

Episode #21 - The Cloak of Invulnerability

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Music

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00:28

Welcome to the Ancient Tradition podcast. I'm your host, Jack Logan. Today I'm not going to waste any time getting started. Today's episode is the cloak of invulnerability. I'm going to jump right in. Today we're going to pick up where we left off in our last episode. In that episode we learned that the great primordial battle that took place before the earth was formed, the God who volunteered to do battle against the God who rebelled against the authority of the hidden God.

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was given a special weapon or weapons, which were critical to his victory over the rebellious god, the god who is almost universally depicted in both the ancient and the modern world as this hideous sea serpent monster or dragon. If you're a regular listener to the podcast, you should be noticing by now how truly important deciphering symbols is, if we wanna truly grasp the theology that was taught in the ancient tradition.

01:25

The theology was both revealed and concealed by way of symbols. So to understand the theology, you kind of have to understand the symbols. In our last episode, I challenged you to see if you could do this, to see if you could figure out what the special weapon was that was given to the divine son who volunteered to protect his father's kingdom from the rebellious son who threatened to usurp it. So did you figure it out? Did you figure out what the special weapon is?

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what it symbolizes theologically. That's not always easy to figure out what the symbols mean. And I don't think they're supposed to be easy to figure out. Why? Because by pondering and studying the symbols and investing our time and our thoughts into thinking through them and parsing out their meaning, then we begin to grow, to mature spiritually ourselves as a consequence of that pondering and studying. It's kind of all part of the spiritual process.

02:23

So hopefully some of you experienced some of that as you thought through what this special weapon, which is symbolized in the myths and legends and folk tales as a epic sword or a golden bow or even ruby slippers symbolizes theologically. In the podcast so far, we've uncovered a lot of clues which can help us decipher what this special weapon is. So hopefully some of you parsed it out, but if you didn't, don't worry because

02:53

Even with all those clues, it's kind of can still be difficult to connect the dots. But I think you'll find that as we put the clues together, you'll see how they fall in place in this perfectly coherent and cohesive manner, which speaks to me of a divine origin. Mercea Eliade. I don't know if you remember him, but I've mentioned him before. He's one of the world's foremost scholars of comparative religion. And he said it like this. Quote.

03:21

Symbols are signs of transcendent reality. Instead of being isolated fragments, become part of a whole system. All right, let me stop there for just a second. This is a system which I would call a fully cohesive theology. He continues, we have therefore every reason to speak of a logic of symbols in the sense that religious symbols of every kind and at every level are always

03:50

consistent and systematic. Now that's crazy. He's saying that all of the symbols he's come across in the ancient world are quote, always consistent? How is this possible? I mean, we're talking about thousands of years of ancient history, where we should theoretically be seeing considerable variability and divergence in the symbols that the ancients were using.

04:16

We should be seeing variable meanings attached to divergent symbols, and we should be seeing an extensive variety of religious ideas and conceptions and theologies in the ancient world. That's just not what Eliade found. He found the opposite. He found that symbols are quote, always consistent with one another and even more mind boggling. He found that they made up the individual parts of a singular full system.

04:46

which like I just mentioned, I would call a fully cohesive theology. And this is truly mind boggling. I've definitely seen this as I've studied the religious symbols and the precepts of the ancient world. And to me, it's kind of akin to a miracle. It speaks to me of a divine origin. In fact, Plutarch, a Greek middle Platonist philosopher who lived between 46 and 1, 1980 argued the same thing.

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He argued that although there are various religious traditions in the world appear to be quite diverse, this is actually betrayed by the fact that these various religious traditions use the same symbols, the same symbolic system to express their theology, which Plutarch maintains reveals the fundamental unity of religions. But in order to see, and I say that in quotes, this cohesive theology that Eliade and Plutarch are talking about,

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We've got to start with the symbols. We have to decipher what these symbols meant to the ancients. If we don't, then the symbols just look like some random set of kind of bizarre and fragmented, isolated and antiquated images. But as we decipher them, you're going to begin to see just like Eliade saw that they make up a magnificent, cohesive, fully coherent whole, this beautiful theology, which on this program we refer to.

06:15

as the ancient tradition. So let's jump back to those special weapons. What is this special weapon that the ancients are teaching us we must have if we're to successfully beat the dragon, the evil rebellious son of the high god who wants to drag us farther and farther away from God? What did the ancients mean by this weapon? And thankfully the ancients left us a lot of clues in the ancient record to kind of help us out. So what are some of those clues?

06:44

So first we know from the ancient record that this weapon is a gift. In all of the examples I gave in the previous episode, from the Mesopotamian Marduk to the Hindu Indra to the Greek Perseus to the Norse Thor to the Japanese Yamato Takaru to the children and the lion, which in the wardrobe and if Frodo Baggins, the special weapon that these heroes use to successfully defeat the dragon.

07:13

had been given to them as a gift. Now I looked up the Merriam-Webster definition of gift, and these are the definitions that it gives. It gives two, number one, it says, it's a notable capacity, talent, or endowment. That's the very first definition of gift. The second is something voluntarily transferred from one person to another without compensation.

