeavors:

A) They rejoiced and sang praise at the creation of the earth (Job 38:7).

B) They were involved in a passive way at the creation and fall of humanity (“Let us” passages in Gen 1:26; 3:22).

C) Contributed ideas at Yahweh’s invitation to fulfill Yahweh’s purposes in Israel (1 Kings 22:19-23).

D) Were included in the discussion of the commissioning of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8- “who will go for us”).

E) Participate and have thrones in Yahweh’s court in reference to judgments on humans (Dan 7:9-10, 26).

F) Issue decrees of their own which agree with Yahweh’s decrees (Dan 4:17, 24).

G) Administration of Yahweh’s governance in the world (Deut 32:8-9; Psalm 82:1-6; Zech 1:10-11; Job 1-2)

H) Perform angelic functions to deliver messages, judgments, rescues, etc. (Dan 9- Gabriel, Gen 19, etc.)

I) Serve Yahweh and also are instruments of praise (Psalm 29:1; 89:5-7; 103:20-22; 148:1-5).

4. The following is an attempt to list the various other elohim (spiritual beings) referenced in the OT with a cautious attempt to assign a rank. It is almost impossible to be dogmatic and does not address NT information.

A) **Angel of Yahweh** (Hebrew *malakh Yahweh*)-this being is well known by OT scholars to exhibit qualities and functions that are identical to Yahweh (Gen 22; Exodus 3:6-14, 23:20-23, etc.). The Jews of the second temple period described this concept as the two powers in heaven, but after Christianity became prominent, their rabbinic writings distanced themselves from this concept. Our NT understanding helps identify this elohim as the 2nd person of the Trinity, God the Son. The Angel of Yahweh is equal co-ruler of the divine council with God the Father. This idea becomes important in understanding the argument of Jesus to the Jews in John 10:24-39. This person (THE angel of the Lord) never appears in the NT and is distinct from other appearances of various angels in the entire Bible. There is one reference in Matthew 1:24 to the angel of the Lord, but grammatically the article is being used for specific reference to the angel who was introduced in 1:20. The Angel of Yahweh is connected with the **Prince (captain) of Yahweh’s armies (hosts)** in Joshua 5:13-15). The same exact terminology **Prince of the host** appears in Daniel 8:11 This same figure is called the **Prince of Princes** in Daniel 8:25.

B) **Michael** (one of the chief princes)- we know from Daniel 10 that these princes (Hebrew *sar*) had geographical regions of rulership or administration (Dan 10:13, 20). Michael is prince over Israel specifically (Dan 10:21; 12:1). He is the only named being specifically called an archangel (Jude 1:9) and has the distinction of having his own set

of angels (Rev 12:7). Based on this terminology of the NT compared with OT “chief princes” (plural), it is believed there are more than 1 archangels (cf. 1 Thess 4:16).

C) **Satan** (the word simply means adversary)- this word and all of its appearances is extremely hard to nail down in the OT simply because of church tradition. Not every instance of the word “satan” is a reference to the one we know as God’s chief enemy (the devil is a Greek term meaning slanderer). If Ezek 28:14, 16 are a reference to him which is hard to prove definitively, he was the anointed cherub guarding God’s throne. The same caution goes to Isaiah 14:12-14 which describes this rebel as the “shining one, son of the dawn” (“shining one”; “serpent”- Gen 3:1). No doubt we know him as the dragon and serpent, Satan and Devil (Rev 12:9). This being has his own kingdom (Matt 12:26) and his own angels (Matt 25:41; Rev 12:7, 9). Yahweh has his own angels (Rev 3:5) and they are labeled as Michael’s angels also (Rev 12:7).

D) **Gabriel**- There is little known about him in the OT except that he is the only other named *elohim*. He appears in Daniel 8:16; 9:21 and functioned in an angelic sense by giving Daniel understanding of his visions. The NT highlights that he stands in the presence of God (Luke 1:19, 26) and again is functioning as a messenger.

E) **Sons of God/Princes/Watchers/Stars of God** (Hebrew for “sons of God” is *beney ha-elohim*; *beney elim*)- this group appears in several places in the OT (Gen 6:1-4; Deut 32:8 DSS; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1; 89:7; “sons of the most high”, Psalm 82:6; princes, Dan 10; watchers, Dan 4, stars of God, Isa 14:13). The terminology is definitely familial and these *elohim* are included in the divine council and are involved in direct rulership and administration. We do not know how many in total there are, but some rebelled against Yahweh and have been causing trouble since Genesis 6. According to Deuteronomy 32:8-9, they were given administration over the nations at the time of the tower of Babel (Gen 10-11). They will be judged with the loss of their immortality for failing to administer righteously (Psalm 82:1-7). In other words, they will experience the 2nd death like humanity. Revelation 20:10-14 describes how Satan (an *elohim*) will experience the **second death** along with other humans whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life by being thrown into the Lake of Fire.

F) **Servants**- these *elohim* do not have any specific distinction, but are seen as those that serve Yahweh and His council. They are not seen to have thrones or rulership like those listed in Letter E, but are attendants (Daniel 7:10; Deut 33:2; Psalm 68:17?). The evidence shows that their number is almost incalculable.

G) **Demons/Evil Spirits** (Hebrew *shedydim*, from an Akkadian loan word into Hebrew)- most translations have come up with no other term for this word except demons based on the LXX. It is well known that this word comes from an Akkadian word meaning territorial/geographical evil spirit. It only appears twice in the OT. These beings are called *elohim* and came to be worshipped with child sacrifice.

Deuteronomy 32:17 They sacrificed to demons (*shedydim*), not God (*elohim*), to gods (*elohim*) they had not known; to new gods (*elohim*) who had recently come along, gods (*elohim*) your ancestors had not known about. (NET)

Psalm 106:37 They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons (*shedydim*).

H) **Goat Demons** (Hebrew *sayir*)- not much is known about the origination or nature of these entities. They are enemies of the most high and seek to corrupt Yahweh’s people through false worship (Lev 17:7; Isa 13:21; 34:14; 2 Chronicles 11:15 RSV- Revised Standard Version translates consistently as “goat demons”).

I) **Lilith**- another strange word that scholars have a hard time nailing down. It appears only twice in OT and has connections with an Akkadian word representing a female demon associated with sexual and fertility overtones (Isa 34:14; Job 18:15).

J) **Rephaim**- this word has two main nuances in the OT. The first is in connection with the Nephilim (giant) tribes which originated from the Sons of God mating with human women (Genesis 6:1-4) and who infiltrated the Land of Israel (Gen 14) and sought to prevent the conquest of Joshua. In later OT writings, the word makes reference to evil spirits who indwell the underworld, but also cause havoc to humanity. This imagery fits well with the book of 1 Enoch 15 which connects the spirits of the dead giants (Nephilim) continuing on and becoming evil demon spirits which are quite evident in the gospels. The Lexham Bible dictionary has a superb article on the background of the Rephaim in all its biblical, contextual, linguistic, and historical origination.