

The Naked Bible Podcast 2.0

Number 109

“John 10, gods or men?”

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With

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In view of Mike's work on the divine council and Psalm 82 in his best-selling book, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, many have asked what's going on in John 10, where Jesus defends his deity by quoting Psalm 82. The consensus interpretation has the gods of Psalm 82 as only people – Jewish elders or Israelites at Sinai (both of which are unmentioned in Psalm 82). How does that approach make sense when Jesus needs to defend statements of equality with the Father elsewhere in the chapter (John 10:30, 38)? Mike's view is that such an approach makes no sense at all – and that there is much more coherent alternative.

Mike laid out his view in a conference paper accessible on the Unseen Realm's companion website ([Chapter 4 tab](#)).

Mike's slide presentation:

[or download powerpoint slideshow here](#)

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 109, John 10, gods or men. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you?

MSH: Very good. We have a good topic for this one, familiar one.

TS: I think this is one of the most asked questions about this kind of material probably. I bet you get this all the time.

MSH: I do so I'm not sure, well, I am sure why it took us this long to do an episode. I have a paper on this topic on the companion website to Unseen Realm. It's under the chapter 4 tab but nobody seems to find that so I keep getting asked the question. So hopefully this will be a go to thing when I get it in the future. I think to start, what we're talking about is John 10:34. And in that verse, Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6. Now I'm well known for Psalm 82, Divine Council, that sort of thing, and anyone who's heard me on interviews or been to the Divine Council website thedivinecouncil.com, or who's read Unseen Realm or Supernatural knows that a straightforward reading its own original context of Psalm 82 has divine plurality, plural Elohim, plural gods, plural divine beings in that passage. It's a Divine Council meeting as the very first verse tells us.

The consensus view, though, conflicts with that. If you pick up any given commentary on the Gospel of John, the better ones will at least tell you where the quotation comes from and they'll tell you or give you two or three different options for how Psalm 82 might be understood, one of which is that we have a divine assembly and spiritual beings meeting with the God of Israel. Some of the better ones will at least tell you that. I have yet to find a scholarly commentary on the Gospel of John that says that reading of Psalm 82, the one that makes sense in the Semitic world, the one that makes sense to the Israelites and their world, that's how we should read Psalm 82 and then take that to John 10. Basically nobody does that. The good ones will mention it but then they'll say the gods here in Psalm 82 are really just people and so we need to remember that when we go to Jesus's quotation of Psalm 82 in John 10:34. And then that becomes sort of the overarching hermeneutic for how John Chapter 10 is handled. And frankly, as I'm going to demonstrate here, as I do demonstrate in the article, a conference paper that people can get, that approach is just absurd because it does nothing, and in fact undermines other things in the chapter that have Jesus being cast as equal with the Father.

So for Jesus to say don't get after me for calling myself the son of God because doesn't Psalm 82 teach us that all of us are gods? It just makes no sense at all. If you're unfamiliar with this passage and this whole topic, I think the best way to start out here is to read most of John 10, at least relevant section, 17-18 verses, because what I'm going to say here, what I'm going to try convince people of is not only do we have Psalm 82 being what it is but we have to understand what Jesus is saying in verse 34 with what he has said prior to verse 34 and after verse 34 so there's an immediate context issue as well as an Old Testament Israelite religion context. Let's just jump in here and I think that for listeners, you'll be able to listen to this. You'll be able to read the article. I have a whole slide presentation on this that I've actually done. In one church, they actually invited me to do this and it went really well. We're going to make that available to you as well. But I think you'll be able to see pretty quickly how the dominant consensus view, the default view, really just doesn't make any sense, and it exists and become

the consensus because it conveniently allows people to not talk about divine plurality. So here we go, in John 10 beginning in verse 22 we read, this is the ESV,

²² At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. ³² Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” ³³ The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— ³⁶ do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸ but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” ³⁹ Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

MSH: That's the whole episode, John 10:22-39, and in verse 34, we get this quotation of Jesus. He quotes Psalm 82:6 in defense of his claim to make himself God. I and the Father are one in verse 30 and then later in verse 38, the Father is in me and I am in the Father. So the question is Jesus identifies himself with the Father in verse 30 and the Jews consider that statement blasphemy. But what they hear is Jesus making himself equal with God. That's verse 33. It says that very plainly. And then Jesus defends himself with a quotation from Psalm 82:6. So the question is, how does the quotation work? What is it about the quotation that Jesus uses it as a proof text to defend his teaching about himself? So we need to understand it in such a way that his use of it makes sense. So how does it make sense? What is he doing? What is he thinking?