07:42

Okay, so this means that the special weapon we see in these accounts was not something that the hero deserved or merited or earned or purchased or even made by him or herself. This was something given to the hero completely as a gift. All right. The second clue we learned in the previous episode in the in the legend of Fafnir that the special weapon is a gift of the tree. A gift given by the tree.

08:12

And that was perfectly clear when the strange man thrust the sword into the tree like a branch and our hero Sigurd had to pull the sword, the sword he would use to slay the dragon Fafnir out of the tree. In order to figure out why the tree is giving Fafnir this special weapon as a gift, we have to figure out what this tree is or rather who this tree is. Especially since this tree, which is

08:41

found literally all over the world is absolutely central to everything in the ancient tradition. The legend itself gives us some pretty important clues as to who the tree represents. We talked about this in the previous episode, but in case you've forgotten, let's return to Mircea Eliade, the scholar who I just mentioned, who says this of the identity of the tree,

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manifested in a tree is a motif that runs through all Near Eastern art. It can also be found in the whole Indo-Mesopotamian Egypto-Aegean area. So Eliade found from all of his

extensive research in the ancient world that the ancients used a sacred tree to symbolize God. And there are a lot of

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very, very important reasons why the ancients used a tree to represent God. And we're definitely going to parse those out in future episodes. But for this episode and all future episodes, it's very, very important to recognize first and foremost that the tree symbolizes God. Eliade continues and he says, at Mohenjo-Daro, and that's an archaeological site that's in the Sindh province of Pakistan.

10:05

dated to around the third millennium BC. Quote, we find a divine epiphany in Ephesus religiosa. The tree is stylized in a manner reminiscent of the Mesopotamian sacred tree. Even in Vedic texts we find traces. Brahman is revealed in a tree. An excellent example of a theophany in a tree is the famous

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which represents the God with the upper part of his body coming out of a tree. In Egyptian iconography we find the motif of the tree of life out of which divine arms come laden with gifts and the pouring the water of life out of a vase. So did you catch that last part? In Egyptian iconography, quote, we find the motif of the tree of life out of which divine arms come laden.

11:04

with gifts right there in Egyptian iconography. It's pretty amazing. See when we recognize that the tree represents God, that it makes complete sense in the legend of Fafnir that the sword protrudes out of the tree. The tree is extending a special gift to Sigurd, a gift that without which Sigurd would fail in his conquest to beat Fafnir. Whatever this special weapon is, it's a weapon that all of us need.

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if we're to conquer the great enemy, the rebellious son who aims to keep us from God and the golden treasure which represents his kingdom. So if we all need this gift, what is it? And as we noted in the previous episode, this gift is often symbolized as a weapon, a sword, a bow, an arrow, a net, a hammer. The weaponry symbolism here indicates that whatever this gift is that God gives to those who are worthy to pull it from the tree,

12:03

or to obtain it from God, this divine gift gives that person the power to threaten, deter, inflict harm, repel, or even slay the enemy. The main point to make here is that this weapon gives the God, the king, the hero, or the scullery maid greater power than the enemy. You heard that right.

12:33

the Mesopotamian Tiamant, the Hindu snake Vritra, the Japanese dragon Oruchi, the Christian Satan. In modern iconography, this monster is portrayed as a massive, potent, toxic, fire-breathing dragon. So whatever it is that God gifts to those who are worthy, this is no light thing. It gives them the power to

13:00

conquer the the ugliest most vile most poisonous most horrendous most powerfully profane being known That being that desires nothing more than our spiritual destruction Desires nothing more than to destroy us and the world by sowing darkness deceit division disorder duplicity and desolation Everything that's contrary to the laws of God

13:31

against which he chose to rebel. So again, whatever this spiritual weapon is that God gifts to those who are worthy, it is no light thing. And as the strange man told Sigurd in the legend of Fafnir, quote, the man to pull out this sword from the trunk shall receive it from me as a gift. And he will find out for himself that he never bore in hand a better

14:00

sword than this. Oftentimes in the ancient record, the god, the king, the hero, and the scullery maid are given other gifts that will enable them to gain victory over the dragon gifts that are best described as spiritual armor. For example, in Greek mythology, the

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which gave Hades the ability to become invisible. Hades uses this special helmet to destroy the weapons of the Titans. And there are a litany of special helmets in the ancient myths and legends. In Chinese mythology, Sun Wukong wears a magical headband. In the Arthurian legends, King Arthur wore Goswick, a magic helmet that had been passed down to him from his father, Uther Pendragon.

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At one point, Marilyn casts a spell on Goswick which allows Arthur to become invisible. Interestingly, this helmet was said to have been buried with King Arthur when he died. Sometimes this so-called helmet is depicted as a halo, which is also known as nimbus, which according to the dictionary is, quote, a luminous cloud or halo surrounding a supernatural

15:25

or a saint. Now I know I seem to have a lot of Harry Potter references in these episodes, but that's because Rowling really milked the ancient symbolism. And quite honestly, she did it quite nicely in a manner that was congruent with the original meanings of much of the symbols. So it was no surprise that Rowling named Harry's broomstick, which was a powerful magical broomstick no less, the Nimbus 2000. A name which to those aware of its meaning,

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marked Harry as the hero who would save his people. From the evil basilisk snake, Voldemort. Also in Greek mythology, in the 18th book of Homer's Iliad, we learn that Hephaestus, the Greek god of artisans, blacksmiths, and metalworkers, forges a spectacularly detailed shield of Achilles, a hero of the Trojan War.

