

F B E A H C I N A D T H E

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Cop Has Passion for UFOs

September 6, 2005; Wakefieldtoday.com

By day detective Gary Heseltine tracks down murderers and muggers just like any other cop but by night he scours the skies and the information superhighway for signs of other life. For the Crofton-based transport policeman is the new editor of UFOmonthly.com.

Det. Con Heseltine, 45, has been running the internet-based magazine for 16 issues and the dad-of-two also supervises the PRUFOS database, where policemen list their close encounters with unidentified flying objects.

His quest to discover whether UFOs exist was sparked by his own sighting in Scunthorpe 30 years ago. He was 15 and was taking his then girlfriend home when they became aware of a moving bright white light, which was much bigger than the stars. The object seemed to be causing power cuts to homes under its flight path.

Mr. Heseltine got home just before the craft glided over his parents home. He said: "I ran into the front room and my parents were having a cup of tea. I said, 'you are not going to believe this, but I think there is a light and it may cause a power cut'. They looked at me bemused."

They ignored his pleas to go outside and witness the phenomenon. The wild-eyed teenager's prediction came true – there was a blackout.

He said: "That inspired my lifelong interest in UFOs."

Mr. Heseltine said his sighting was a few years before the film Close Encounters of The Third Kind so there wasn't the wealth of literature on the subject that you can find nowadays.

But he did find Major Donald Keyhoe's Flying Saucers from Outer Space. He was impressed by accounts from "high calibre" witnesses like pilots – whom people entrust their lives to every time they board a plane.

After a stint in the RAF police, he joined the transport police in 1989. He had no more close encounters until August 1999 when he saw a UFO from his back garden in Crofton. He saw a triangle of three lights but his RAF experience and the flying formation told him these were no earth-based pilots.

Mr. Heseltine felt a sense of frustration that sightings weren't being treated properly by the media. He said opinion polls have shown that 80 to 90 per cent of people believe UFOs are real, but those beliefs aren't shared by the skeptical press.

His interest in the subject was strengthened after spotting UFO Magazine on the newsstand. He got involved and became a guest writer on it, after setting up the police reporting of UFO sightings database PRUFOS on the hobbies section of the transport police's intranet site.

Since 2001 he has had 122 cases, going back to 1950, involving 302 on and off duty British police officers.

He said: "My original aim was to create a body of evidence from people I believed were credible, who would add weight to the positive story that there really was something to the subject."

One of the cases on the database is from 1978, when two officers spotted a brilliant light over

Buckinghamshire. It states: "The object was traveling at a slow speed at an altitude of 500 feet. No noise was heard. The light was described as the size of a football field.

Mysterious Temple Mount Artifact Evokes 'Da Vinci Code'

By Amiram Barkat; Haaretz.com, Israel

[This is one of those 'I don't know whether to laugh or cry' stories. It's like an exercise in non-sequiturs. Makes me wonder if Amiram Barkat isn't a pen name for William Henry.– Editor]

When Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkai and his assistant Tzachi Zweig began the painstaking task of sifting through mounds of Temple Mount rubble, they hoped to find artifacts dating from the period of the First or Second Temple.

They never dreamed of finding a mysterious artifact that looks like something straight out of the world of controversial theories propounded by "The Da Vinci Code."

Dan Brown's blockbuster novel from 2003, which has sold more than 36 million copies, identifies the Temple Mount as the site holding the secret of the Holy Grail - the chalice which, according to Christian tradition, was used at the last supper and in which Jesus' blood was collected at the Crucifixion.

Brown's best-seller claimed the secret that lay buried among the ruins of Herod's temple was rediscovered by the Knights Templar several years after the conquest of Jerusalem in the First Crusade (1099 C.E.).

Accepted scientific research confirms that the Knights Templar built their base on the Temple Mount, around the underground compound known as Solomon's Stables. However, the whole story of a connection between the Knights Templar and the Holy Grail is pure fairy tale, according to archaeologists and experts on Temple Mount history.

Barkai, an expert on biblical archaeology at Bar-Ilan University, and Zweig, a master's student there, have spent 10 months examining rubble from the Solomon's Stables area of the Temple Mount. This dirt dates from the Crusades, when Muslim rulers apparently blocked up the spaces along the periphery of Solomon's Stables.

Barkai and Zweig discovered in the rubble a cross-shaped bronze pendant measuring a square centimeter. The pendant, which was originally gold-plated, bears mysterious symbols: on one side are a hammer, pincers and nails; the flip side has what looks like a sun, as well as an altar. But the main symbol, which immediately grabs the attention, is the Holy Grail lying on a crown of thorns. [Here's a shocker—the Knights Templar were in Jerusalem. Like who doesn't know that? Of course you'd find something that they once owned; they spent enough time there! – Editor]

According to Barkai, some of the people who saw the pendant suggested that this was an artifact that related to "The Da Vinci Code," but Barkai was dismissive. "I heard several interesting explanations along those lines," he said, "but in my opinion there is here nothing more than a coincidence that ignites the imagination."

Zweig decided to examine the pendant thoroughly. He supposed that it dated from the 19th century, since Christians had been barred from visiting the Temple Mount from the end of the Crusades until 1840. Based on the symbols, and particularly the work tools, he assumed the pendant was related to the Freemasons, a semi-secret fraternity that was founded in 18th-century England and established branches, or lodges, in nearly all Western countries.

Zweig could not locate an expert on Masonic symbols in Israel, so he contacted Prof. Andrew Prescott, director of the new Centre for Research into Freemasonry at the University of Sheffield.

Prescott studied the photographs of the pendant and replied to Zweig at the beginning of this week that the symbols do, indeed, appear to be connected to the Freemasons, but are not the symbols of Britain's Masonic Lodge.

Prescott noted, however, that members of the fraternity had visited the Temple Mount area during the 19th century. The mysterious pendant might have belonged to famed archaeologist Charles Warren, who made a documented visit to the Temple Mount in 1867, he said.

If the pendant is Masonic, then there is an indirect connection between it and "The Da Vinci Code" - Brown claims in his book that the Freemasons are the successors of the Knights Templar.

Barkai said that beyond the story itself, the pendant attested to the variety and multitude of artifacts buried over the years on the Temple Mount. "Dirt from the Temple Mount is not ordinary dirt, but rather dirt that portrays the history of this land."

Barkai and Zweig are studying truckloads of Crusader dirt mixed with modern construction waste that were removed clandestinely in November 1999 and dumped in the Kidron riverbed, east of the Old City. There is controversy among archaeologists regarding the value of studying this rubble, because the admixture makes it hard to date, and it is unclear where the dirt used to plug the holes at Solomon's Stables originated.

Barkai is convinced this study is immensely valuable, despite the methodological flaws. "Sure, from a research standpoint you could say we're dealing with a corpse rather than a live body, but even from a corpse you can [article ends – MSH]."

Martian Volcanoes 'May be Active'

By Paul Rincon; BBC online
BBC News science reporter, Cambridge

Fields of volcanic cones discovered at the North Pole of Mars suggest the Red Planet could still be geologically active, scientists have said.

The cones, seen in images from Europe's Mars Express probe, have no blemishes from impact craters.

This suggests the volcanoes erupted very recently and that the sites could have ongoing volcanism.

Mars Express scientist Gerhard Neukum presented the results at a conference in Cambridge.

"Mars is a planet that was very recently active - maybe one, or two, or three million years ago. And in some areas, I have the impression it is really ongoing," said Dr Neukum, of the Free University in Berlin, Germany.

Future eruptions

But what cannot be determined is when, if at all, some of these volcanoes might erupt again: "It could be a million years from now, it could be tomorrow," he added.

Dr Neukum acts as the principal investigator for the High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) on Mars Express, which took the images in which the cones were discovered.

There may be 50-100 of the volcanic cones covering a flank of the North Pole about one million square kilometres in area. They are between 300m (980ft) and 600m (1,970ft) tall, said Dr Neukum.

In addition to the North Pole, other regions with recent - and possibly ongoing - activity on Mars include parts of Tharsis - home to the volcano Olympus Mons - parts of Elysium and the so-called highland-lowland boundary.

By counting the number of craters on the surfaces of Solar System objects, scientists can estimate the age of those surfaces.

If they are heavily cratered, they are deemed older, while smoother surfaces are considered younger. This assumes a constant cratering rate since the heavy bombardment that terrestrial planets underwent about four billion years ago.

Fresh cones

The cones appear to be fresh with no discernible evidence of cratering. Dr Neukum admitted it was possible the cones could be ancient features that have been eroded by wind, but added that this was unlikely.

"I don't see any wind-related features in the region. We should see it and we should see the remains of craters somewhere. But we don't," he told the BBC News website.

Volcanic activity appeared to have peaked on Mars at around 1.5 billion years ago, Dr Neukum said, adding: "Mars is still active within certain limits; it's still not dead."

Dr Neukum thinks that volcanic activity strongly influences glacial activity on Mars. This is because on the Red Planet, eruptions also mobilise water.

In some cases, this water freezes and forms glaciers, says Dr Neukum. But other scientists believe glacial activity on the planet is more strongly influenced by the inclination of Mars in its orbit around the Sun.

The Mars Express results were presented at the American Astronomical Society Division of Planetary Sciences meeting in Cambridge, UK.

Vanished, Under Force of Time and an Inconstant Earth

By DENNIS OVERBYE; September 6, 2005, NY Times

Nothing lasts forever.

Just ask Ozymandias, or Nate Fisher.

Only the wind inhabits the cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde in Colorado, birds and vines the pyramids of the Maya. Sand and silence have swallowed the clamors of frankincense traders and camels in the old desert center of Ubar. Troy was buried for centuries before it was uncovered. Parts of the Great Library of Alexandria, center of learning in the ancient world, might be sleeping with the fishes, off Egypt's coast in the Mediterranean.

"Cities rise and fall depending on what made them go in the first place," said Peirce Lewis, an expert on the history of New Orleans and an emeritus professor of geography at Pennsylvania State University.

Changes in climate can make a friendly place less welcoming. Catastrophes like volcanoes or giant earthquakes can kill a city quickly. Political or economic shifts can strand what was once a thriving metropolis in a slow death of irrelevance. After the Mississippi River flood of 1993, the residents of Valmeyer, Ill., voted to move their entire town two miles east to higher ground.

What will happen to New Orleans now, in the wake of floods and death and violence, is hard to know. But watching the city fill up like a bathtub, with half a million people forced to leave, it has been hard not to think of other places that have fallen to time and the inconstant earth.

Some of them have grown larger in death than they ever were in life.

Take the library in Alexandria. If anyplace might have had justifiable pretensions of permanence it would have been the library, founded sometime around 300 B.C. It grew under the early Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt into an enduring symbol of culture and knowledge before disappearing into the sand and sea less than 1,000 years later.

"This was the library," said Roger Bagnall, a historian at Columbia. "It influenced everybody who ever thought about building a library."

Nobody, Dr. Bagnall complains, knows how large it was - estimates range from 40,000 to 400,000 scrolls - or what was actually in it. The library's demise is equally shrouded in myth. One legend says the books burned during Caesar's conquest of Alexandria in 47 B.C., but the library was still around in the fourth century, according to historical accounts.

Dr. Bagnall thinks that simple neglect killed the library. "Books rot," even acid-free papyruses, he said, noting that there are no records of any investment in maintaining the library after the early Ptolemies.

By the time Christian mobs sacked the library and museum at the end of the century as a pagan institution, there was probably little left to destroy. "The palace quarter was pretty well wrecked by that point. Whatever had survived the rotting didn't make it past that," Dr. Bagnall said.

Later, in 642, the Arabs moved Egypt's capital to the Cairo region and Alexandria shrank into obscurity.

On the other side of the globe, in the Caroline Islands of Micronesia, a stony silence relieved only by the lapping of waves envelops the empty city of Nan Madol. It consists of almost 100 islands, built by humans and constructed of columns of basalt 15 feet long and weighing 5 tons, stacked log cabin style to make walls 25 feet high.

Local legend says that you will die if you spend the night there. But once this was home to the nobles and priests of the Saudeleur dynasty, which ruled Pohnpei's 30,000 inhabitants up until about 500 years ago, according to William S. Ayres, an archaeologist at the University of Oregon.

Dr. Ayres said that Nan Madol was constructed out on the reef, starting about 1,500 years ago, partly because people had been living out there for hundreds of years to have easy access to the sea, and, perhaps more important, to better commune with ocean deities.

The columns for the walls were quarried on Pohnpei, he said, and floated out to the reef on rafts, about 500,000 tons in all over the 1,000 years of construction, Dr. Ayres has estimated. While most of the islands were living quarters for priests, others were given over to special purposes like making canoes, preparing coconut oil or, most grandly, burying royalty in tombs with courtyards surrounded by 25-foot walls.