Every John commentary I've ever seen interprets this statement, and, of course, going back to Psalm 82 which is its source, it interprets this statement in this Psalm to be speaking of humans, Jewish elders, Israelites maybe at Sinai, or something like that, mere mortals. And since they look at Psalm 82 that way and Jesus quotes the Psalm, they more or less have to say Jesus is quoting this verse here and he's trying to get them to cool down and say God uses this language of humans elsewhere. He uses it of us Jews so don't get bent out of shape. That makes no sense as a proof text for defending the idea that He and the Father are one. So this is what we need to look at. Now at the risk of belaboring the point here, whatever interpretation you have of

this quotation of Psalm 82, it needs to reinforce Jesus's claims in John 10:30 and 38 because the quotation is sandwiched between two statements that equate Jesus with God. So whatever your interpretation of Jesus quotation here is, it has to reinforce those points, otherwise, it contradicts them.

So that's the first thing we need to really sort of pack into our brains. And as I go through the options, what I'm going to do here is I'm going to go through the consensus way to show kind of what it is based on and why it just doesn't make any sense. But I think if you just sort of master this one point, whatever the quotation in John 10:34 means, it needs to be consistent with John 10:30 and John 10:38. If you just packed that away, you're going to see pretty quickly that the consensus view just doesn't make any sense at all. It undermines Jesus claims to deity elsewhere in the chapter, in the passage. So let's start off here by talking about the mortal view, what I'll just call for general sake the mortal view. There's really two versions of this. Mortal view means that we know where the quotation comes from. It's Psalm 82:6. There's no debate there so when we go back to Psalm 82, the mortal view is that the gods here in Psalm 82 that the Psalmist is talking about are just people. They are mere mortals, mortal men. There are two variations of this. People will say they're just sort of Jewish elders, Jewish leaders in the community or they could be Israelites, more broadly speaking, but even more specifically, the Israelites that were at Sinai receiving the law. And therefore by extension, since the law was received by the whole nation, the community, Psalm 82 is just calling Israelites in general gods. So those are two variations of what we'll call the mortal view. To refresh your memory, verse 34 goes like this, John 10:34,

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'?" ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—³⁶ do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

MSH: Jesus clearly uses it to defend himself. So we have this reference even though it says in your law, there are other places in the Old Testament. And the way the Old Testament is cited by the New where Torah, Law, referred more broadly just to the Bible, the sacred Scriptures. We know where the quotation comes from. It's word for word using the Septuagint right out of Psalm 82 so that's not going to be an issue. The issue is what is a phrase like to whom the word of God came mean because if you're thinking the gods are people then the phrases that sort of surround it are going to become important for asking and answering the question, which people are we talking about? There were two versions of this mortal view. The first one I said was Jewish elders. Here's the way this is articulated. When Jesus says is it not written in your law I said you are gods, this is going to sound absurd but this is the way it's argued. People will say, scholars will say we know that Jesus's quoting Psalm 82:6 and that technically isn't in the Law of Moses.

It's not in the Torah, the Pentateuch. So when Jesus says is it not written in your law, even though he's quoting Psalm 82:6, Jesus is probably connecting that thought with something in the Torah. And then they say that something in the Torah is Exodus 18. Now if you know what Exodus 18 is, you know right away where this is going to go. Exodus 18 is the chapter where Moses, this is after passing through the Red Sea in the Exodus event and they get on the other

side and Moses meets up with Jethro, his father-in-law. This is the chapter where that meeting is described and Jethro says we've heard about all these amazing things that God is doing for you and has done for his people. Jethro then observes sort of the life of the camp during his visit with Moses and he sees Moses basically spending his whole day sitting there answering people's questions about the law. The law had just been given at Sinai and Jethro says what are you doing? Moses explains I got to do this. People have questions and debates. They've got problems, whenever, so I answer their questions. And Jethro says this is not a good idea. What you need to do is you need to appoint people to help you. So Exodus 18 is the chapter in which Moses appoints people who will become later sort of identified as the Jewish elders, the people who help him advise the people and interpret the law to make decisions about the law. Now you say what does this have to do with Psalm 82? That's a good question because Psalm 82 never references anything in Exodus 18. But if you read Exodus 18, you will find that there are a number of places in Exodus 18 where the word *elohim* occurs. For instance, the first verse,

Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.