16:19

And this shield is so spectacular that Homer spends over 125 lines in the poem of the Iliad, just describing the intricate details of this shield. Achilles uses this shield to protect himself in his battle against the Trojan Prince Hector, whom Achilles ultimately slays. If you'd like to see Angelo Monticelli's rendition of Achilles' shield, you can find it on our

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thea under the show notes for this episode. We can find many other magical shields in the ancient myths and legends. Another one I want to mention is found in the Arthurian legends. Here we find the shield of Lancelot, which was given to him by the lady of the lake. The shield instantly cured Lancelot of tiredness and gave him the strength of three men. In the Shana-Mei, which is

17:15

The Book of Kings, it's an epic poem written by the Persian poet Ferdowsi. It was written between 977 and 1010 AD. It tells how the hero Rostam, before he went into battle, put on a special fur coat over his chainmail called the Bab-Rabayan. Some sources say that this special fur coat was sent from heaven. Other sources tell us that Rostam, when he was 14 years old,

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killed a dragon in India known as the Babra Bayan. No surprise, this dragon lived in the sea. And from the hide of the dead dragon, Rastam made this special coat that had supernatural qualities that made him invulnerable to fire and water and weapons. And I find this legend quite interesting because if you remember back a couple of episodes, Marduk formed the earth from the hide of the dead sea monster Tiamat.

18:14

We mentioned that this makes sense because once the chaos monster has been destroyed, life could emerge, the creation could take place. In this legend of Rastam, we seem to see echoes of this. Once Bab-Rabbi is destroyed, nothing can threaten his life. And this also seems to be somewhat akin to the ancient Hebrew high priest wearing the dead leviathan as a sash around his waist as part of his vestments. It's a reminder that life

18:43

both physical and spiritual comes as a result of vanquishing the dragon. In either case, whether the coat came from heaven or whether it came from the hide of the slain dragon, they both echo themes that we keep seeing over and over again. In Norse mythology in the 13th century AD in a saga known as the Orvar Odds Saga, Fulvio Ferrari, who's a Norse scholar, says this of our hero Odor, quote.

19:13

In the universe in which Oda lives and acts is pervaded by magic. He himself resorts to enchanted objects and forces in order to reach his goals, such as magical arrows, the shirt of invulnerability, and the always favorable wind. Now, this is super interesting. I find all three of Oda's magical items fascinating. We have the favorable wind.

19:39

which in episode number 13, the incomprehensible brooding wind, we learned how a special wind which came directly out of God brooded over the primordial waters of chaos. This

wind essentially conquered the chaos. Odor also had magical arrows, which are clearly special weapons, but Odor also, like we just saw in our Persian hero Rostam, wore a special shirt which protected him in battle.

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the shirt of invulnerability. And guess who Odor used his favorable wind and magical arrows and shirt of invulnerability to fight? You guessed it, monsters. Ferrari writes, quote, the malignant and ugly giants whom Odor fights against during his first journey to the north are the same grotesque trolls.

20:35

Okay, so I don't wanna steer too far off topic here, but I wanna talk about trolls for a minute. First of all, trolls are a Norse invention. The Norse word troll actually means fiend or demon. So listen to how this description of a troll in the Norse pros-ita text kinda matches many of the characteristics of our sea monster. It reads, they call me a troll, moon of the earth.

21:04

Runger, wealth sucker of the giant, destroyer of the storm sun, beloved follower of the cirrus, guardian of the knopfjord, swallower of the will of heaven, the sun. What's a troll if not that? Okay, so trolls are quote, wealth suckers. Now, where have we seen this before? We saw this in the legend of Fafnir.

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when Fafnir killed his father, Raymar. And he did this so that he could steal the gold which the high god Odin had given his father, Raymar. Trolls, quote, destroy the storm sun and, quote, swallow the will of heaven. And both of these lines refer to the monster that destroys the sun, which is a well-known archaic symbol of the high god. So these lines.

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definitely resonate with the notion of rebellion, one who seeks to destroy the high god and take the wealth of his kingdom for himself. And finally, this troll is described as a quote, guardian of the Nafjord. Now Nafjord appears to be a proper name here, but I couldn't find anything on where or what this place is precisely. But I do know what a fjord is. And if you're not familiar with a fjord, a fjord is a long kind of narrow inlet of water.

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that's typically formed by a glacier. They're usually characterized by steep cliffs that are on either side. They often have stunning natural beauty, clear cold waters surrounded by towering mountains. And if you look at an aerial view of a fjord, and I'll post some on the website, it looks like a narrow passage of water winding its way inland until it stops, usually at the base of a breathtaking mountain.

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We haven't yet discussed the symbolism of the winding path that culminates in a mountain yet, but you do already know that the mountain represents where God dwells. So according to Norse mythology, our lovely troll stands outside the entrance to the fjord, a watery pathway that leads to a mountain. So you see the symbolism here. The prose Editech says that the troll guards the entrance to the fjord. So if one can't make it past the troll,

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one has no chance of making it to the mountain where God dwells. I personally don't like the use of the word guardie in here because this suggests that the troll is in some way working for or in behalf of God, kind of guarding his sacred abode. But everything we've seen so far, the awful dragon rebelled against God's power and authority and is doing everything in its power to repel or block us from God's presence.