Nan Madol's end was simple. When the last of the Saudeleurs was overthrown, the island was divided into smaller chiefdoms, "which exist up to the present day," Dr. Ayres said. The city was abandoned to its sleeping kings and its cold stone logs.

The dry, desert silence in Mesa Verde tells a more complex tale.

Archaeologists say that in the middle of the 12th century, some 20,000 people were living in the picturesque cliff dwellings and surrounding areas in southwestern Colorado, growing maize, squash and beans, raising turkeys, and apparently fighting with their enemies (thus the cliff houses, which were easier to defend than mesa-top villages).

By 1300, these Anasazi, or "ancient ones," were all gone.

That crash was due to a combination of climatic, political and environmental factors, according to Tim Kohler, an anthropologist at Washington State University, who along with Mark Varien of the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in Cortez, Colo., has been studying the history of pueblo populations.

One culprit was climate change. According to classic tree-ring studies by Andrew Ellicott Douglas of the University of Arizona, the years 1275 to 1295 were abnormally dry.

Recent work using bristlecone pine tree rings has established that it got cold, as well, during that period, lowering the maize production even more, Dr. Kohler said.

At the same time, the deer population seems to have declined significantly. As a result they needed the turkeys for protein.

And what were they feeding the turkeys? Corn.

"If something happens to the maize, the system collapses," Dr. Kohler said.

And so it did. Adding to the pressure, apparently, was war, which meant that the people of Mesa Verde were penned in. They didn't or couldn't spread out to less protected areas. Instead they simply left. The green table had turned brown, and perhaps red.

The most famous lost city of all is one that probably never really existed, Atlantis, the fabulous island civilization swallowed by the sea, which was referred to by Plato.

Some scholars think he might have been inspired by one or more real events. Among them is the destruction of Helike, a city on the Corinthian coast, which was swallowed by an earthquake and a tsunami one winter night in 373 B.C., during Plato's lifetime.

"For the sea was raised by an earthquake," wrote the Greek geographer Strabo, "and it submerged Helike and the Helikonian Poseidon." The city went down like the Titanic with its entire population on board. An expeditionary force sent from a nearby town the next day found no survivors and no bodies to recover.

Though not the seat of empire like fabled Atlantis, Helike was a significant and prosperous city. It was the head of a confederacy of 12 Greek city states, the First Achaean League, whose successor, the Second Achaean League, was recommended as a model of federalism by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison in their Federalist Papers. It minted its own coins.

Lured by the prospect of an underwater time capsule, archaeologists have long sought the remains of the sunken city.

Five years ago, after a dozen years of searching, a team of archaeologists led by Dora Katsonopoulou of the Ancient Helike Society in Aigion, Greece, and Steven Soter, a geophysicist with New York University's Center for Ancient Studies, said they had found the lost city - not in the sea but on the coastal plain next to it, near Aigion, about 45 miles northwest of Corinth. It may have been gradually raised by seismic activity, said Dr. Soter.

Moreover, he said, three rivers feeding the coastal plain deposit sediment that helps build it up.

In expeditions every summer, Dr. Soter and his colleagues have uncovered more and more of the city, including a road that goes almost a mile across the plain, walls, buildings, coins, pottery and a cemetery, although they have not found the center of the city yet.

Recently they have found a whole new and unknown city, dating from 2200 B.C., the early Bronze Age, near Helike. The sediments of this ruin contain marine and lagoonal microfauna, Dr. Soter said, suggesting that it too, may have been swallowed by an earthquake and a tidal wave like Helike, but 2,000 years earlier, only to rise again.

It may be, he said, that there have been recurrent floods and abandonments on the plain, the land rising and sinking, cities blooming out of the reborn mud.

"Good agricultural land tends to be reoccupied after catastrophes," Dr. Soter said, echoing Dr. Lewis's statement. "People will live there and take their chances."

There is in the picture a kind of immortality for the dead, as well as for the perennials blooming on the flood plain. If Helike can give rise to the vision of an Atlantis, a collection of scrolls can forever change our concept of learning and memory and empty stones can inspire us to reveries, what can we expect from jazz, gumbo and soft air at one of the trading crossroads of the world, so blessed and cursed with water?

New Orleans will never die. It is already larger than life.

Some Sex With Your Clone Perhaps?

By Kristen Philipkoski; wired.com 8/31/05

Two amateur documentary makers say they've infiltrated the UFO cloning sect known as the Raelians and come away with candid videos they hope will further tarnish the group's reputation and even help shut it down.

The Raelians are no strangers to bad press: Brigitte Boisselier, a Raelian bishop and biochemist, created a media furor in December 2002 when she announced the world's first successful cloning of a human. But her credibility, as well as the Raelians', was questioned when she never produced "baby Eve" or 12 other purported clones.

Now, rare video footage of the group taken at one of its Las Vegas seminars has been spun into an as-yet-unreleased documentary that brings a fresh, critical slant to the Raelians -- replete with allegations that the sect uses sex as a recruitment tool, targeting people most likely to sympathize with its message that aliens populated the world: "Trekkies and whatnot," explained Abdullah Hashem, who taped the group in May as part of a broader, personal investigation of the group.

"There are a lot of people (at these seminars) who believe in aliens, and all these beautiful women who will have sex with you even though you're a dork," he said. "And that's why most people were there."

Billed as an exposé, the video does little to shed light on the cloning controversy, according to its makers' own admissions. In a taped interview, Boisselier largely ducks questions about the existence of baby Eve, Hashem said. And Claude Vorilhon, the Raelian leader, says that he has never seen the baby, but that he supports Boisselier's efforts "morally."

In fact, few people believe the cloning claims anyway, so there is little left to debunk. But the video does offer a little-seen view into the inner workings of the Raelians and the sway that Vorilhon -- aka Rael -- wields over his followers, according to people who have seen it.

"I think what's disturbing about the Raelians is the total submission members have to Claude Vorilhon, and the fact that families have been estranged and marriages have been broken as a result of his influence," said Rick Ross, a cult expert based in Jersey City, New Jersey, who screened the documentary footage.

In an interview with Wired News, the Raelians dismissed Hashem's claims as a big misunderstanding. Spokesman Sage Ali said the group has nothing to hide, and is not ashamed of anything the team may have recorded.

Raelian theology states that aliens long ago visited the Earth and populated it through cloning. The religion also teaches that nudity and sexuality are pure and beautiful, and that if people were more in touch with their feminine sides, there would be less violence in the world.

"We love sensuality," Ali said. "We're very proud of what goes on. We have nothing to hide. The footage taken at the seminar is all great as far as I'm concerned."

Like most people, Hashem first heard of the Raelians as a result of the human cloning claims. But the group really caught his attention after he discovered that one of the Raelian commandments is to give 1 percent of your annual income to help Vorilhon deliver his message. Hashem says it was then that he suspected the group was a scam.

He recruited longtime friend Joe McGowen to attend the Raelian seminar. The duo carried digital recorders and posed as hopeful inductees making a student film. What they really wanted was to tape incriminating activities of a group they suspected was coercing people to join the organization to get their money.

"That's why I decided to make the documentary, to expose them," Hashem said. "I contacted Rael and all the Raelian bishops and told them they had a choice. I didn't have to release it if they would return all the money and give a public apology."

The Raelians refused. After that, Hashem began holding talks with TV networks to license his footage, and he said he has already struck one deal that he hopes will see light as a news documentary as soon as this fall.

Hashem isn't the first person to take on the Raelians and Clonaid, the company the group owned and operated that purportedly conducted the cloning.

Florida attorney Bernard Siegal, who sued Rael, Boisselier and Clonaid for custody of the supposed cloned child, discovered that Clonaid had no address or board of directors. "I came away completely convinced it was a totally specious, fraudulent claim and publicity stunt, and that Clonaid was a sham," Siegel said.

In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration has investigated the Raelians for their association with Clonaid and the company's cloning claim. But Vorilhon has never been convicted of a crime.

Hashem hopes to give authorities more fodder. He claims his videos and other investigations prove the Raelians deserve to be shut down.

It's unclear how damaging the video footage might be on its own, however. Although it reveals activities that some people might find hypocritical or distasteful, Hashem cannot point to anything illegal that he caught on tape.

One "gotcha" moment shows the Raelian leader riveted by the erotic gyrations of Raelian dancers. Another shows him instructing seminar attendees not to gamble while visiting Las Vegas because it's against the teachings of the Elohim -- the aliens that populated Earth through cloning, according to Raelian doctrine. Later, Vorilhon is seen betting at a casino.

Hypocrisy itself is not a crime, however. And, having weathered one media storm and survived, the Raelians could be hard to fluster.

"That was the cutest thing," spokesman Ali said of the alleged gambling incident. "The biggest thing we want in life is to see all humans happy. A big part of our philosophy is to play, have fun."

Carbon Nanotube Electronics Will Lead to \$3.6 Billion in Business Opportunities by 2009

By: NanoMarkets (misterrob) 2005.05.17

Sterling Virginia: According to a new report from NanoMarkets LC, a market research and consulting firm based here, the unique electrical, thermal and physical properties of carbon nanotubes (CNTs) will create \$3.6 billion in new business for the electronics and semiconductor sectors by 2009. NanoMarkets' research indicates that carbon nanotubes are already becoming a key enabling technology that electronics firms should not dismiss as being a long way off.

The report, "Carbon Nanotube Electronics, A Technology Analysis and Market Forecast," says that the biggest near-term opportunities for "nanotube electronics" will come from the sensor, display and memory sectors. Each of these markets will include more than \$200 million in CNT-based products by 2007:

- Nanotubes are already being used to produce tiny sensors, potentially capable of distinguishing a single molecule. This could make nanotubes the material of choice for the highly sensitive sensors required for medical and homeland security applications. The low power consumption of nanotube sensors also makes them ideal choice for battery-powered sensor networks.
- Nanotube-based field emission displays combine the high-quality video of CRTs with the flatness of LCD and plasma displays, but without the burn-in and poor viewing angles associated with today's flat-panel displays. Samsung will release its CNT-driven television in 2006. Other large electronics firms that are developing such displays include Hitachi, Sony, Mitsubishi and Toshiba.
- Nanotube-based memories will combine the speed of SRAM with the non-volatility of Flash, which should allow them to quickly penetrate the laptop, mobile phone and PDA markets. NanoMarkets believes this market could generate hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue.

NanoMarkets also notes that CNT-based interconnects and thermal management could help provide CMOS with a much needed enabling technology as it moves to 45-nm and 22-nm nodes. Nanotube-based logic, processors, interconnects and thermal management solutions are already the subject of intense research by IBM, Intel and NEC which believe that their work in this field will help CMOS scale to smaller feature sizes.

About the Report:

This report provides eight-year growth projections broken out by product type and application. These projections are based on market surveys as well as NanoMarkets' forecasting model for the emerging nanoelectronics sector. The report is designed to provide critical information for firms involved in the electronics industry and their materials and device suppliers.

Members of the accredited technical press may request an executive summary by emailing to press@nanomarkets.net. The report is available in both hard copy and electronic versions with site licenses available. For purchasing information, please visit www.nanomarkets.net or contact Robert Nolan at (571) 434-7520 or sales@nanomarkets.net.

About NanoMarkets:

NanoMarkets analyzes the market opportunities and disruptions brought about by advances in technology at the micro and nano scale. We focus on both established and emerging markets in

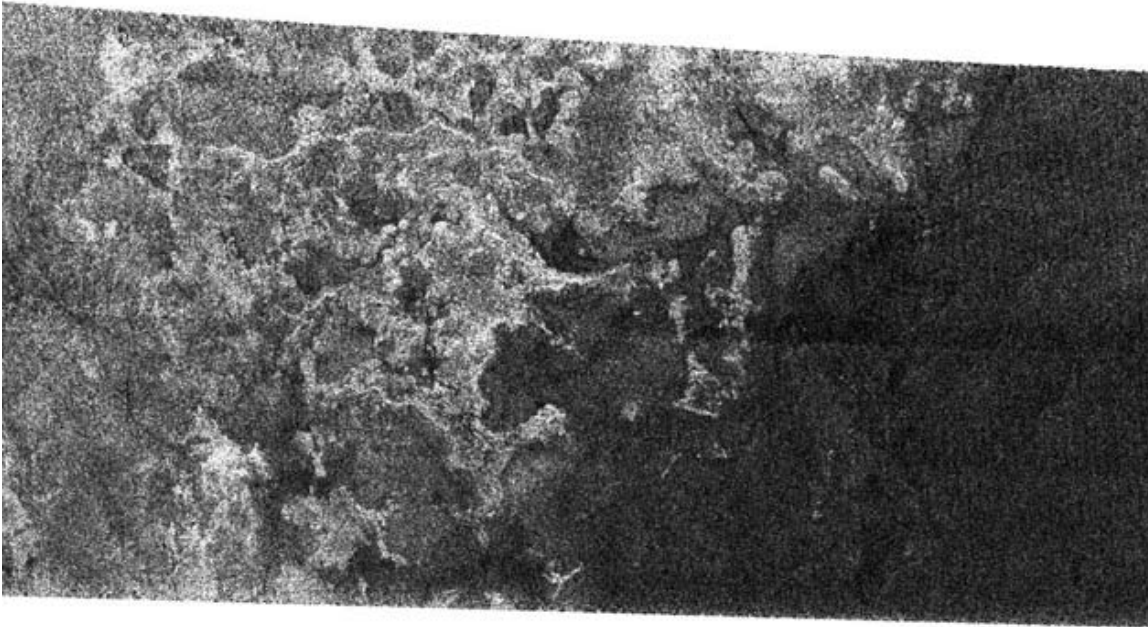
the electronics and semiconductors, bio-medical device, energy, and advanced materials sectors.