⁵ Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God.

MSH: So *elohim* shows up a number of times in the passage and so here's how the argument goes. If you go to verse 15, Exodus 18, it says,

¹⁵ And Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God; ¹⁶ when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws." ¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. ¹⁹ Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God and bring their cases to God, ²⁰ and you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do.

²¹ Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.

MSH: So the logic here is that when Moses said earlier in the chapter that people come to ask questions of God and they're really asking me and I give them answers, the logic is when Moses appoints these people, these elders to judge the people then that basically means that when they come to those judges, they're coming to *elohim* as well. So the judges are sort of viewed as

elohim. And then we take that back to Psalm 82 and we say the elohim in Psalm 82, those are just people, the Israelite judges from way back in Exodus 18. Now if you're thinking what a convoluted strange hermeneutic, I agree with you because if you just think about what you know about Psalm 82, God stands in the Divine Council, in the midst of the elohim he passes judgment. And the elohim are getting judged for corrupt administration, for not being ethical, for being oppressive and abusive. And then they're called in verse 6 sons of the most high, the verse that Jesus quotes. You look at that and say it's obvious that they aren't men. They're going to die like men. God is meeting them in a council. If you go to Psalm 89, the very same language sons of God, elohim, council, assembly, Psalm 89 has it in the clouds, in the skies. This is in the spiritual realm.

The people who make this argument from Exodus 18 they never show you Psalm 89. They'll never consider it. They immediately just go back to Exodus 18 because their job, what they want to do, and I know this is going to sound harsh but it's true. I haven't spent 15 years in this material and not discovered this. The task of many interpreters is to avoid divine plurality in the Bible. It is just that simple. They think it affects monotheism. They think it creates polytheism in Israelite thinking and the biblical writers. They just don't want to go there and so this is an escape valve. This is a convenient way to dismiss the question. It doesn't matter that it doesn't make any sense. I address this at length in Unseen Realm why this is incoherent. For those who are new to my content, just go to the divine council.com and you'll get the education that you need to know what's going on with Psalm 82 and why the consensus view is frankly absurd. No Israeli would have been thinking this, the consensus view. It doesn't mean polytheism. It doesn't harm Israelite monotheism. I've put out dozens and dozens of things and probably by this point maybe 100 hours of content going over this material. Listeners should be well familiar with it.

If you're new to the podcast then you need to get caught up. We have videos on the website for the Israelite supernatural worldview. You can get caught up. But this is how the thinking goes. So when Jesus quotes this passage, doesn't it say in your law, and he quotes Psalm 82:6. But he uses the word law so Jesus wants us to think of the Torah proper and he wants us to think of Exodus 18. He wants us to think of the appointment of judges so the gods in Psalm 82 that he's actually quoting are just human judges, the elders of Israel. If that's the case, you got a number of problems and they start in Exodus 18. Every occurrence of elohim in that chapter can be translated God, talking about God, talking to God, fearing God, being blessed by God, God be with you. There isn't a single occurrence of Elohim in Exodus 18 that needs to be plural except for one reference to foreign pagan gods and obviously those aren't the Israelite elders or the God of Israel. My point is that translations like ESV do a good job here. You don't need to have plurality here. In fact, translating elohim as plural in any other instance just doesn't make any sense.

It is just talking about God. Human judges, the appointees in Exodus 18 are never actually called elohim in Exodus 18. It never happens. It doesn't happen elsewhere either where you have human judges referred to as elohim. So from the get-go, even the presumed Old Testament basis for this is flawed. The thinking about Psalm 82 is deeply flawed but this is something you are going to read in standard commentaries. It's option one of the mortal view, which is the consensus view. But the deeper question is if Jesus was thinking this, how does this help him defend himself as being equal with God because that is exactly how the Jews read him. I and the Father are one. The Father is in me and I am in the Father, John 10:30 and John

10:38. The quotation of Psalm 82:6 is sandwiched right in the middle and its Jesus's proof text to defend himself against blasphemy and also to defend the idea to validate what he has just said, that I and the Father are one. How does this human option do that? I get to call myself the son of God and the sons of God in Psalm 82:6 or elohim just like you guys do. We'll all just be one big happy family. We'll break out the Barney song. It doesn't make any sense to have Jesus saying cool off boys. The language I'm using about myself you could use about yourself, too. It just doesn't make sense. The second option for the mortal view is Israelites in general. A lot of commentators prefer the first one because Jesus is speaking to ostensibly Jewish elders and they're thinking that's the connection here. There is another alternative here, Israelites in general. Let's go back to John 10:34-35 and I'll read it again and you'll see where this view comes from.