23:51

It's in this light, he isn't a true guardian per se. He's an obstacle, a barrier, an impediment, preventing us from entering where God resides. As a quick aside, one of the best things I've ever done in my life is to take a rigid, inflatable boat through Njeri Fjord. It's one of only two World Heritage Fjords in Norway. The scenery is beyond stunning. In fact, it's along this fjord that you find

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little village that looks remarkably similar to the village Arendelle in Disney's Frozen and that's because this is the little village which inspired Arendelle but I digress but if you ever have the opportunity in your lifetime to visit Nurefjord do it. Do not let the opportunity pass you by. While I was in Norway I took a lot of pictures of Nurefjord and that little Norwegian village and I'll post them on the website under this episode's show notes

24:51

Check them out, they're truly magnificent. Okay, back to our trolls. There are two additional aspects of trolls that correspond with the awful dragon. So first trolls, like the dragons we've seen, are malevolent, terribly hideous creatures. I think this is really well depicted in the Harry Potter series in the Philosopher's Stone when Harry encounters a large, grotesque mountain troll in the bathroom. J.K. Rowling describes him like this,

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It was a horrible sight. 12 feet tall. Its skin was a dull, granite gray. Its great, lumpy body like a boulder with its small balled head perched on top like a coconut. It had short legs, thick as tree trunks with flat, horny feet. The smell coming from it was incredible. It was holding a huge wooden club which dragged along the floor because its arms were so long. Ugh.

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In addition to its hideous nature, trolls are also vulnerable to sunlight. You might've thought it was only vampires, but no, trolls as well. Legend has it that when a troll is exposed to sunlight, they turn to stone. Consequently, trolls, like the sea serpent who lives in the dark, primordial ocean, lives either in dark, isolated subterranean caves or grottoes, or deep in a foreboding forest or under a bridge that marks the path.

26:20

to the mountain where the high god dwells. And like the dragon, the troll must be vanquished if one is to proceed to the tree or the mountain where the tree dwells. Okay, that was a little longer detour than I'd planned to make. We were talking about our hero Odor, who before he went to battle against the grotesque trolls, put on a powerful silken shirt, which no weapon could pierce. Now that is some very special armor.

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In Greek mythology, the aegis, which was a shield or a cape or a breastplate, no one's quite sure, was made from the hide of the goat, Omaothu. Aegis actually means goat skin. However, it's portrayed this goat skin, which came from the goat which suckled Zeus, protected whomever wore it. So back to our original question, we know that these special weapons and special armor are symbolic.

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Like Eliade tells us, religious symbolism is meant to teach us something about transcendent reality. They're supposed to teach us something about the true nature of spiritual reality.

And based on what we've learned so far, based on their proliferate symbols of special weaponry and special armor, the spiritual battle that started when a rebellious son of God decided to challenge the high God's authority, a battle that from everything we see in the ancient texts,

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that appears to be continuing in our day is real, very real. And it's not a battle that should be taken lightly. It's a battle with serious repercussions. So if we learn anything from the ancient record, it's that we should not despair. We're not doomed or fated to be consumed by the malevolent dark forces of evil.

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In fact, it's pretty darn clear from all of the sacred texts and myths and legends and folktales that we've been discussing over the past couple of episodes that the high god does not leave anyone who chooses to battle the dragon empty handed. He empowers them with fierce, powerful spiritual weapons and invincible spiritual armor, which will ensure their victory.

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But I want to be super clear here. The ancient record also tells us that this spiritual weaponry and spiritual armor is not handed out willy-nilly. There appear to be some very important qualifications. The God, the King, the hero or the scullery maid must meet before they're able to symbolically pull the sword from the tree, which you know now is just another way of saying obtain these spiritual weapons and spiritual armor from God.

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And we'll talk about what those qualifications are in a future episode. But unfortunately, it might be a bit down the line because I have a lot to cover before we get there. But for right now, we're gonna still work on what these spiritual weapons and armors actually are. And for the answer of that, we have to go back and learn a few more things about the great primordial Theomache. So after one of the high gods beloved sons rebelled, another one of the high gods beloved sons,

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willingly volunteered to directly battle the rebellious son to save his father's kingdom. And like we mentioned, this hero son, who's called by the name Marduk in the Mesopotamian

literature, that name actually comes from Mar-u-tu-ak, which means son of the sun, S-u-n. The sun, S-u-n, being symbolic of the high god. So he's the son of the high god.

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In the Enuma Elish we're also told that he's the first born son. All right. So Marduk is gifted special weapons and special armor by the high god before he goes into battle. And keep in mind that these weapons and armor are symbolic again of transcendent reality. These are really spiritual weapons and spiritual armor that we're talking about. In tablet number four of the Enuma Elish the gods tell Marduk quote,

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who began the rebellion, pour out his life. When the gods, his fathers beheld the fulfillment of his word, and they're talking about Marduk there, they gave him an invincible weapon which overwhelmeth the foe. Go and cut off the life of Tiamat. Now listen to how Marduk, the son of the high god, takes all of the weapons he's been gifted.