Nanotechnology newsnet - <http://www.nanonewsnet.com/>

Shoreline Spotted on Saturn's Moon Titan

By Robert Roy Britt; space.com, Sept. 17, 2005

The idea of a large sea on Saturn's moon Titan was all but ruled out after the Cassini mission found no evidence early in its mission.



But a new image shows what scientists think is a shoreline with bays and channels feeding liquid into a possible sea.

Scientists have long speculated that Titan might contain liquid methane or other hydrocarbons. The chemistry resembles prebiotic Earth, but Titan lacks liquid water. Nonetheless, earlier this month another group of researchers speculated that Titan might actually harbor life today.

"This radar data is among the most telling evidence so far for a shoreline," said Steve Wall, radar deputy team leader from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif.

The image, released Friday, shows a distinct division between a bright and apparently rough region and dark and smooth area.

"This is the area where liquid or a wet surface has most likely been present, now or in the recent past," Wall said. "Titan probably has episodic periods of rainfall or massive seepages of liquid from the ground."

"We also see a network of channels that run across the bright terrain, indicating that fluids, probably liquid hydrocarbons, have flowed across this region," said Dr. Ellen Stofan, Cassini associate radar team member from Proxemy Research in Laytonsville, Md.

Combined with other radar images taken on previous Cassini passes of Titan, scientists have identified two distinct types of drainage features. One type is long and deep, suggesting fluids flowing over long distances. Another is in a denser network that suggests rainfall.

"It looks as though fluid flowed in these channels, cutting deeply into the icy crust of Titan," said Larry Soderblom with the U.S. Geological Survey in Flagstaff, Ariz. "Some of the channels extend over 100 kilometers [60 miles]. Some of them may have been fed by springs, while others are more complicated networks that were likely filled by rainfall."

More imaging is planned on future passes by the icy moon.

Moon-to-Mars Plans Emerge: New Agenda or Apollo Retread?

By **Leonard David**; Senior Space Writer; 9/19/05

BIG SKY, Montana – NASA is set to unveil today details of its new space architecture, a "how-to" response to President George W. Bush's Moon, Mars and beyond [vision speech](#) made in January 2004.

Bush called for putting astronauts back on the Moon by 2020 and sending humans to Mars thereafter. Last week SPACE.com and Space News reported that NASA will announce today [plans to send four astronauts to Moon in 2018](#).

More detail was provided here this weekend at a meeting of NASA officials and other space planners.

On the list: A re-usable vehicle that's safer than the shuttle; technology for extracting fuel from the destination; and an airbag landing upon return to Earth. Plans were also detailed for sending robotic scouts first.

Apollo-plus

Aspects are somewhat vintage Apollo in approach, but with numerous technical twists. For example, a four-person lunar expedition crew would make use of a Crew Exploration Vehicle that is outfitted with solar panels. The astronauts would rendezvous in Earth orbit with a pre-launched Earth Departure Stage, and then make the outbound voyage to the Moon.

Once in lunar orbit, all four crewmembers would ride down to the Moon in a lander. They would depart the Crew Exploration Vehicle, putting it in autopilot mode as they spend seven days on the lunar surface.

In comparison, six two-person teams landed at the Moon's equatorial region in the 1969-1972 timeframe as part of Project Apollo. Each expedition had an additional astronaut who remained in lunar orbit.

In NASA's new return-to-the Moon scenario, astronauts will cover much more territory than Apollo moonwalkers. A key goal is to use water ice that may be stashed within permanently shadowed craters at the Moon's poles.

Each team of Moon explorers would leave behind essential components for later use, as well as equipment that could constitute a lunar station. That base could well mirror the type of encampment now situated in Antarctica.

As a cost-saving measure, the NASA vision embraces the use of hardware and production capabilities embedded within the space shuttle program, to be closed down in 2010.

But the initiative also relies on harnessing a suite of advanced technologies: from self-diagnostic gear for boosters and sophisticated medical equipment for astronauts to on-the-spot processing hardware that churns out fuel, water and oxygen supplies from lunar resources. Down the road, the same approach would be used on Mars.

Given the green-light

"This is a go-as-you-can-afford-to-pay kind of program," said Rex Geveden, NASA Associate Administrator. Last week, the White House "green-lighted" the plan, he said, giving NASA Administrator Michael Griffin the go-ahead to proceed with rolling out details to Congress and the public.

Geveden joined current and past NASA officials, university and industry experts in the Inland Northwest Space Alliance (INSA) Space Policy Institute meeting, held here September 16-18. The Missoula-based INSA is a private group created by the University of Montana in 2003. INSA is focused on broadening space-related research and commercial applications, particularly in the inland northwest.

NASA's new space vision is one where "schedules are the independent variable," Geveden said. That's in contrast with the Apollo program where schedule was fixed and cost was variable, he said.

"We can't dial the cost here, in this case. So we've had to focus on affordability," Geveden added. Doing so means drawing upon a heritage of available hardware and workforce, he said.

For example, the still-to-be-built, post-shuttle Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) is capsule-shaped and would sit atop a four-segment Solid Rocket Booster -- a space shuttle component flown 178 consecutive times with no failures, Geveden noted.

Safer craft

The CEV will be tipped by an escape tower. With that tower, the capsule could be pulled free from a troubled booster ride. That hardware provides ten times a factor of safety than the space shuttle, Geveden explained.

An Earth-returning CEV would toss off its reentry shield after its fiery plunge. A parachute system would deploy, followed by a set of airbags to cushion the craft's touchdown on land, somewhere in the American West, Geveden said. Ocean recovery – like that done in the Apollo effort – is considered a contingency mode, he said.

A heavy-lift, cargo-only booster would also be shuttle-derived. That launcher incorporates the large shuttle external tank, use of a cluster of five space shuttle main engines, straddled by two five-segment solid rocket boosters. It would toss into orbit loads of hardware, like the CEV's Earth Departure Stage.

Geveden told *SPACE.com* that tapping shuttle hardware does not equate to maintaining today's entire shuttle workforce. "We can't have 10,000 people on the ground at the Kennedy Space Center," he said, integrating payload and launching that system.

"That's not affordable," Geveden said. "The future workforce for launch vehicles can't be as big as it is for shuttle."

In order to become leaner in mission launch and operations, Geveden added, more automation through better software, smart sensors, and greater test and checkout technology to ready boosters for flight is critical.

However, the shuttle derivative hardware – the CEV booster and heavy-lifter – must draw upon the existing tooling and fabrication facilities, supply chains, and workers to build those components or modify them, Geveden said.

South Pole analog

The long march to Mars will be challenging.

Geveden said 500-metric tons of fuel and structure have been scoped out in the NASA plan for a projected humans-to-Mars flight.

"One of our objectives will be to put a chemical plant on Mars", Geveden said, alluding to machinery to extract rocket fuel from the martian atmosphere for a return trip. In this regard, liquid-oxygen/methane burning engines are part of the lunar piece of NASA's vision. Those engines can be used for use on the martian surface, given the local resources on the planet, he said.

In moving from lunar stays by astronauts to a humans-to-Mars outing, will the Moon become discarded real estate in the process?

"I don't think it's a foregone conclusion that you may have to abandon the Moon," Geveden told the INSA audience. "What we're headed for on the Moon is a South Pole analog...some kind of camp that we set up and sustain ourselves for months at a time, not years."

Geveden said that thousands of people-hours went into charting the new NASA Moon, Mars, and beyond architecture. "We have animations. We have a very sophisticated study with data. It's a deep analysis, he said.

"But having said that...now we need people to take this from the concept stage to the time we're actually building hardware...and getting ready to launch these systems," Geveden concluded.

Robots first, humans later

An early element of dispatching people back to the Moon is sending robots.

Scott Hubbard, Director of NASA's Ames Research Center -- located in the heart of California's Silicon Valley -- said he and colleagues have been assigned the responsibility for the robotic lunar exploration program.

The first mission in the robotic lunar cue is the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter in 2008, Hubbard said. Following up on those findings are robotic landers, with Ames managing the suite of missions to assure that they are carried out successfully, he said.

"The point of the robotic lunar exploration program is engineering...technology testing and demonstrations...to prepare for human exploration," Hubbard told *SPACE.com*. "It's not a science program. It will get us ready to return people to the Moon."

Items like lunar processing, precision landing, integrated health monitoring and management -- these are items that can benefit from technology not available in Apollo-era exploration. "The important point is that this is not developing technology for something way in the future," Hubbard said, but for getting people back on the Moon in the 2015-2020 timeframe.

"The Moon is just three-days away," Hubbard said, a distance he's already covered vicariously as the former NASA mission manager for the Lunar Prospector robot. "That means you don't have a lot of time to do operations planning and software code writing en route. You've got to be ready to go...because whatever you've got, it is going to be used three days later."

Yawn of a new era?

Selling the vision won't be a cake walk. That was one take-home message from former NASA Chief of Staff, Courtney Stadd, now President of Capitol Alliance Solutions, a management consulting services firm located in the Washington, D.C. area.

"The challenges facing successful implementation of the exploration vision are formidable," Stadd said, "ranging from budgetary to the noise-signal ratio of competing priorities facing the political system."

Stadd said that he viewed NASA's Griffin and his leadership team as "literally the best in a generation in terms of being equipped to confront these and other challenges to turning the vision from Power Point charts to reality." That talent will be central to effectively navigating through the challenges facing the new exploration initiative in the months and years ahead, particularly moving the vision through the legislative and executive branches of U.S. government, he added.

Reaction to NASA's new visionary agenda at the INSA meeting was mixed. But the feedback seemed more a matter of age.

From several university students, "where do I sign up" was common. From others more senior, "yawn of a new era" seemed to rustle through the audience. "It looks to me like the Alzheimer's program...for those that don't remember Apollo," said one participant.

Scientists Reconsider Habitability of Saturn's Moon

By Ker Than; September 13, 2005; space.com

Recent findings from NASA's Cassini spacecraft and new discoveries about organisms here on Earth that thrive in extreme conditions are causing scientists to rethink the possibility that there may be life on Saturn's cloudy moon Titan.

Analyzing data from Cassini's recent Titan flybys, scientists at the Southwestern Research Institute (SwRI) in Texas and Washington State University announced last week that several of the key elements crucial for life on Earth are also present on Titan, including liquid reservoirs, organic molecules and ample energy sources.

Discovered in 1655 by a Dutch astronomer, Titan is the second largest moon in the solar system apart from Jupiter's Ganymede. Looking around, a person standing on Titan's surface would see rocky fields strewn with small ice pebbles. Gazing up, one would see clouds racing across the orange Titan sky as if on fast forward, because like Venus, Titan's atmosphere rotates much faster than its surface. Saturn and its magnificent rings would not be visible most of the time, due to the dense haze of orange smog that blankets the entire moon.

Scientists are interested in Titan because it reminds them of how Earth was billions of years before life existed. Titan is colder (-289 degrees Fahrenheit, or -178 Celsius) than primitive Earth was, but it has a dense nitrogen-rich atmosphere and a natural process for producing hydrogen and carbon containing molecules called hydrocarbons that are essential for life on Earth. Astronomers have long seen Titan as a place that had the preconditions for life, but most scientists saw it as too inhospitable to actually contain biology today.

The Sun's ultraviolet light reacts with nitrogen and methane high in the upper reaches of Titan's atmosphere, producing the orange smog and a steady stream of organic materials that fall steadily onto the moon's surface.

Many of the natural forces that shape the Earth's landscape are also active on Titan, including shifting continental plates, wind erosion, possibly oceans—albeit of ethane and methane and not water—and volcanoes. On Earth, these forces raise mountains and carve canyons, yet much of Titan's surface looks smooth, leading many scientists to suspect that the moon is relatively young.

If life does exist on Titan, a good place to look for it may be in hot springs connected to hydrocarbon reservoirs, said David Grinspoon, a researcher at SwRI's Space Science and Engineering Division.

Further fueling speculations about life on Titan are recent findings that microscopic organisms that live in extreme environments on Earth are hardier and capable of surviving in environments much harsher than anyone ever imagined.