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'?" ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—

MSH: The commentators will say a-ha, to whom the word of God came, that's "obviously" a reference to the giving of the law to the Israelites at Sinai. Therefore, the gods are the Israelites. This is how the logic goes. An obvious question should be raised here. Is Psalm 82, which is the source of the quotation, describing events at Sinai? Is there anything in the Psalm that points to the gathering at Sinai? And the answer is no. This is just an invented imported context, imposed context on Psalm 82 to humanize the elohim. That's all it is. So mortal view number one, Jewish elders; mortal view number two, all the Israelites because to whom the word of God came must refer to Sinai. No, think about Psalm 82. Ask yourself the question going to Psalm 82:1. God has taken his place in the divine council, in the midst of the gods, in the midst of the elohim he holds judgment. He's having a meeting with other elohim and then in verses 2-5 he starts railing on them. And then in verse 6, we get to our quotation verse.

I said, "You are gods,
sons of the Most High, all of you;
⁷ nevertheless, like men you shall die,
and fall like any prince."

MSH: So here's the question. To whom does the word of God come in Psalm 82? It comes to the gods. It doesn't come to Israelites at Sinai. In other words, just read the passage for what it says. The gods are being addressed in the Divine Council. Psalm 82:1 gives you the setting. It doesn't say that the setting is Sinai. Psalm 81 gives you the setting. It's the Divine Council. And we go to Psalm 89 and lots of other passages, the Divine Council refers to God's headquarters, meeting place in the spiritual world. It has nothing to do with giving two tablets to Moses or to the Israelites at Sinai. It's very clear to whom the word of God came in Psalm 82. The answer is the gods. It's not the Israelites. So I'm hoping you see, what I've just given you might sound kind of dumb but it is the consensus view. One of those two options is going to represent the consensus view. Somehow, people want to argue that the gods of Psalm 82 are just human and they do it to escape divine plurality in the Hebrew Bible. That's just point-blank what's going on here. And then they import that to Psalm 82.

It's unfortunate because it produces an interpretation of Jesus quotation that undermines his claims to deity in the same chapter and that's my objection to it. It makes Jesus look like a poor utilizer of Scripture, really even inept. Or it makes Jesus look like he's backing away a little bit from I and the Father are one. I got news for you. Jesus isn't backing away from the claim at all because in verse 38 he follows it by saying the Father is in me and I am in the Father. He is not backing away from anything. Now let's make a transition here and say if that's not what it means, what does it mean? My answer, what is Jesus doing by citing the verse? He's defending his deity. That's what he's doing. So what if we look at Psalm 82 the way we should look at it? We take the divine view. The elohim in Psalm 82 that are getting railed against are gods. They're spiritual beings.

Elohim has nothing to do with a specific set of unique attributes. We do not have polytheism here. I'm sorry if the Divine Council content is new to you but I can't keep rehearsing Divine Council stuff in every episode of the podcast. Go to the divinecouncil.com, watch some of the introductory videos on my homepage, and get up to speed. But we're going to assume the divine view that we're talking about divine plurality here. Yahweh is an elohim but no other Elohim are Yahweh. There's lots of elohim. Some of them are loyal, some of them are disloyal. We're talking about in Psalm 82 about some disloyal ones. We have a Divine Council meeting to excoriate them and pronounce an eschatological punishment on them that is connected elsewhere to the Day of the Lord. So what if we have that as our view and then we take the divine view back to John 10. Then what do we get? We have a statement in verse 30,

³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. ³² Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” ³³ The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— ³⁶ do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸ but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” ³⁹ Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

MSH: See, they know He's defending His original claims and He's using Psalm 82 to do it and it torques them off. So they're angry at Jesus for claiming equality with God and using Psalm 82 to do it. Now, Jews are going to hear the word Father in verse 30 and later on in verse 38 when Jesus says I and the Father one. They know that he is claiming divine parentage. It's very clear to them and they don't like it. He is therefore, follow my thinking here. Jesus says I and the Father are one. He's not talking about I'm an Israelite and we're all sons of God. That is not how

the Jews read it. They consider it blasphemy. He is claiming divine parentage. He's therefore claiming to be divine, to be more than mortal, and in that sense, divinity, he is claiming to be the same as God. He is not just a mere man like them. He's claiming to be more than man. He's not saying I'm just like you guys or you're just like me. We're all elohim, all one happy family. He's not doing that. Instead, He's reminding his Jewish opponents that the Scriptures, their own law then he quotes Psalm 82, he's saying look, there's this Psalm out there, Psalm 82, that actually does teach the idea that there are divine sons of God.