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and prepares for spiritual battle. His spiritual preparations are quite impressive and try to envision it as I read. Quote, he made ready the bow. He chose his weapon. He slung a spear upon him and fastened it. He raised the club. In his right hand, he grasped it. The bow and the quiver he hung at his side. Okay, so like I mentioned,

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His spiritual preparations are pretty impressive. He arms himself with a spiritual bow, a quiver full of spiritual arrows. He slings a spiritual spear over his shoulder and fastens it. He raises a spiritual club in the air. He is armed. But this is not all. Listen to what he does next as part of his preparations. Quote, he set the lightning in front of him. With burning flame, he filled his body.

31:57

Okay, this is pretty interesting. The symbols we have here are lightning and burning fire. In the ancient world, lightning and fire are emblematic of virtue, righteousness, illumination, glory and light. So take a second and think on the imagery of a lightning bolt. So here we see that a lightning bolt goes in front of Marduk. In our lived experience, we know that a lightning bolt is a flash of...

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immeasurable brightness and power. And these are the images that we're supposed to be getting. More often than not, lightning is associated with the high god. So it's probably not too far of a stretch to suggest here that this powerful spiritual lightning bolt was a gift to Marduk from the high god. The text also tells us that Marduk prepared for battle by filling his entire being with fire.

32:52

Okay, in the ancient record, fire is kind of like serpent symbolism. It can kind of take on both negative and positive connotations. Here it's used as a symbol of Marduk's glory, the glory that's associated with righteousness and virtue. The association between fire and glory is all over in the ancient record. We see it in ancient Egypt, in chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead. The god Osiris is described as the fiery benben bird, the phoenix.

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It reads, quote, I am the great Benu bird, which is in Ununu, which is a town named Heliopolis. What does it mean? As for the Benu bird, it is Osiris. We see it in Daniel chapter 10 verse six. We see an association between the God Jehovah and both lightning and fire. In this verse, Daniel describes what Jehovah looks like. He says, quote,

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His body also was like the barrel. Now barrel is kind of similar to crystal and his face as the appearance of lightning and his eyes as lamps of fire. The god Agni, which means fire, is a major god in the Vedic tradition associated with fire, lightning, and the sun. In Hindu iconographies depicted with red skin,

34:17

with flames engulfing his crown or a halo of flames around his body. And there's literally hundreds of examples like this that I could give you. So for Marduk to fill his body with fire, fire which symbolizes the radiant glory of one who has obtained the highest level of holiness is another way of saying that Marduk prepared for the battle against the great dragon by filling himself with the purifying.

34:45

power of righteousness, virtue, and holiness. But this is not all. He makes even more preparations. The text continues, quote, he made a net to enclose the inward parts of Tiamat. And we learned in our last episode that this net was a gift of the high God Anu. Quote, then he gets the winds ready, the four winds he stationed so that nothing of her might escape.

35:14

He created the evil wind and the tempest and the hurricane. He sent forth the winds which he had created, the seven of them. We've talked plenty about winds, but there's more. We're starting to get the picture here that Marduk made extensive preparations before he ever went into battle. And listen to what else he takes with him. Quote, the Lord raised the thunderbolt, high mighty weapon. He mounted the chariot.

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storm unequalled for terror. He harnessed and yoked onto it four horses, destructive, ferocious, overwhelming, and swift of pace. Their teeth were flecked with foam. They were skilled. They had been trained to trample underfoot, mighty in battle." Now remember again that all of these preparations are spiritual preparations for the great battle. It's at this point in the text that we might be thinking, those are a lot of preparations.

36:12

We might be thinking Marduk is ready to go. He's fully prepared, but he's not. It's here that we are told about one more very, very important item. Listen to what it is. And this is the Stephanie Dally translation. It reads, quote, clothed in a cloak of awesome armor. His head was crowned with a terrible radiance. Okay. This is really interesting.

36:40

The last thing Marduk does before he is fully prepared for battle is put on a special cloak of armor. Just like we've been talking about. Now this cloak is pretty interesting. In the earlier LW King translation, this cloak is referred to as a garment. It reads, quote, this garment was clothed with terror.

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Interestingly, earlier in tablet number four in the LW King translation, we learn a little bit more about this special garment. Listen to who gave Marduk this garment. In these lines, the gods have been praising Marduk for volunteering to take on Tiamat, and the text reads,

quote, “‘Then set they,’ now they is referring to the council of the gods, “‘in their midst a garment.’”

37:34

And unto Marduk their firstborn they spake, may thy fate, O Lord, be supreme among the gods. Here we clearly see that this special garment with which Marduk cloaked himself was a gift from the council of the gods. And we already learned that this council was governed over by Anu, the high god. The council didn’t do anything without the decree of the high god. So this special garment or cloak was really a special gift given to him by virtue.

38:04

of the High God himself. I think it’s really interesting that this garment is the last piece of Marduk’s battle gear to be mentioned before he’s ready to go off to war. It must have been a very, very important item. And I absolutely love how the LW King translation says that with this garment, Marduk was quote, clothed with terror.