One recently discovered species of so-called [extremophiles](#) could live in briny environments ten times saltier than seawater. Another species found in Yellowstone National Park could live off nothing but hydrogen, the most abundant element in the universe.

Perhaps most relevant for life on Titan, scientists have discovered within the past two decades several species of bacteria that thrive in freezing temperatures. Called psychrophiles, these organisms live in temperatures ranging from 23 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit (-5 to 20 degrees Celsius) and use methane to produce energy.

Scientists knew that if life did exist on Titan, it might need to have a combination of these traits, so the discovery that such life actually does exist is highly encouraging.

Grinspoon speculated that life on Titan, if there is any, might be able to produce energy by mixing acetylene, a hydrocarbon abundant in Titan's atmosphere, with hydrogen. The energy could then be harnessed to power metabolism or to heat their surroundings.

"In environments that are energy-rich but liquid-poor, like near the surface of Titan, natural selection may favor organisms that use their metabolic heat to melt their own watering holes," Grinspoon said.

The researchers presented their ideas Sept. 8 at the 2005 Meeting for the American Astronomical Society's Division for Planetary Sciences.

BRIEFING ROOM

[Keeping up with DARPA](#) (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency)

Grant Cameron and Homeland Security Fiasco

(obtained from Stephen Bassett)

[Part 1](#); [Part 2](#)

Editor's Note: I know Grant. We met last year at the X-Conference in Washington, D.C. where we were both speakers. This looks like deliberate harassment to me on the part of Homeland Security.

Part 1 - Canadian UFO Researcher Blocked by U. S. Homeland Security From Speaking at NUFOC Conference

© 2005 by Linda Moulton Howe

September 8, 2005 Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada - Last weekend I was in Los Angeles for the National UFO Conference to speak about UFO Crash Retrievals and the American Government's Policy of Denial in the Interest of National Security. One of my colleagues from Canada, Grant Cameron, was going to speak at the conference about the "64 Reasons the U. S. Government **Can't** Tell the Truth About UFOs." Grant's research the past few years has been in American National Archives and Presidential libraries looking for time and date links between White House meetings and alleged UFO crash retrieval events. Grant's work has strongly contributed to the emerging Big Picture of American presidents as far back as Franklin Delano Roosevelt having knowledge about UFO crash retrievals and cover-ups.

Grant was scheduled to speak on Sunday afternoon at the NUFOC conference, but instead there was a public announcement that his phone had been disconnected, his e-mail was not working and that no one had heard from him. Given that Grant Cameron is a well grounded man who is the building facility manager at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, and reporter and producer of the popular website, www.presidentialufo.com, we were all alarmed. I tried Grant's cell phone number and only heard a rapid beeping.

Finally after returning to Albuquerque from the NUFOC conference, I was able to hear Grant's firsthand account of what appears to be American Homeland Security's premeditated and deliberate block on Friday morning, September 2, 2005, at the Vancouver International Airport. Grant Cameron was not allowed to enter the United States. He had been pulled aside by one customs checker and then sent into the offices of three U. S. Homeland Security agents. There was no courtesy from the man in front of Grant, only arrogance.

Interview:

Grant Cameron, a building facility manager at the University of Manitoba; reporter and producer of www.presidentialufo.com, Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada: "And he (Homeland Security agent) said, 'Well, you won't be going into the United States today. You don't have the proper work permit.'

I told him I had done this numerous times, had always showed appropriate paperwork. I said, "It's a simple, small honorarium for one speech and that's all I'm doing there. I've done this a number of times before."

At that point, he was very arrogant about the whole thing. He didn't say anything nice the whole time I talked to him. He then said, 'We won't be making that mistake again,' referring to the fact that I had done this a number of times before and had never had any problems with going through customs to do a speech in the United States.

THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT IF THEY WERE BLOCKING YOU FROM GETTING TO THE UNITED STATES FOR THE NUFOC CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 2-4, THAT THEY WOULD BLOCK YOU ON FUTURE EFFORTS TO SPEAK AT CONFERENCES HERE.

Yes, it seemed to indicate there was a new ruling in place and that whatever had happened in the past would not be happening again.

At that point, he said, 'Go sit outside the office and I'll call you back.'

So, I sat outside and could see him laughing and talking to people around him. He came back in and he just pushed this paper to me which had the details of what was going to happen and basically said again, 'You're not going to be allowed into the United States. And don't bring up the honorarium. You are not a professor and these aren't professors you are speaking before. So don't even say that. You're not going anywhere today. You've been rejected from entering the United States.'

He pushed the paper towards me and started talking to someone beside me and totally ignored me. I waited for a couple of seconds and then asked, 'What do I do now?'

At that point, he said, 'I really don't care what you do. You can go back from where you came from. I don't care what you do now.'

So, I was left with no alternative but to grab the paper that had Homeland Security on the top, U. S. border. I took the paper and walked out of the office and had no idea where to go next, what to do."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
International Airport, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Post Office Box 1829
Blaine, Washington - 98231
(604) 278-3360

NOTICE OF INELIGIBILITY FOR PRE-FLIGHT CLEARANCE

You, GRANT CAMERON have not clearly established your eligibility to travel to the United States through pre-flight inspection procedures. Specifically, the following section(s) of the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act appear(s) to be the basis of your ineligibility:

- 212 (a) (2) (A) Conviction, admission of having committed or admission of having committed essential elements of:
 - (I) A crime involving moral turpitude
 - (II) A violation of or a conspiracy to violate any law or regulation related to controlled substances
- 212 (a) (2) (B) Two or more criminal convictions for which the aggregate sentences imposed were five or more years
- 212 (a) (2) (C) I&NS officer knows or has reason to believe you to be or to have been an illicit trafficker in controlled substances; or that you are or have been known to assist, abet, conspire or collude with others in such illicit traffic
- 212 (a) (4) You are a person likely to become a public charge in the United States
- 212 (a) (5) (A) You appear to seek to engage in skilled or unskilled labor in the United States without having received a U.S. Department of Labor certification
- 212 (a) (6) (I) Seeking entry or other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act of the United States by willful misrepresentation or concealment of any material fact
- 212 (a) (7) (A) (I) (i) You appear to be an immigrant not in possession of a valid immigrant visa or other suitable document in lieu thereof
- 212 (a) (7) (B) You are a nonimmigrant not in possession of a valid nonimmigrant visa and/or your passport lacks the required period of validity

OTHER YOU NEED WORK AUTHORIZATION TO SPEAK AT A CONFERENCE THAT PEOPLE ARE PAYING A FEE TO ATTEND + FOR WHICH YOU ARE BEING PAID A FEE PLUS EXPENSES.

Pursuant to Section 274(b) of the US Immigration and Nationality Act, seeking to enter into the United States without properly addressing the above-noted deficiencies can lead to vehicle seizures, imposition of monetary penalties and other legal ramifications

2740
(Inspector Number)

09-02-05
(Date of Action)

United States Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection Notice of Ineligibility for Pre-Flight Clearance rejecting Grant Cameron's ability to enter the United States on September 2, 2005

"There was a guy sitting out where you pick up your bags and I got my bag which was there and went to this guy and said, 'I've been rejected from entering the United States. How do I get back? I've got to get a flight out of here and get back home.'

At that point, I phoned Lisa Davis and basically left a message on the phone number that was on the color brochure stating I would not be at the conference, that I had been rejected and it took me quite awhile to get back through. [Editor's Note: For unknown reasons, NUFOC Director, Lisa Davis, never received any of Grant Cameron's cell phone voice mails.]

Grant Cameron's Computer Scans "Positive for Explosives"

One other strange thing happened, which was probably a coincidence is that when I got back through (to Canadian side) and I had to put my bags on the plane (back to Winnipeg), I got that through and was left with only about maybe 25 minutes before the flight. I went through security going back to get on the plane (back to Winnipeg) and got through and suddenly I'm under surveillance again. My computer came up as positive for explosives.

Another officer came up and asked questions. He said, 'I saw that they scanned your computer and it came up positive (for explosives). At that point, I figure now I'm going to jail. This is the day from hell type of thing.

LIKE YOU ARE BEING REALLY SET UP?

Yes, I could not believe it. It was my computer bag which I take on the plane with me. I never let it out of my sight because it has my presentation on it. As far as I knew it had never left my hands. He started asking me a lot of questions and it got closer and closer to the flight. Where did I work? Did I work with explosives? He was actually nice about the whole thing, but it was just one question after another and figured it was just a matter of time that they would arrest me.

Then he asked me to run a program. I ran a program which was the presentation that I was going to give in Los Angeles. So I popped it up with the little thumbnail photos and here were George Bush and all these pictures. He says, 'What's he doing here? Why is Bush on there?' He was very curious why I had all this presidential stuff on my computer.

So I'm trying to explain very quickly because I'm running out of time to get on the plane and then he said, 'OK, run another program.' So I ran another program and I guess they realized I was not carrying a bomb. And I think what may have happened there is that I had just gotten the computer back from Dell. It had gone in for a new motherboard. I had just gotten it back that day and put it in the case to travel with. Dell might have used some sort of cleaning fluid, but it was that kind of day where one thing after another occurred. Basically I left at 7:30 a.m. in the morning and returned at 5:30 p.m. back home after flying all day and had really gone nowhere.

Then I left a second message with Lisa Davis and left my cell phone asking if she needed more details, here was my situation.

AND NOBODY HAD GOTTEN YOUR CELL MESSAGES APPARENTLY BY SUNDAY WHEN LISA AND THE ORGANIZERS ANNOUNCED THAT YOUR PHONE WAS DISCONNECTED, YOUR E-MAIL WAS NOT FUNCTIONING AND THEY HAD NOT HEARD FROM YOU.

Yes, it is very strange.

Timing of Customs Block Linked to History Channel Program?

IT SEEMS A REASONABLE SPECULATION THAT YOUR NAME IS NOW ON A HOMELAND SECURITY LIST AS A 'TROUBLEMAKER' AND IT MIGHT BE LINKED DIRECTLY TO THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DOING SERIOUS INVESTIGATION ABOUT AMERICAN PRESIDENTS AND WHAT THEY MIGHT KNOW ABOUT THE UFO PHENOMENON, THE COVER-UP. WHAT ARE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS RIGHT NOW ABOUT BEING A MARKED FIGURE ON AN ELECTRONIC LIST?

Yeah, it's kind of unnerving, I can tell you that. It did seem to have the coincidence that the History Channel had just done a special on the presidents which I had done a lot of work with them and that had appeared only about a week and a half before. It is quite now you have to look forward to the fact that every time you go to the border, you really can't agree to do anything for anybody, any presentations, because you have no idea if you are going to get across.

If I am on an electronic list, it does have some benefits in that at least somebody is listening. It's not that they are just ignoring you. If you are on a list, it means the United States is paying attention to what we are doing, which has some advantage that it gives what you say a little more impact if people know the government is listening to you.

If it was to block me, the implications are that what I'm doing is significant and I'm going to have to be very sort of vigilant about fighting back and making sure my rights are maintained. I'm going to have to make sure every time I get a work permit from Homeland Security or wherever I get this from. And it's going to be a lot of work, but it's worth going through. You can't just walk away and let them win. It's a game we've all been in. We know what the stakes are and you can't give up. It kind of inspires you that maybe you're getting somewhere and you have to fight back. It's sad, and expensive to be buying airline tickets and having to come home without going anywhere. That bothers me.

But the fact that they are listening or I was purposely withheld from the United States means someone is listening to what I'm doing. And that's a good thing.

Grant Cameron Legal Action in Canada

WHAT ABOUT YOUR GOING TO AN ATTORNEY IN WINNIPEG TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED AND START A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT, CANADA TO UNITED STATES, INQUIRY ABOUT WHY YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN REJECTED AT THE BORDER ON WHAT APPEARS TO BE A VERY FALSE AND PHONY CHARGE SINCE YOU WERE SIMPLY COMING TO SPEAK AT A CONFERENCE.

Yes, that's something I'm planning to do. I haven't started the process yet, but I really have no choice to do that because I've got a number of indications here that it's going to be hard to get across and you have to clear it up. Otherwise, I'll always have this hanging over my head that I can't accept any engagements. I know in talking to some of the people at work (at University of Manitoba), it's just shocking when I tell them the story. They are absolutely shocked when they hear what happened."

Website: <http://www.presidentialufo.com>

Paradigm Research Group

E-mail: ParadigmRG@aol.com

URL: www.paradigmclock.com

Cell: 202-215-8344

4938 Hampden Lane, #161

Bethesda, MD 20814

Part 2 - Update - September 8, 2005 - Grant Cameron

PRG has researched information relevant to the situation regarding Grant Cameron being turned back at the border on his way to speak at the Nation UFO Conference.