There are divine beings who have God as their Father, divine parentage. God has more sons than just humans, mankind, humankind. We're all sons of God like Paul says because God created all of humanity. We get that. That is not what Jesus is affirming. He's saying there's this Psalm back there that affirms my contention. This is where He starts His defense that confirms the idea that there are divine beings out there, plural, that are not just mortals, that are the sons of God. They're equal in the sense that they're spirit beings. They are not human. They are not mere humans. They are not that. That's not what they really are. What they really are is nonhuman divine. So that's the first sort of step, the first thing that you can get out of what Jesus going to be doing here with Psalm 82. He is affirming the divine view of Psalm 82. He's not affirming a human view of it. He going to use it to His advantage. His claim to be divine, this is where it starts, has precedent in the Old Testament. If God has divine sons then those sons are divine. They're not human. Jesus says that's step number one, God is my Father. I'm claiming divine parentage, therefore, ergo, I'm not like you guys. I'm divine, you're not. Now if that weren't true, think about what the rest of John 10 says. Jesus says if you don't believe me, believe the works.

Believe the works that I do in the Father's name that the Father has sent me to do. The works of the Father is a phrase that means this is stuff only God can do or the very least only a divine being can do. Humans don't do the stuff that you're watching me do and you know it. You know it. So if you don't want to believe my words, believe the works that I do. So this is his toehold in the Psalm 82 and then he ups the ante. He adds this thought in verse 38. Believe the works because the works prove that I'm more than a man. I am more than mortal. I am not just like you. When I say I and the Father are one, I'm claiming divine parentage. I am more than a human. Believe my works so that you may know, verse 38, and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father. In other words, it's not just that I'm divine and there's Old Testament precedent for that thought fellas. Go look up Psalm 82:6. You do err not knowing the Scriptures but it's more than that. The Father and I are ontologically inseparable. The Father is in me and I am in the Father.

You can't have one and not have the other. That ups the ante even more. For those who have read Unseen Realm or who have heard my lectures on the Two Powers of Heaven, this is where that theology comes into play. The phrase the father is in me has a deep significant Old Testament context and Jesus uses that phrase, John uses it of Jesus in the Gospel of John and other places, John 14:10-11, 14:20, 17:21-23. The name of the Father has given me, he's not referring to the name Jesus being better than Elvis. He's not saying that. The name given to him in John 17, the Father is in him, think about it. John 17 is the same chapter where you get this language from John 10, the Father is in me and I'm in the Father. I'm in you and you're in me. That has a specific Old Testament antecedent and that is Exodus 23. I'll read it to you again. If you've heard my material on Two Powers in Heaven, this is familiar. I'd have this one

memorized by now. God comes to Moses. This is after the Exodus and after the giving of the law, too.

²⁰“Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

²²“But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

MSH: If you are familiar with my material, you know exactly what’s being talked about here. This is the name theology of the Old Testament. Jews today, at least conservative Jews, people who care about not using the divine name in a flippant way, will either substitute something like Adonai. I like to use the illustration I was in grad school. We had one professor who would not permit us to use the divine name in class. So when we were reading Hebrew text, when he said now when you come to the divine name, you do not say the divine name. He wouldn’t even say it. Don’t say Yahweh. He wouldn’t even say that. You either substitute Adonai, which means Lord, or you say HaShem, which means the name. The name in Old Testament passages, in a number of them anyway, is another way of referring to God himself. For instance, Psalm 20:1,

May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!
May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!

⁷ Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the LORD our God

MSH: These are not statements that four consonants will protect you or we don’t need an army because like when the invading Philistines come over here, we’re just going to shout YHWH at them, or maybe write it into the ground. There you go, do something with that. They’ll do something with that. They’ll run over it with their chariot wheels on their way to running you over. The idea is not four consonants. The name is God. And so when you have this reference to the name, pay attention to this angel. Why, because my name is in him. I am in him. This is the human form, this angel, is me, God says, in human form so that you can visually detect me, frankly, so that my essence is filtered so that it doesn't destroy you. The name is God. This is Old Testament name theology. Isaiah 30:27,

Behold, the name of the LORD comes from afar,
burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke;
his lips are full of fury,
and his tongue is like a devouring fire;