38:32

In other words, this wasn’t an item that upon seeing it would terrify or evoke terror in the evil sea serpent Tiamat. So this must have been a very special spiritual cloak indeed. There’s an interesting parallel to this in Genesis, which we’ll discuss in greater detail somewhere down the line. But you should note that in Genesis chapter three, Adam and Eve are naked. And I mentioned this before, the word naked here is loaded with a lot of very interesting possibilities.

39:02

And I offer up here that one of these possibilities is that naked means that they were unprotected. Can you imagine going to battle without any armor? My guess is that you’d feel extremely naked. Well, Adam and Eve don’t have the protective special armor that they need to victoriously beat the evil serpent who will tempt them and try them in mortality. In this section of the text, Adam and Eve have succumbed

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to the deception of the serpent lurking in the garden and they’ve partaken of the fruit. As soon as they do this, as soon as they partake of the fruit, the text says their eyes were opened and they quote, knew they were naked. My argument here is that they knew they were no

longer protected. At this point in the text, we get this really interesting interaction between Adam and Eve and God. The text reads, quote,

40:00

And they Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.

40:27

So after this, there's a little more dialogue. And then the Lord God addresses the serpent who tempted Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit. It reads, quote, "And the Lord God said into the serpent, "because thou has done this, thou art cursed." I'm gonna skip a bit forward. Quote, "I will put enmity between thee "and the seed of the woman,' which is mankind. "It,' referring to mankind, "shall bruise thy head,

40:57

and thou shall bruise his heel." In other words, we learn here that this evil serpent has not yet been fully vanquished. God is telling Adam and Eve that this serpent will have power to continue to wage war against human beings in the mortal realm. Now, there's a purpose to this, which we'll discuss at some other time. At this point in the text, the Lord God is preparing to kick Adam and Eve out of the garden. They've partaken of the fruit so they can't stay where God dwells.

41:26

But it's what God does before he kicks them out of the garden that's of greatest interest to us here. Listen to what God does. And this is in verse 21, it reads, quote, "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, "did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothes them." See here, just how we saw the gods or the high God give Marduk a special cloak to protect him before he went into battle. Here we see God.

41:56

give Adam and Eve special coats made of skins before he kicks them out of the garden. Coats of skins, which I argue, are meant to protect them in their battle against the serpent, Satan, in the mortal world. And note too how in this first, that it's the Lord God who actually makes

the coats for Adam and Eve. These coats are of divine origin. They are gifts that God gives Adam and Eve.

42:24

And with these coats, Adam and Eve are no longer unprotected. They are no longer naked. Now like Marduk, they are cloaked in spiritual armor ready to take the battle to Satan. And hopefully like Marduk's special garment, Adam and Eve's coats of skins will invoke terror in Satan. Okay, let's return to the Enuma Elisha. At this point in the text, Marduk is fully equipped. Now he's equipped, he's ready.

42:52

He's made all of the necessary preparations for spiritual warfare. And the text says this, quote, his garment was clothed with terror, with overpowering brightness, his head was crowned. Then he set out, he took his way. And toward the raging Tiamat, he set his face. I love that, I can just feel his courage.

43:21

I want to stop here and remind you one more time that all of this is symbolic. The ancients are teaching us about the nature of spiritual things. These accounts are talking about spiritual warfare, the battle that you and I must face if we're to make it past the formidable troll guarding the fjord passage leading to the mountain of God. The ancients are teaching us how we can make it past the troll, the dragon, or the sea serpent.

43:49

And it's here that I want to make a very, very important point about the ancient world. It's a point that I'm going to make several times in the future, and it's best expressed by the Hermetic adage, as above, so below. Mersey El-Yati really drilled down on this aspect of the ancient world. We see a very similar statement in the Vedic Suttabhatha Brahmana, which says, quote, thus the gods did, thus men do.

44:20

See, the ancients taught time and time again that we as mortals were to try and imitate what happened in the spiritual world, or to follow their example. The heavens are our exemplary model. In other words, we should pattern our spiritual preparations after Marduk's spiritual preparations. He's the exemplary Mesopotamian model. If we want to succeed in defeating the dragon,

44:49

We must do what needs to be done to release the sword, like Sigurd, from the barn stoker tree so that we can be armed with the special weapons and the special armor needed to come off victors. We're to emulate the preparations of the primordial hero god. Now don't hate me because I haven't yet answered the question I posed at the end of last episode and the beginning of this episode, which was.

45:16

what is this spiritual weapon that all of us must have? And I promise we're getting closer, but I can't yet explain until we go over a little more of what happened during the primordial Theomache. And I promise that we're gonna get to that. I was hoping we'd get to it today, but sometimes I'm kind of distracted by so many interesting things that I wanna tell you. But I hope you're beginning to see how, by deciphering the symbols, that we're deciphering the theology. I'm gonna have to leave it there.

45:44

I look forward to seeing you next time on the ancient tradition. With that, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Loogan.

46:00

You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #22 - The Wounded Hero

<https://theancienttradition.com/22-the-wounded-hero/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:28

Welcome to The Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. It's great to have you with me today. Before I jump into today's episode, I want to remind you that you can learn more about this podcast and our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio write on our website, thea You can find our YouTube channel there, more information about.

00:53

scholars that we've mentioned on the podcast and as well as their bios and links to the important books that they've written. And in addition you can find show notes for each and every episode of the podcast there. It's a great resources. If you haven't had a chance to check it out be sure and check out the show notes. I highly recommend it because you'll find there a full written transcript of each episode.