Conclusion: Homeland Security is now instituting full compliance with the laws, either across the board or on a selective basis. It is well known that in the past Canadians coming into the U.S. to do a little business or work were not heavily scrutinized.

The most important issue for PRG is this: was Grant Cameron simply caught up in a new policy of strict enforcement or was he selected out for strict enforcement based upon some list used by Homeland Security. At this time it is impossible to know.

That said, PRG encourages all researchers and activists who plan future speaker travel to diligently research and comply with all travel regulations. Furthermore, please contact PRG if you have problems entering the United States as a foreign speaker or entering other countries from the U.S. as a speaker. To repeat, the ability to assess whether or not UFO/ET researchers are being targeted directly depends upon your dotting all the I's and crossing all the T's as regards your travel requirements.

Obviously, one could skirt these requirements by giving false information to the customs officials. PRG strongly discourages this, though it will mean more work for the speaker and the venue. Giving false statements could lead to travel bans up to 5 years and other punishments.

Findings:

First, it is important to note that an "honorarium," as interpreted for visa and travel purposes, means a payment made by an academic institution or other nonprofit organization. If you are speaking at a for-profit function, you are a performer. (the irony here is that most of the conferences rarely make any money.)

The following information from the Canada Consular Affairs website provides key information regarding "performer" visa requirements. Most importantly it provides a pdf. publication with complete information for Canadian performers:

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/PDF/canadian_performers-en.pdf

This guide is described below and at website for

Canada Consular Affairs

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/canadian_performers-en.asp

You are a Canadian performing artist or a member of a Canadian entertainment group in a creative field such as music, opera, dance or theatre, or you are a circus performer. You have just signed a contract with a U.S. employer for a single performance or a tour in the United States. Besides the travel and accommodation arrangements, **you need a visa for temporary employment in the United States.** So now what do you do?

This guide outlines the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (USINS or INS) visa classifications, procedures, required materials and deadlines related to individual Canadian performing artists as well as theatre, dance and musical troupes based in Canada, but not necessarily employing solely Canadians. Included in this guide are lists of INS offices, labour

unions, immigration and tax lawyers and other resources. While the INS petition process is essentially the same for non-Canadian nationals as it is for Canadian nationals, there are some procedures that are unique to Canadian nationals. Where this is the case, the word "Canadian" is in **bold**.

Although the petitioner (U.S. presenter, management, immigration lawyer or other party) must be based in the United States, the Canadian artist and his/her manager should be fully aware of the INS process. It is the artist and/or his/her management that must provide the U.S. petitioner with the vast majority of the required materials and information. The key to success in dealing with the USINS is to gather all the documentation early and to anticipate problems before they arise. The INS process should commence between the artist and the U.S. petitioner during the booking process. According to research conducted by Arts Presenters in the United States, 90 percent of petitions that are returned are returned because of missing information, mistakes and miscalculations.

Although every effort has been made to provide current and accurate information in this guide, changes do occur. You are encouraged to contact the USINS, the U.S. Embassy or a U.S. consulate in Canada for up-to-date information. You may receive conflicting information, however, as many U.S. government personnel are not familiar with the performing arts in general or the specific quirks of visa classifications for performing artists.

Below is other information regarding Canadian travel to the US. It is provided to show how someone could get the false impression coming to the U.S. to speak is without additional requirements.

The following information from official websites has bearing on the recent refusal by U.S. Border Services to permit Grant Cameron into the United States to give a paid lecture at the National UFO Conference. Comments are given in brackets []. Some bolding is added for emphasis.

U.S. Department of State Website

From: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1260.html

Who from Canada, Mexico and Bermuda, Needs a Nonimmigrant Visa to Enter the United States Temporarily?

Canada

Citizens of Canada traveling to the U.S. do not require a nonimmigrant visa, except for the purposes as described below. **[Note: business is not listed as a required exception.]**

- * Foreign government officials (A), officials and employees of international organizations (G) and NATO officials, representatives and employees assigned to the U.S. as needed to facilitate their travel;
 - * treaty traders (E-1);
 - * treaty investors (E-2);
 - * fiance/es (K-1);
 - * children of fiancées (K-2);
 - * U.S. citizen's foreign citizen spouse, who is traveling to the U.S. to complete the process of immigration (K-3);
 - * children of a foreign citizen spouse (K-4) described above;
- spouses of lawful permanent residents (V-1) traveling to the U.S. to reside here while they wait for the final completion of their immigration process.

* children of spouses of lawful permanent residents (V-2) described above.

Permanent residents (aka landed immigrants) of Canada must have a nonimmigrant visa unless the permanent resident is a national of a country that participates in the visa waiver program (VWP), meets the VWP requirements, and is seeking to enter the U.S. for 90 days or less under that program.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

From: http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/req_canada_mexico.xml

Entry of Citizens of Canada [Note: there is no distinguishing between business and pleasure.]

Citizens of Canada are exempt from the visa and passport requirement of Immigration and Nationality Act (section 212(a)(7).) To enter the United States, a Canadian citizen must be able to establish both identity and citizenship. Documents that may establish citizenship are:

Birth certificate
Citizenship certificate
Passport.

Although a CBP officer may accept an oral declaration of citizenship, it is recommended that a Canadian citizen carry a document that establishes citizenship. Under current procedures, all travelers may be required to present photo-identification.

NOTE: A Canadian citizen arriving from outside the Western Hemisphere is required to present a passport. Canadian citizens classified as Treaty Trader, Treaty Investor, or Fiancé(e) require a visa.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

From: http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/difference_visa_adrecord.xml

Non-Immigrant Visa

Nonimmigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States on a temporary basis for tourism, business, medical treatment and certain types of temporary work. The type of nonimmigrant visa needed is defined by immigration law, and related to the purpose of the travel. Generally, an individual applies directly to the U.S. consulate or embassy abroad for a tourist (B-2) or business nonimmigrant (B-1) visa. However, foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States to study or work may require certain authorization and documentation prior to applying for a nonimmigrant visa. For an alphabetical listing all of the nonimmigrant visa classifications and specific requirements refer to the USCIS Website at ([USCIS](#)) or the U.S. Department of State Website, at ([Temporary Visitors to the U.S.](#)) . Issuance of a visa does not guarantee entry to the United States. A visa simply indicates that a U.S. consular officer at an American embassy or consulate has reviewed the application and that officer has determined that the individual is eligible to enter the country for a specific purpose. The CBP Officer at the port-of-entry will conduct an inspection to determine if the individual is eligible for admission under U.S. immigration law.

[Note the apparent discrepancy here. Canada is not listed as country exempt for purposes of business travel.]

Visa Free Travel

U.S. policy permits citizens of certain countries as identified below to travel to the United States without a visa. The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) permits nationals from designated countries to apply for admission to the United States for 90 days or less as nonimmigrant visitors for **business** or pleasure without first obtaining a U.S. nonimmigrant visa. At the time of application for admission, a VWP applicant must:

Be in possession of a round-trip ticket that will transport the individual out of the United States to any other foreign port or place as long as the trip does not terminate in contiguous territory or an adjacent island; except that the round trip ticket may transport the traveler to contiguous territory or an adjacent island, if the traveler is a resident of the country of destination **or** if arriving at a land border, provide evidence of financial solvency and a domicile abroad to which the traveler intends to return;

Be arriving on designated carrier that is signatory to a Visa Waiver Program Agreement, if applicable;

Have a machine-readable passport valid for 6 months beyond the period of intended stay, or essentially 9 months (90 days + 6 months). The Department of State's 6-month list extending the validity of certain foreign passports can be found on the Department of State Website, at ([Countries with Agreements with the United States to Extend Passport Validity for an Additional Six Months](#)). (A traveler with an expired passport is ineligible for VWP admission); and, Complete an Arrival/Departure Form I-94W. Travelers arriving at a land border will be required to pay the required Form I-94W processing fee. In addition, VWP visitors may not file an application to change status to an immigrant or another nonimmigrant classification or extend their stay beyond the 90-day timeframe. VWP applicants waive their right to proceedings before an Immigration Judge, unless they make an asylum application. * Visa Waiver Program - Participating Countries

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Austria	Italy	San Marino
Belgium	Japan	Singapore
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Denmark	Luxembourg	Spain
Finland	Monaco	Sweden
France	Netherlands	Switzerland
Germany	New Zealand	United Kingdom

For additional information about the Visa Waiver Program, refer to the Department of State Website, at ([Visa Waiver Program](#)) .

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Book and Article Reviews

George Brooke, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005); reviewed by Thomas Kraus

Paul E. Fitzpatrick, *The Disarmament of God: Ezekiel 38-39 in Its Mythic Context* (Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series, 37; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2004); reviewed by T. M. Lemos, Yale University; *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* - Volume 4 (2002-2003)

Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd revised edition; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001); reviewed by Scott Noegel, Univ. Washington

Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint* (Edited by M. A. Knibb; *Understanding the Bible and Its World*; London & New York: T & T Clark, 2004); reviewed by Richard Hess, Denver Seminary

Paul E. Fitzpatrick, *The Disarmament of God: Ezekiel 38-39 in Its Mythic Context*

The Gog pericope in Ezekiel 38-39 has long perplexed scholars and lay readers alike. Among the many proposals regarding the identity of Gog, those of a historical nature have figured prominently: Gyges of Lydia, Alexander the Great, etc. In this book, however, Fitzpatrick offers an alternative explanation of Gog as a mythological, rather than historical foe. He is not the first to make such a suggestion, of course, but his reading goes further than others have in explicating not only the content but also the placement of this enigmatic passage.

Fitzpatrick presents an intriguing reading of Ezekiel 38-39. In his assessment of previous proposals, he convincingly problematizes the thesis that Gyges of Lydia forms the basis for the character of Gog, and suggests that one should look at a mythological, rather than historical referent. In fact, he argues that this passage is mythopoetic in nature. In it Yhwh musters the forces of chaos that he battled at creation in order to destroy them once and for all, thus completing the act of cosmogony itself. In doing this, he addresses certain thorny issues (e.g., why it is that Yhwh himself leads out Gog against Israel, and the seemingly odd placement of 39:21-29). Fitzpatrick tackles these issues primarily in chapter four.

In chapter five, perhaps the strongest in the book, Fitzpatrick discusses the mythic elements in the rest of Ezekiel. While his criteria for what features of the book qualify as myth seem at times overly generous, his assessment that Ezekiel is rife with mythic references is certainly convincing, even if it largely reiterates the work of others. His treatment of these elements brings his larger reading into sharper focus, giving him the opportunity to explicate why the Gog passage was placed where it was in the book and to argue that its placement was quite purposeful, contrary to what others have alleged. In Ezekiel 34, Yhwh establishes a covenant of peace with Israel. In Ezekiel 36-37, this covenant begins to be actualized. Israel will resettle the land and live securely without walls, Israel will be resurrected and reconstituted. But in order to ensure that this occur, Yhwh must call forth the foe of foes and destroy it, so that Israel will never again be threatened. Only after this momentous battle may the temple be rebuilt and the cult established once again. Fitzpatrick thus offers a broad reading that addresses not only the myriad interpretive issues presented by the Gog pericope, but also much of the material in the latter half of the book of Ezekiel.

Though compelling, Fitzpatrick's expansive reading is not unproblematic. One major issue concerns his argument that the passages in the book of Ezekiel were very consciously arranged—an argument upon which his overall reading is to a large extent dependent. This argument is not always convincing. A place of particular weakness is his explanation concerning the seemingly disjunctive placement of chapter 35.

In addition, the book has certain organizational flaws. Rather than beginning the work with an introduction, he does so with a lengthy review of scholarship. This review of scholarship is thorough and accurate, but one finds strewn throughout it various comments introducing Fitzpatrick's own arguments. Such asides interrupt the flow of the chapter. The lack of a proper introduction to the work proves to be problematic for the latter part of the book as well, for it necessitates that the actual argumentation in chapters three through five double, in some sense, as introductory material. This fact makes these chapters at times difficult to follow. The argumentation in chapter four, especially, is less focused than one might like.

Fitzpatrick's work also suffers at times from a certain lack of methodological sophistication. In the second chapter, he discusses the nature of myth, both in ancient Israel and more generally, and addresses such concepts as the "mythopoetic" and the "mythopoetic," both of which are important to arguments presented in later chapters. The author does provide a good review of the scholarship on myth in ancient Israel here, but inadequately deals with certain highly contentious issues—for example, the relationship between myth and cult/ritual. While he does

refer to certain non-biblicists, his citations are limited to very general works, such as *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, or scholars such as Eliade, whose phenomenological approach is very unpopular among anthropologists and religious theorists today. Fitzpatrick seems unaware that his approach is at odds with that of more current religious and ritual theory, as exemplified by the work of Catherine Bell and others.