MSH: He’s personified as a person. Why, because the name is God. Deuteronomy 4:35- 37 is a verse I like to introduce into the conversation. If we asked the question who was it that delivered the Israelites out of Egypt and took them to the Promised Land, most Christians would say it

was God. Some verses say God, Elohim. Other verses use the divine name Yahweh. Some verses like Exodus 23 have the Angel. The Angel is the one I'm going to send to guard you on the way. Other verses, Deuteronomy 4, says where God is speaking, this is Moses speaking about God, verse 37,

³⁷ And because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence,

MSH: Some verses say it's the presence of God. Judges 2, who does it say it was? Verse 1,

Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers.

MSH: Wait a minute. I thought God took them up to the land. I thought Yahweh did it. I thought Elohim did it. I thought the presence did it. Now, here's the Angel who did it. Tell us who brought Israel out of Egypt and took them to the Promised Land. Was that God, the Angel, the presence? The answer's yes. It's all the above because they're all the same way of referring to the same person. You take all this back to Exodus 23. Here's this angel. My name is in him. This is Old Testament thinking for God, catch the wording here. The Father is in this angel. God is in this angel. That is Old Testament expression, the Old Testament way of saying, this is God in human form. Take that back to John 10. I and the Father are one. The Jews get mad and they're going to stone Jesus. He says look fellows, Psalm 82 teaches you that Yahweh does have sons. He has sons. So this whole thing about me being the son of God and you being offended because you think I'm saying I'm equal to the Father, whatever. There's Old Testament precedent that Yahweh is Father to non-human beings, to supernatural spiritual beings that are not mortal humans, not mortal men. And I'm using that term and that theology is justifiable because Psalm 82 says it. And it refers to those beings as elohim. So that's the first part of your problem. You don't understand Psalm 82.

And if you didn't get the point, let's go one step further. Not only does Psalm 82 serve as a good proof text for me saying I can claim to be more than a man, not only does Psalm 82 allow me to say that but here's another thought. The Father is in me and I'm in the Father. We are ontologically inseparable. You cannot have one without the other. Just as in the Old Testament, you can't have the Angel of the Lord, you can't have this special angel without Yahweh, God, being in him because that's what made him different. So when Jesus uses this language, he's saying take a close look. I'm God in human form. I'm not only an Elohim, a spirit being, claiming divine parentage and using Psalm 82 to show you that there is such a thing as divine parentage of beings that are not human. There is such a thing. It's right there in the Bible. But I'm not only saying that, I'm saying I'm also the Lord of the Council because God is the Lord of the Council. The Father is the Lord of the Council and the Father is in me. That took their minds back to clear unambiguous Old Testament theology, unlike the human view where you have to impose contexts to get rid of Old Testament theology.

You have to impose contexts to avoid the supernatural worldview of the Israelites. Unlike that, if you're thinking this kind of theological thought that Jesus is this thinking, and you're using Psalm 82 to establish your divinity and then you go one step further and say I'm the

Father because the Father is in me. I am God in human form and you know where this language comes from guys. Read Exodus 23. You know what I'm saying. That is the only view that produces predictable response and it's the response in John 10. They sought to arrest him again. Earlier they wanted to stone him. Now they're trying to arrest him for the same reason. They want to get rid of him. The human view doesn't make sense of any of that at all. Their reaction looks like a ridiculous absurd overreaction. It's not. They understand what he's saying. The problem is that we don't. The problem is that we have commentators, pastors, other teachers, they either don't understand the material or they don't want to tread into waters of things like divine plurality.

And you the listener pay the price for that. You're the one that gets misled theologically to really see the richness of what John is getting at here in John 10 and how Jesus defends his deity in this chapter. You never get it because your attention is deflected away from it. That's just not what we do here. It is not what we do on Naked Bible Podcast. So I am glad we took an episode to do this. That is my take on Jesus's use of Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34. And I will go to the wall. I've read it at academic conferences. I've said it before. There's nothing in Unseen Realm, and this is what makes it different, there is nothing in Unseen Realm that isn't based on peer reviewed scholarship and that I have not or would not take to an academic conference or classroom and defend. I've done it plenty of times. We're getting into the meat of the word here. We're getting out of the milk and we're getting into the meat. This is the kind of stuff that God wants you to know but you're not going to be able to know if you don't have the Israelite in your head and you're not allowing the supernatural worldview of the Bible to remain intact and this is a really really good test case for it.