01:19

with a lot of links in there to the texts and myths and legends and some of the key figures that we've mentioned on the podcast, as well as pictures, pictures of things like the ancient records and the artifacts that we talk about on the program, like the pyramid texts and cylinder sills and bass reliefs and carvings and just anything that's pertinent to that episode. So for example, in our last episode, we talked about the Norris trolls, if you remember.

01:46

and Norway's amazing, beautiful fjords. So I posted pictures of both, including a short video even of my boat trip through Norway's world heritage Nierofjord. So be sure and check it out. Today we're gonna pick up where we left off in our last episode. So to kind of refresh your memory, we've been talking about the great primordial battle that the ancients told us took place in the heavens before the earth was formed.

02:16

In the ancient record, this primordial battle is ubiquitous. And the world's oldest sacred texts and scriptures and myths and legends, and even in the modern day, remnants of this primordial battle show up, albeit in degenerated and desacralized forms in much, much of the world's greatest literature and film. This primordial battle represents one of, if not the

02:45

most important and prevalent mythological themes in the ancient world. So it's one of those stubborn bits par none again. So for this reason it's really important that we study everything that we can about this battle so that we can truly understand what the ancients are teaching us about the spiritual realm or world and then our relationship to it.

03:09

What you're going to learn is that this primordial battle is critical to an understanding of the creation of the earth. And that'll become a little more clear towards the end of today's episode. And that's why we're talking about it here, but it's also critical to an understanding of the establishment of kingship, both heavenly kingship and earthly kingship. In fact, you're going to see over the next couple of episodes, how so many of the concepts that we've been discussing, the

03:36

battle against the dragon, the special weapons that are needed to defeat the dragon, victory over the dragon, kingship, the building of a temple, and the creation of the world are all tied together in this neat theology that, in fact, through an examination of the Primordial Battle and these myths that express it, you're going to see the theology of the ancient tradition really began to take shape, which you will find is pretty significant.

04:05

both in its cosmological and cosmogonical implications. But stick with me because we still have a lot to cover before we get there. All of this brings me to today's episode, the wounded hero. For the past two episodes, we've been discussing the special weapons and the special armor that were gifted to the divine son of the high god, be he known by the name Marduk, Bal, Horus, Odin, Indra or Tesla Kapoka. Special weapons and armor.

04:34

that would both protect him and ensure his defeat of the rebel son of the high god, who is usually depicted as a sea serpent or a dragon or a monster when we look at the ancient iconography. In the past couple of episodes, I've mentioned Neil Forsythe's book, *The Old Enemy*. It's an important monograph on the combat myth that was published by Princeton University Press. If you go to page 448 of this book, Forsythe provides readers with a table.

05:03

it outlines the sequence of events that most combat narratives follow. Those stubborn bits or themes that seem to show up wherever we see these combat myths in the world. To put this table together, he drew upon his own research. He went through a lot of combat myths himself, and he also drew upon the research of Vladimir Prop and Joseph Fontenrose. These are scholars who also studied combat myths, and then they put together their own kind of sequence of the core themes. And in this table,

05:32

narrows the main sequence of events down to 12, kind of 12 events that these myths follow. And he says this quote, represents a significant incident in the plot structure of most ancient combat narratives. Of those 12, I want to briefly go through the first six so that you can get a feel for where we are in the podcast in terms of the general sequence of events in most combat narratives.

06:01

So the first event is the presentation of a villain or enemy or the repercussions of their presence, like a lack of fertility in the land and things like that. Forsythe says, quote, combat narratives generally begin with a statement of the fundamental situation, a conflict or opposition of some kind, which determines the subsequent events and which the champion's victory will liquidate.

06:32

And listen to what Forsythe stresses next. He says, quote, such a beginning becomes specifically a combat myth at the moment when the initial situation is attributed to the agency of the enemy figure. And I think this is interesting because here we have two academic scholars. We've got Forsythe and Prop who are telling us that all combat myths begin with the misuse of moral agency.

06:59

We talked about the theological significance of moral agency in our last episode. And as we see here, it plays an absolutely fundamental role in what caused the primordial Theomache. These scholars are corroborating the interpretation that the beings in the primordial realm were moral agents.

07:21

After the enemy reveals his ugly head and his destructive works, the second thing we see is the emergence of the hero. As I pointed out previously, the hero god or king or pauper typically volunteers to battle the enemy in order to save his father's kingdom or his country, the village or the people. And then he makes ready all of the preparations to fight that battle.

07:49

The hero of legend or myth is usually pictured as the representative of his people. He's already their king or god, for example. And this relationship is often portrayed as the selection of the hero by the divine council or as the hero's response to his people's problems. In the sequence of events, the hero, quote, emerges from the group and so becomes a genuine cultural hero.

08:18

It's at this point in the combat narratives that we see the third event. We see the high God or a God subordinate to the high God, like the craftsman God, Cawther, which we talked about in the Ugaritic literature, who crafts special weapons or armor and then gifts them to the hero God. It's a universal theme in combat narratives that the hero is gifted supernatural aid as part of his preparations or her preparations for the battle.