Although such weaknesses lessen the force of Fitzpatrick's reading, the interpretation of the Gog pericope he presents here remains quite interesting. At the very least, Fitzpatrick offers in this volume a worthy alternative reading of a passage that many had deemed a perpetual interpretive crux, and for that he must be commended.

Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*

The appearance in 1992 of Emanuel Tov's masterful work, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, offered scholars and interested lay readers the first exhaustive reference work for undertaking textual critical study of the Hebrew Bible. Its organization, thoroughness, comprehensiveness, and accessible style quickly made it a standard in the field. Today it appears in German and Russian editions as well, and can (or should) be found on the shelves of every serious scholar of the Hebrew Bible.

Though this work has retained its importance over the nearly ten years since it first appeared, a great deal has occurred since then in field of Qumran Studies. Indeed, all of the remaining biblical manuscripts from Qumran have been published, scores of new and important publications have appeared, and a number of new insights have been gained. Hence, the appearance of second edition.

Not surprisingly, this edition is as monumental as the first. It retains the original organization and clarity of the first book, but integrates a number of revisions. Since the reader will doubtless be familiar with the first edition, or will have access to reviews on it, I shall concentrate my remarks only on what is new in the second.

Most of the changes that one finds are relatively minor in import, and can be detected only by undertaking a careful comparative textual analysis of the two editions! Such changes include altered wording and the removal or addition of particular manuscript references (usually found in lists of examples). One finds, for example, that Tov has changed the line "The hundreds of fragments found near Hirbet-Qumran..." (p. 101, 1st. ed.) to "The thousands of fragments..." (p. 101, 2nd. ed.) in the section on the biblical texts discovered at Qumran. The number of biblical texts found at Qumran is said to be "more than 190" in the first edition (p. 107), but "over 200" in the second (p. 107). See also the section on paragraphing in which the first edition cites "... the beginning of the line in 1QIsa^a and other texts" as containing paragraphing marks, whereas the second edition reads "... the beginning of the line of some twenty Qumran texts, among them 1QIsa^a" (p. 216). Such details are of minor significance and comprise the brunt of the changes made to the book.

Other changes, like those found in the section on Pre-Samaritan texts (pp. 97-100), involve the addition of a number of new textual references and updated bibliographic information. Indeed, the bibliographies that precede every major topical unit in the book have been judiciously expanded (as have the book's indices). Tov's treatment of "The Copying of the Biblical Text" (pp. 201-219), also is expanded, especially his list of the scrolls written in longer columns (p. 205)-- again, mostly representing an updating of source materials.

In addition to these changes, two entirely new, albeit brief, sections have been added: "A Different Recension of Joshua Reflected in 4QJosh^a" (pp. 345-46) and "Rearranged and Shorter Texts (?)" (p. 346). The former section compares the altar building sequence of Josh 8:30-35, as found in the Masoretic text, with the Qumran manuscript 4QJosh^a, where it appears just before 5:1. The new section, therefore, draws attention to additional evidence for "a third independent text of Joshua," besides the Masoretic text and Septuagint (p. 346).

The second added unit discusses those biblical texts found at Qumran that omit entire pericopes or that order the materials in significantly different ways, such as various manuscripts of the Psalms, Song, and Exodus. Elsewhere Tov has treated such texts as excerpted materials used for liturgical or personal functions, but here, he raises the possibility that they may simply represent differing conceptions of the textual tradition.

The only place where one will find an alteration in the Tov's position on a subject (as he informs the reader on p. xxxv) is in the section on "The Original Shape of the Biblical Text (pp. 171-172, 177-180). Here one finds a subtle, but meaningful change in the Tov's definition of what is meant by "a single original text." The previous edition understood the expression as referencing "the copy (or textual tradition) that contained the finished literary product and which stood at the beginning of the process of textual transmission (pp. 171)." The second edition sharpens this as "the text or edition (or a number of consecutive literary editions) that contained the finished literary product and which stood at the beginning of the process of textual transmission" (p. 171).

In reference to the hypothesis that parallel literary compositions other than those attested in actual manuscript form existed and had an impact on the manuscripts that have survived Tov has similarly sharpened his approach. In the first edition, Tov stated "It is not impossible that there once existed parallel literary compositions, which may have influenced each other, *but textual criticism mainly takes into consideration the one composition which is reflected in all the known textual sources and which has been accepted as authoritative by Judaism.* (p. 172; emphasis mine)" In the second edition Tov wrote, "It is not impossible that there once existed parallel literary compositions, which may have influenced each other, *but such editions have not been found and are therefore disregarded*" (p. 172; emphasis mine).

Tov similarly alters his definition of the "original text" by removing the former emphasis he had placed on the distinction between the process of textual transmission and the literary development of the biblical books (p. 177). He also has nuanced his argument by factoring in the relationship between canonization and authority. Thus, in the first edition Tov had stated that "at the end of the process of the composition of a biblical book stood one textual entity (a single copy of tradition) which was considered finished at the literary level... (p. 177)" The second edition replaces these words with: "at the end of the composition process of a biblical book stood a text that was considered authoritative (and hence also finished at the literary level)..." Moreover, here Tov adds a note of caution:

The formulation of the original text is complicated by the assumption that in some books the authoritative edition such as known from M [Masoretic Text] was preceded by earlier literary editions, each of which was accepted as authoritative by subsequent generations. (p. 177)

Tov similarly has nuanced his argument concerning the methodological reasoning for considering only the literary stages preceding the literary editions of the Masoretic Text when searching for the "original text." In the first edition Tov had asserted that

The reconstruction of the original composition at the textual level depends, among other things, upon a certain view of the content of the composition that was accepted as authoritative in Judaism. Such a position is necessitated by the historical development of Judaism and its writings (p. 179).

The second edition offers a considerably more self-conscious clarification.

Such reasoning is necessarily subjective, but by definition literary structures (as opposed to individual readings) created after the crystallization of the editions contained in M [Masoretic Text] should not be brought to bear on the original text of Hebrew Scriptures. That corpus contains the Holy Writings of the Jewish people, and the decisions that were made within this religious community also determine to a great extent the approach of the scholarly world towards the text (p. 178-79).

This section also contains an added discussion as to why "the assumption of consecutive 'original editions' in some biblical books does not preclude the reconstruction of elements in the original

text, but it does complicate such a procedure" (p. 180). Here Tov briefly remarks that in this context any reconstruction must be based not on changes made by the editors of consecutive literary editions, but only on "readings created by the vicissitudes of textual transmission, often visible in textual corruptions. In other words, the genetic readings ... need to be located and evaluated in every possible scenario" (p. 180).

In sum, the second edition of this work differs little from the first edition in its approach to the material; most of the changes being minor in scope and significance. Nevertheless, the new edition does provide a number of useful and important textual and manuscript references throughout, as well as updated bibliographic information. It will doubtless serve as the standard work on textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible for many years to come.

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Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint*

This neat and relatively small work provides a handy introduction to the complexities of Septuagint study. Until Jobes and Silva's *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Baker 2000), there was nothing that provided a useful summary of much of the relevant material necessary to begin study of this fascinating subject. Now, however, that has been rectified. With the appearance of another English introduction, we find some repetition but also further perspectives in guiding one into a difficult field. The usefulness of this work is enhanced by the regular listing of other bibliographical guidance for study in specific areas; a process that begins before page 1 of the actual text. Dines begins by identifying the major early collections of manuscripts that have been discovered. She goes on to survey translation characteristics of each of the books contained in the Septuagint.

Dines then turns to the early attestations of the translation of the Septuagint (LXX). Since she believes that Aristobulus was dependent on the letter of Aristeas, she dates the letter earlier than most, to the first part of the second century B.C. Even so, her observations about the occasion for writing the letter reflect events throughout this period. She sees it very properly as an attempt to exalt the Ptolemaic dynasty in contrast to the threats and persecutions of the Seleucids as they gained influence in Palestine in this period. Along with this, it supports the high priest of Jerusalem and the scholars there as possessors of God's grace in their interpretation of the Scriptures. Finally, the letter suggests that the LXX of Ptolemy II was regarded as made with the agreement of all the scholars and that of the Jewish community in Alexandria. All this supports this translation against possible attempts in the second century B.C. to produce other translations or to "correct" the LXX back to the Hebrew text.

For Dines, the LXX was likely created during the second century B.C. It was created to satisfy the needs of Alexandrian Judaism and the places of prayer and study that existed there, as well as elsewhere in the Diaspora. Comparing texts from Genesis and Amos, she argues that stylistic intentions to follow the original Hebrew appear to be present from the beginning. She considers the issue of multiple original translations versus a single original one for each book and observes how much of modern study (including the Göttingen critical edition of the LXX) has assumed a single original. Yet it is correct to ask this question because there is no easy answer. Given the diversity of types of translation techniques in the books outside the Pentateuch, it may be just as likely that there were multiple translations of some books. The question remains open and Dines returns to a theme that recurs throughout the book; the unique project undertaken by the Jews of Alexandria in making this "translation," something that had never been done before.

The discussion of various testimonies to the Septuagint considers the development of the story of the original translators. For Philo they each translated the text separately and yet came up with the same result. The talmuds are generally positive in their witness to the LXX, but not exclusively so. The early Christian writers, such as Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria, affirm the communal inspiration of the LXX and thus its preference over later translations. By the end of the fourth century, however, Jerome is voicing doubts about the legend and arguing for a return to the Hebrew (proto-Masoretic text, presumably).

The discussion of "the Three," i.e., Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, indicates the increasing extent to which antecedents or precursors to these translations suggest that many aspects of their works were more than a century old by the time they found their way into the Hexapla. The same is true of the three traditions that Jerome mentions: Hesychian (as much as can be known of it), Lucian (or Antiochene), and that reflected by Origen.

When Dines turns to the question of translation style, she adds to her initial discussion of the degree of literalism reflected in specific books of the LXX. She considers what kind of Greek was used. Noting the presence of "Semiticisms" in non-Jewish Hellenistic Greek, she suggests that this

characteristic was common to Hellenistic Greek in Egypt, whether coming from Coptic influence or elsewhere, and therefore cannot be used to prove the intrusion of Semitic syntax and style on the Greek translation. In her review of modern translations of the Septuagint she discusses the NETS Bible, a work that assumes Hebrew influence on the Greek; and *La Bible d'Alexandrie*, a French project that treats the LXX as solely a Greek text. Of interest to students here would also have been the text, translation, and commentary on Codex Vaticanus now being published by Brill and edited by S. E. Porter, R. S. Hess, and J. Jarrick. The volume on Joshua, by A. G. Auld, has now appeared and provides an excellent example of a cautious balance by demonstrating cognizance of the Hebrew background but at the same time an appreciation of the existing literary structure of the Septuagint book itself.

A concluding section traces the use of the LXX throughout history. Of special interest are the sections that consider the Hellenistic authors, Jewish and otherwise, who preserve references to the LXX and texts from it. These culminate in Philo and Josephus, who themselves anticipate the patristic tendencies toward allegory and literalism. The final section on modern translation projects again needs to add the abovementioned series to its repeated references to NETS and *La Bible d'Alexandrie*. Overall Dines has contributed a useful means of access to the study of the LXX. While most courses on the subject will want to move further, and thus should find the introduction of Jobes and Silva helpful, Dines serves as an important first step into the complex and fascinating world of Septuagint studies.

Divine Council Forum

*Readers Interact as Mike's divine council "layperson non-fiction"
book manuscript takes shape*

For new readers, see the introduction to this project in the July 2005 issue.

Here's the first draft of Chapter Three. It's intended to be an introduction to the divine council itself.

Chapter 3 - God's Heavenly Offspring

To this point we've learned that even before the very beginning of creation God was not alone. There was a second, uncreated person with him, who shared his own essence and was an independent, but not autonomous, being. As Christians we are familiar with this second person by such terms as "the Son," and we believe that this second "deity person" became incarnated as Jesus of Nazareth. In the Old Testament, "the Son" is manifest physically and visually, but is referred to by other names, such as Wisdom and the Word. There are several other names taken by "the Son" in the Old Testament, and we'll get to them. For now, though, we need to look at the other members of God's family and their relationship to "the Son."

I put "the Son" in quotation marks and used capitalization in the above paragraph to draw your attention. God's co-ruler and co-creator, the second deity person we think of as "the Son" since we are living after the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of that person, is qualitatively different than God's other sons. That will be made clear as we progress. And if you just asked yourself, "what other sons?" you're tracking—and you wouldn't be alone. God's other sons are the focus of this chapter and the next. What we'll discuss here and in the next chapter is one of the most neglected, misunderstood, side-stepped—and critical—doctrinal areas in the Old Testament. In fact, it is the backdrop for most of New Testament theology.

I don't make that last assertion lightly. I'm not saying that without an understanding of this issue you can't comprehend the Bible. I'm saying that without it you can't comprehend it precisely or fully, or even well. You will inevitably miss out on the context for much of what goes on in the New Testament, a context understood and utilized by the apostles at every turn. Remember back in the introduction when I talked about how the church has been missing the ancient context for its theology for millennia? How we've lost the ancient Israelite and first century lenses for understanding what's going on in the Bible? Well, if the first two chapters haven't demonstrated that for you, the next few will. Read prayerfully and closely, because you'll never look at your Bible the same way again once you meet God's original heavenly family—the sons of God.

We'll start our introduction with an obscure but important passage, Job 38:4-7. God is challenging Job, who wanted to know why he was suffering. God's general answer in Job 38-42 is that he doesn't need to explain himself because he's God. Part of that response reads:

⁴Where were you [Job] when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Speak if you have understanding!
⁵Who fixed its dimensions? Surely you know!
Or who measured it with a line?
⁶On what were its bases sunk?
Who set its cornerstone,
⁷When the morning stars sang together
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

There's a lot to be said about this passage. First, you probably noticed that God is basically asking Job (sarcastically) where Job was when God created the earth. God refers to the time when he laid earth's "foundations," fixed and measured its "dimensions," sank its "bases," and set its "cornerstone." Second, you also no doubt noticed the underlined portion. We learn from this text that, at the very moment of earth's creation, there were *already* a number of "sons of God." These sons of God shouted for joy when they saw God's creative power and handiwork. You might be thinking the sons of God are the angels. That's a common assumption, but it's wrong since the Hebrew word for angels (*mal'akim*) is completely different than the Hebrew behind "sons of God" (more on that below). Third, you may have discerned that the two lines of verse 7 parallel each other. That is, the sons of God who shout for joy are also identified as "morning stars" who "sang together." Such parallelism is the major feature of Hebrew poetry: one line renames or repeats another. I won't lapse into a lecture on Hebrew poetry—just make a mental note of the parallel, that the sons of God are identified with the heavenly starry host.

The passage raises some questions. Maybe you're wondering if we can be sure that God's description really does refer to the creation of the earth. I'm going to keep my promise to save all the data that proves this for an appendix.¹ By way of just one proof for now, though, you should know that the Hebrew words in Job for "laying the foundations" are the same words as used in other verses that undoubtedly refer back to the creation of the earth (see Psalm 102:25 [Hebrew, 26]; 104:5; Prov. 8:29; Isa. 48:13; 51:13, 16). One verse in that list should jump out at you right away—Proverbs 8:29. That's the passage we read in Chapter One, where Wisdom claimed to be at God's side serving as his assistant in creation! This is clear biblical testimony that the sons of God who watched the show were watching God *and* his co-creator in action. They were all there—*before there were human beings*.

Why would I emphasize that last line when it seems so painfully obvious? Because many Christian pastors and professors teach that the phrase "sons of God" refers to humans! Granted, they do not make that mistake in this passage—the supernatural character of the sons of God is irrefutable in Job 38 since humans were not yet created. However, in other passages, it is argued by not a few that "sons of God" refers to human beings. The reason for this misguided conclusion requires a bit of background.

In the original Hebrew, the phrase "sons of God" in Job 38:7 is *beney elohim*.² You might recognize *elohim* as one of God's names. In fact, it is the most common name for Israel's God, despite

the fact that its “shape” or spelling is *plural*. (Yes, you read correctly—*plural*). Hebrew actually has two generic words for “God” (or any other foreign “god”): the more common is *el*; the other is *eloah*. In English we normally make words plural by adding “-s” or “-es” to words (“rats”; “horses”). In Hebrew, plurals of masculine nouns end with “-im” (and God is always described with masculine pronouns in the Bible – “he”; “him”). The word *elohim* is the plural of *eloah*; the plural of *el* is *elim*.

The above discussion means that the word *elohim* all by itself can refer to either “God” (capitalized, the God of Israel) or “gods” (other divine beings). We have to wait for the word to be put into a sentence to know which meaning is the focus. We have words like this in English. For example, the word “sheep” can be either singular or plural. By itself we cannot tell which option is correct. If we put “sheep” into the sentence, “The sheep is lost,” we know only one sheep is meant since the verb “is” requires its subject to be singular. Likewise, “the sheep are lost” informs us that more than one sheep is in view.

Over two thousand occurrences of the word *elohim* in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament point to the singular God of Israel. We know this because of the grammar of the sentences in which the word occurs, as well as context. Job 38:4 obviously refers to the God of Israel since the grammar there has the creator speaking in the first person singular (“I laid the foundations of the earth”). At other times, God is referred to as *ha-elohim*, with the Hebrew definite article (the word for “the”) in front of *elohim*. It was written this way to signal that the God of Israel was “THE God” (par excellence) among all other gods. The grammar and context of any particular occurrence helps the reader make the decision about what to do with *elohim*.

It shouldn’t be surprising that since God can be referred to as *elohim* and *ha-elohim* the Hebrew Old Testament attaches the phrase “the sons of” to both forms of God’s name. At times the Hebrew text refers to the sons of God as *beney elohim* and at other times as *beney ha-elohim*. There is no difference in meaning. In the same manner, the Hebrew text occasionally reads *beney elim*—with the meaning “sons of God” (though plural in shape, *elim* refers to the singular God in that phrase, just like *elohim* does).³ One verse (see Psalm 82:6 below) uses the phrase *beney elyon* (“sons of the Most High”), since *elyon* is yet another name for God.

The thought might have occurred to you that when the Hebrew writers referred to the God of Israel as “THE God” (par excellence) or “Most High” (greater and more exalted than all others) that this implies more than one god. If that question crept into your mind, kudos to you! You’d be *correct*—and that brings us to the reason why so many evangelical scholars and pastors want the “sons of God” to be human beings in certain passages. They think having heavenly sons of God in certain passages puts polytheism in the Bible.

This uneasiness is felt especially acutely in Psalm 82, *since Psalm 82:1 and 82:6 identify the sons of God as plural elohim—gods*. But that is the literal and most straightforward understanding of the text. What opponents of the obvious meaning of the text miss is that the presence of more than one god in the Bible does *not* mean polytheism as we commonly use that word. If these last two sentences sound way out, stay with me. Let’s take a look at Psalm 82 (note my insertion of Hebrew and grammatical terms and the underlining):

A psalm of Asaph.

¹ God (*elohim*) stands in the divine council (literally, council of El); among the gods (*elohim*) He pronounces judgment.

- ² How long will you (plural) judge unjustly,
showing favor to the wicked? *Selah.*
- ³ Judge the wretched and the orphan,
vindicate the lowly and the poor,
⁴rescue the wretched and the needy;
save them from the hand of the wicked.
- ⁵ They neither know nor understand,
they go about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth totter.
- ⁶ I said, “you (plural) gods (elohim),
sons of the Most High (beney Elyon), all of you (plural);
⁷but you (plural) shall die as men do,
fall like any prince.
- ⁸ Arise (the command is singular), O God (elohim),
judge (the command is singular) the earth,
for you (singular) shall inherit all the nations.

Despite the fact that it makes people uncomfortable, the text means what it says.⁴ In Psalm 82:1, the first *elohim* must be singular, since the Hebrew grammar has the word as the subject of a singular verb. The second *elohim* must be plural, since the preposition in front of it (“in the midst of”) requires more than one. You can’t be “in the *midst* of” *one* person. And according to Psalm 82:1, the singular God (*elohim*) of Israel presides over an assembly or council of other gods (*elohim*).⁵ Verse six makes it perfectly clear that these other *elohim* are the sons of the God of Israel. In that verse God himself is speaking (“I said”) to the other *elohim* of that divine council, and he addresses them with the plural “you.” He says point-blank: “you are gods (*elohim*), all of you.” The fact that he is speaking to a group (plural *elohim*) is made certain even in the English, since God also calls them “sons of the Most High.” I made the observation above that the Hebrew word for angels is *mal’akim* (literally, “messengers”), an entirely different term than occurs for the sons of God. If one still insisted against the inspired textual evidence that the two should be identified, you’d still need to explain why angels are called gods in light of Psalm 82:6.

Some who object to the obvious meaning of the text may assert that this psalm is actually describing God the Father speaking to the other members of the Trinity. This view results in heresy here, in some very obvious ways. First, not all the members of the Trinity are “sons.” The Holy Spirit is not the Son of God or a son of God. Second, if the passage has the Trinity in mind, then God is charging them with corruption! Verses 2-5 are quite clear that God is displeased with these other *elohim* in his council and has indicted them for their wicked rule. Third, this view would also have the Trinity sentenced to death! They would die like mortals (“as men do”). This can’t refer to the death of Christ for three reasons: (a) the death sentence isn’t restricted to just *one* son of God; (b) the death sentence is for personal guilt and corruption; (c) the Son (note the capitalization) who is God’s own essence and uncreated, is superior to the other sons of God (more on that in a moment). Fourth, it is evident from the last verse that the judgment of the sons of God, these other *elohim*, has something to do with God’s reclamation of the nations of the earth. The implication is that the sons of God have been ruling the earth and doing it wickedly, and so they must be removed for God’s rule to come to full fruition. In other words, they are an impediment or a nuisance (or at best a disappointment). Certainly not the way we’d want to (or can) look at the Trinity.

But what about the view that the *elohim* upon whom God has placed a death sentence are human rulers? This, too, is incoherent. Ask yourself some questions of the text. What is the scriptural

basis for the idea that God presides over a council of *humans* that governs the nations of the earth? Some commentators who reject the face-value meaning of Psalm 82 like to argue that Israel's council of seventy elders is in view here—that God is judging Israel's judges or elders for their corruption. This makes little sense, since at no time in the Scriptures did Israel's elders ever have jurisdiction over all the nations of the earth. In fact, as we'll see in the next chapter, the situation is exactly opposite—Israel was *separated* from the nations to be God's own possession and focus of his rule. Moreover, since when do the corrupt decisions of a group of humans make the foundations of the earth totter (v. 5)? Lastly, if these *elohim* are humans, why are they sentenced to die “like humans”? This is nonsensical, and is defeated by the grammar and structure of the Hebrew text.⁶ It would be akin to sentencing a child to grow up, or a dog to bark, or a human being to breathe. The point of verse 6 is that, in response to the corruption of the *elohim*, they will be stripped of their immortality at God's discretion and die like humans die. A clear contrast is set up in the text.

The real problem with the human view, though, is twofold. This view cannot be reconciled with: (1) other references in the Hebrew Old Testament that refer to a divine council and other *elohim*; (2) other passages in the Hebrew Bible speak of an act of God to divide the nations of the earth among the sons of God as a punishment for their rebellion—before there was a nation of Israel. Once you understand the texts we'll examine below, Psalm 82 becomes completely coherent—and frankly brings most of the entirety of the Old Testament into proper focus. For the remainder of this chapter we'll focus on the first issue: references to a heavenly council that make it clear that the council of Psalm 82 is comprised of God and other supernatural beings. We'll tackle council functions and related concepts in the chapters that follow.

There are several other places in the Hebrew Bible that speak of plural *elohim* and a heavenly council. Perhaps the most familiar passages where the sons of God show up are the first two chapters of Job:

Job 1:1ff.

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz named Job. That man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. ² Seven sons and three daughters were born to him; ³ his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-asses, and a very large household. That man was wealthier than anyone in the East. ⁴ It was the custom of his sons to hold feasts, each on his set day in his own home. They would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ When a round of feast days was over, Job would send word to them to sanctify themselves, and, rising early in the morning, he would make burnt offerings, one for each of them; for Job thought, “Perhaps my children have sinned and blasphemed God in their thoughts.” This is what Job always used to do. ⁶ And it came to pass, when the sons of God presented themselves before the LORD, Satan came along with them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you been?” Satan answered the LORD, “I have been roaming all over the earth.” ⁸ The LORD said to Satan, “Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil!”

Job 2:1ff.

¹ Once again the sons of God presented themselves before the LORD. Satan came along with them to present himself before the LORD. ² The LORD said to Satan, “Where have

you been?” Satan answered the LORD, “I have been roaming all over the earth.”³ The LORD said to Satan, “Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil. He still keeps his integrity; so you have incited Me against him to destroy him for no good reason.”⁴ Satan answered the LORD, “Skin for skin—all that a man has he will give up for his life.⁵ But lay a hand on his bones and his flesh, and he will surely blaspheme You to Your face.”⁶ So the LORD said to Satan, “See, he is in your power; only spare his life.”

In both these passages the Hebrew phrase translated, “the sons of God” is *beney ha-elohim*. Although I have the familiar “Satan” in this passage, the Hebrew word here (*saṭan*) is best translated “The Adversary” since it has the definite article prefixed to it (*hassaṭan*). Hebrew does not prefix proper names with the article, and neither does English (I am not “the Mike”). In the Intertestamental period and the New Testament era, *saṭan* became a proper name for God’s arch enemy. The word as used here actually refers to a being who exercises a prosecutorial function—one who accuses or indicts another person. In the ancient Near East, to which the Old Testament culturally belongs, this was a specific role within the divine council (see Zechariah 3:1-7 for perhaps the classic passage on this function).

The picture here is that the divine council is meeting for business, and The Adversary has a role in that meeting. The Hebrew text is ambiguous as to whether he is a member of the council or one of the sons of God.⁷ He may simply be an “officer” of the council at its meetings.⁸ One also encounters the sons of God (*beney ha-elohim*) in Deuteronomy 32:8 (in the Dead Sea Scrolls material; see the next chapter for this passage) and Genesis 6:1-4 (see Chapter 6). Before moving on, take note of how the human view of the sons of God fails hopelessly here. There is simply no way that the sons of God could be human beings in Job 1-2.

One encounters the sons of God in the slightly variant spelling *beney elim* in two biblical passages. In Psalm 29:1, a verse that has suffered greatly at the hands of translators, the other *elohim* are commanded to worship Yahweh:

Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of God (*beney elim*),
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

It is quite clear from this text that Yahweh is to be worshipped by other *elohim*, not the other way around. The God of Israel is qualitatively superior. Psalm 89:5-7 (Hebrew, vv. 6-8) echoes the same thought, and specifically references the divine council:

⁵ Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!

⁶ For who in the skies can equal the LORD,

Who can compare with the LORD among the sons of God (*beney elim*),

⁷ a God greatly dreaded in the council of the holy ones,
held in awe by all around Him?

I naturally underlined the phrase “sons of God” and obvious references to the divine council to draw your attention to their existence in the biblical text, but I also underlined “in the skies” and “all around him.” The reason is to emphasize that these sons of God are *in heaven* and *around God’s throne*. They are not a human council of judges. Once again, the human view is completely inadequate.

Perhaps the most striking scene of the divine council is found in I Kings 22. In that passage, the reader is privy to an actual council meeting concerning the evil king Ahab. I reproduce the whole chapter here (NRSV) for context (note the underlined portions):

¹ For three years Aram and Israel continued without war. ² But in the third year King Jehoshaphat of Judah came down to the king of Israel. ³ The king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, yet we are doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?” ⁴ He said to Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?” Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, “I am as you are; my people are your people, my horses are your horses.”

⁵ But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “Inquire first for the word of the LORD.” ⁶ Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred of them, and said to them, “Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?” They said, “Go up; for the LORD will give it into the hand of the king.” ⁷ But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there no other prophet of the LORD here of whom we may inquire?” ⁸ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster.” Jehoshaphat said, “Let the king not say such a thing.” ⁹ Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, “Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah.” ¹⁰ Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹¹ Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, “Thus says the LORD: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.” ¹² All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king.”

¹³ The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably.” ¹⁴ But Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.”

¹⁵ When he had come to the king, the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?” He answered him, “Go up and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king.” ¹⁶ But the king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?”

¹⁷ Then Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd; and the LORD said, ‘These have no master; let each one go home in peace.’ ”

¹⁸ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?”

¹⁹ Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him. ²⁰ And the LORD said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said one thing, and another said another, ²¹ until a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ ²² ‘How?’ the LORD asked him. He replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then the LORD said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.’ ²³ So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has decreed disaster for you.”

²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?” ²⁵ Micaiah replied, “You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber.” ²⁶ The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son, ²⁷ and say, ‘Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I come in peace.’” ²⁸ Micaiah said, “If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Hear, you peoples, all of you!”

Note from this remarkable vision of the true prophet of Yahweh that the deliberative assembly is once again in the presence of God. There is no possibility that this is a human council.

There are other references to the corrupt gods of the nations—and not idols—outside immediate divine council contexts. They affirm that other gods were part of the worldview of Israel in the Hebrew Bible. The first list below contains passages where the word *elohim* or *ha-elohim* is in the Hebrew text where you read “gods.” The second list has verses where the Hebrew word is *elim*.

The plural *elohim* / *ha-elohim*

Psalm 86:8 - Among the gods there is none like you, O Yahweh; neither [are there any works] like your works.

Psalm 95:3 - For Yahweh is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Psalm 96:4 - For Yahweh is great, and deserving of exceedingly great praise: he is to be feared above all gods.

Psalm 97:7 - All who served images were put to shame; those who boasted in mere idols; even all the gods bow down before him [Yahweh, see v. 5 preceding]

Psalm 97:9 - For you, O Yahweh, are Most High above all the earth: you are exalted far above all gods.

Psalm 135:5 - For I know that Yahweh is great, and that our lord is above all gods.

Psalm 136:2 - O give thanks to the God of gods: for his mercy endures for ever.

Psalm 138:1 - I will praise you with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise to you.

The plural *elim*

Exodus 15:11 – Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?⁹

Psalm 58:1 - Do you indeed decree what is right, O gods? Do you judge people fairly?¹⁰

It is common for those who resist the face-value meaning of the text of Psalm 82:1, 6 to argue at this point that such references to other gods are actually references to idols, or that they are figurative expressions—that Israelites didn't really believe such beings exist. The first objection is discussed in detail in the next chapter. For now take another look at Psalm 97:7 in the above list. It clearly *distinguishes* the gods from idols. The psalmist mocks the people who bow down to idols, and adds that even the gods who the idols represent bow down to Yahweh! The second objection is best addressed here.

Those who want to argue that these references to other gods cannot be taken as reflecting what Israelites really believed don't realize how that objection does injustice to both the biblical text and the God of Israel. What I mean here is that, if the above verses are not conveying factual information relative to biblical theology, then God's superiority is a mockery. For example, if Moses is comparing Yahweh to beings that don't exist, how is Yahweh glorified. To have Moses "really" saying "Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the beings that aren't real" is to judge God's greatness by nothing. *We're* greater than something that doesn't exist! So is a microbe. This view unintentionally brings God down quite a few notches, to say nothing of the deception involved on Moses' part—and even God's since he inspired the words. Saying "among the beings that we all know don't exist there is none like Yahweh" is tantamount to comparing Yahweh with Mickey Mouse, Spiderman, or some fictional literary figure. This reduces praise to a snicker. It also makes the writer somewhat mentally unbalanced. He sings Yahweh's praise before beings he really believes aren't there? He commands the same imaginary beings to worship Yahweh (Psa. 29:1)? Worse yet, Yahweh presides over a council of beings that don't exist? Why would the Holy Spirit inspire such nonsense?

More substantive is the fact that those who don't want to take the text for what it says in such verses fear that they might be affirming polytheism as part of the belief system of the biblical writers. This is a concern only in that we use the word "monotheism" in a particular way that means "the belief that no other gods exist," as opposed to "the belief that there is one *unique* God."¹¹ Polytheistic religions typically have a group of gods who fight and scheme against one another for power, and sometimes leadership of the lead god in charge can (and does) change in such religions. These systems also universally assume that the gods can be identified with parts of the creation, and that at least subset of the pantheon is basically equal in power and ability (or they have powers and abilities that offset the powers and abilities of the other "top tier" gods). Other terms relevant to this question are also flawed, such as *henotheism* (the belief in one superior god among other gods) and *monolatry* (the belief that you should worship only one god though others exist). These terms are deficient in that they do not sufficiently describe what the biblical writers believed. Henotheistic systems can have the lead god toppled and replaced by another god who then becomes "superior" (one wonders on what grounds, since just prior to that the god was inferior). Monolatry fails to articulate *why* one God is superior and *what criteria* make him superior—it comments only on worship.

Israel's faith cannot be adequately understood by any of the terms above as we understand them today. The faith described in the Hebrew Bible is one that has one, single "species unique" Deity, who created other lesser deities to rule under his authority. By definition they are qualitatively inferior since they are created beings.¹² The God of Israel alone is Creator of all that is, the lone sovereign, the only uncreated being, the only omnipotent and omniscient being there is, and thus the single legitimate object of our worship. One word may not be sufficient to capture all this, but the Hebrew Old Testament makes this understanding abundantly clear. To say that a divine council of plural *elohim* means polytheism requires ignoring Israel's description of its God and the other gods.

The “species-uniqueness” of Yahweh also answers the question of how the co-creating and co-ruling Son is different than the other sons of God. God’s “special agent” (the Word, Wisdom) is unique in that *he is Yahweh’s own uncreated essence*. This “second Yahweh” is repeatedly identified with the Son (Jesus) in the New Testament since he became incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth. This explains why Jesus is described in the New Testament as *monogenes*, a Greek term typically (and poorly) translated “only begotten.” You no doubt recall from an earlier chapter that there is a difference between “created” and “begotten.” I didn’t get into the Greek terminology there, but it’s helpful now.

“Only begotten” is an unfortunately confusing translation, especially for modern readers. It does sound to us as though the “only begotten” Son had a beginning because we aren’t used to the old English word. The confusion should never have happened, though, since *monogenes* actually doesn’t mean “only begotten.” The controversy extends from an old misunderstanding of the root of the Greek word. For many years *monogenes* was thought to have derived from two Greek terms, *monos* (“only”) and *gennao* (“to beget, bear”). Scholars of Greek linguistics have discovered, though, that the second part of the word *monogenes* does not come from the Greek verb *gennao*, but rather the noun *genos* (“class, kind”). The term literally means “one of a kind” or “unique” with no connotation of time or origin. The validity of this understanding is borne out by the New Testament itself. In Hebrews 11:17, Isaac is called Abraham’s *monogenes*—but it is crystal clear from the Old Testament that Isaac was *not* the only son Abraham had begotten, since he had also fathered Ishmael prior to Isaac. The term must mean that Isaac was Abraham’s “unique” son, for he was the son of the covenant promises and the line through which Messiah would come. Many of the more recent versions of the Bible have opted to translate *monogenes* as “only,” but this confuses readers when they come across references to other sons of God in the Old Testament.

The end result of all this is that the Hebrew Old Testament teaches that Israel’s God was utterly unique—not just in terms of ability, but also in essence as the lone pre-existent and uncreated being. The God of Israel had a co-ruler and co-creator, who was his own unique essence manifested as a second person. This second person went by many names, two of which (Word, Wisdom) we have already discussed, and was viewed by New Testament writers as being incarnated in Jesus. The other sons of God can make no such claims. They are of another “species” and thus by definition beneath the Father and Son. They serve Yahweh and his co-sovereign in the divine council and accept their punishments for disobedience. The essence and status of the Father and Son will never and can never change. They will not be displaced or usurped as polytheism and henotheism allow, because they are unmatched and unmatchable in essence and power. There is only one Yahweh, and his co-regent, the Son *is him*.

As explosive as this chapter is, it only prepares us for what’s to come. The divine council shows up in other quite unexpected places, some of the most important passages in the Bible. Their story is at the heart of God’s original intention for humanity, the Fall, the story of Israel and the nations, and the ancient plan for the redemption of humanity. We need only lose the scales of tradition that have covered our eyes. Your journey into the world of the patriarchs and prophets has just begun.

¹ See Appendix ___ for a full discussion.

² I am using only English letters to “spell” this Hebrew term rather than strictly proper transliteration for reasons of convenience for English readers.

³ See Appendix ___ for how *elim* in this phrase still points to a singular being. However, *elim* by itself and not following “sons of” (Hebrew, *beney*) can only mean plural “gods” (cf. Job 41:17).

⁴ See Appendix ___ for a detailed analysis of the Hebrew grammar and syntax of Psalm 82.

⁵ What follows in this chapter is a basic introduction to the divine council. Aside from the Appendixes related to this chapter, for more information on the divine council see E. Theodore Mullen, “Divine Assembly,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol.2 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 214-217; S. B. Parker, “Council (Sod),” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Eerdmans, 1999); and Michael S. Heiser, “Divine Council,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (Intervarsity Press, forthcoming).

⁶ See Appendix ___.

⁷ The questions are difficult to answer given the paucity of the biblical material relevant to the discussion. See Appendix ___.

⁸ We will discuss Satan in more detail in other chapters.

⁹ This verse requires a brief comment. All scholars and translators agree (due to the obvious context) that the Hebrew text here is *elim*. I mention this because the plural here is spelled with the normal “y” [yodh]. This note is important because of the next verse in the discussion, Psalm 58:1. Many English translations do not recognize the shortened spelling in that verse and so translations are often confusing (e.g., the word gets translated as something to do with “silence”). At other times, the reference to plural gods is deliberately obscured (e.g., NIV, “rulers”). Some of the more recent translations get Psalm 58:1 right (ESV, NRSV).

¹⁰ See the above footnote. Also note the content of this verse – that it has the gods judging humanity unjustly, just like Psalm 82. See the next chapter for the rulership of the gods / sons of God and their corruption.

¹¹ The word as coined in the 17th century as an antonym to atheism, and subsequently imposed on the ancient Semitic (Israelite) mind by modern people.

¹² Those passages that have the God of Israel creating the other gods of the council are detailed in the next chapter.