08:48

be it in the form of weapons or armor or abilities or even knowledge. Now that the hero is armed and ready for battle, the fourth thing that we see is that the hero god must journey to the land where the battle is going to take place. So like in the Epic of Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh journeyed to the Cedar Forest so that he could battle the monster Humbaba.

09:14

And then in the Ugaritic ball cycle, the god ball journeyed to his father's palace so that he could battle Yam. And in Beowulf, Beowulf sailed to Denmark to battle the monster Grendel. And once the hero god or the hero arrives, the fifth event to take place is the battle. The enemy god attacks and the battle begins.

09:38

The ancient narratives usually include a great deal of violent imagery to kind of capture the gravity of this battle. It's a battle of both immediate and eternal import. This brings us to the sixth event and the subject of today's episode, which is the initial and temporary defeat of the hero god or champion.

10:05

nearly always the hero god or champion is wounded during the battle and sometimes the wounds are minor other times are kind of super serious and other times they're outright fatal foresight writes quote one of the most important elements of fontan rose discerned in his material was the frequency with which the hero is initially defeated or even killed

10:34

And I second this, the wounded hero is one of the most important aspects of the primordial Theomache, or as the scholars and writers refer to it, the combat myth. And that's because these wounds constitute one of the most important aspects of the theology of the ancient world, the theology of the ancient tradition. So for that reason,

10:57

Let's take a look today at what we can learn from a few of the divine combat myths that we find all over in the ancient world. So let's start with ancient Egypt. Upon King Osiris' death, who was killed by the evil god Set, Horus, Osiris' son, his beloved son, no less, as is actually stated in the pyramid texts, is born.

11:25

And Horus grows up under the tyrannical reign of Set. Donald McKenzie's historical narrative tells the story like this, quote, Set continued to rule over Egypt and he persecuted the followers of Osiris. One night, there appeared to Horus in a dream, a vision of his father Osiris, which as a quick aside here appears to be the earliest form of the Hamlet myth.

11:55

The ghost urged him to overthrow Set by whom he had been so treacherously put to death and Horus vowed to drive his wicked uncle and all his followers out of the land of Egypt. Okay, let's stop here for a second. Note how we are seeing really important combat themes here. The land of Egypt is under the rule of a tyrant. This tyrant is persecuting the quote followers of Osiris.

12:25

Horus is the son of the dead king Osiris, so he is the rightful king, he's the rightful heir. Egypt is rightfully his to govern. He's the representative of the people. But he cannot reign

because the rebellious one has usurped his throne. In the Book of the Victory over Seth, which is a late heretic text, it's dated to around 300 BC. It says this of Seth.

12:55

quote, back rebel of abominable character, who did evil, who stepped outside of the prescribed path, who loved the fight, who enjoyed quarrel, who created evil, who caused grief, an enmity to the father of his fathers, who avoids laws, who uses force, robber, lord of the lie, ruler of deceit, leader of criminals.

13:23

whose heart is haughty among the gods, who sows enmity, who creates destruction, the evil one who incites rebellion, who causes grief and creates wounds.” Okay, did you catch that? It says that Set, quote, creates wounds. At this point, our hero Horus is called to action by the ghost of his father Osiris.

13:50

who appeals to him to drive his wicked uncle and all of his wicked uncle's followers out of Egypt, a feat that would ultimately restore the throne to Horus and restore peace and fertility to the land. So let's keep reading to see what happens. Quote, so he, we're talking about Horus still, gathered his army together and went forth to battle. Set came against him at Edfu and slew many of his followers.

14:21

but Horus secured the aid of the tribes that remained faithful to Osiris and Isis. And Set was again attacked and driven towards the eastern frontier. He rested at Zaru and there was the last battle fought. It was waged for many days and Horus lost an eye. But Set was still more grievously wounded and he was at length driven with his army out of the kingdom.

14:52

We have a lot of interesting things going on here. Note how the battle between Set and Horus here is more than a battle between the two of them. It's more akin to a war, a war between the quote, followers of Osiris, who adhere to Ma'at, which is the Egyptian concept of truth, justice and righteousness, against the rebellious quote, followers of Set, who reject Ma'at and epitomize untruth, injustice and unrighteousness.

15:21

So what we're really talking about here is a spiritual war. Okay, but did you catch how Horus was wounded in the battle? McKenzie writes, speaking of the battle, quote, "It was waged for many days and Horus lost an eye." At some point in the battle, Set brutally rips out Horus's eye, leaving him badly wounded." Now,

15:50

Obviously, since we're talking about a spiritual battle here, the loss of Horus's eye is pretty symbolic. The lost eye is symbolic of the loss of something spiritual. And we'll get to that in another episode. But for now, it's important to recognize here that Horus sustains a grave wound during his battle against the evil set. Now let's turn to the Epic of Gilgamesh.

16:16

In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the god Shamash, who's the sun god, gifts Gilgamesh great winds, the north wind, the world wind, the stone and the icy wind, the tempest and the scorching wind. And not only does the sun god Shamash give Gilgamesh the great winds, just like what we saw out of the high god in episode number 13, the incomprehensible brooding wind, but the god Shamash also orders blacksmiths to make special weapons for Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

16:46

they head out to kill the monster Humbaba. This is the same theme that we keep seeing over and over and over again. Listen to N.K. Sanders translation where it gives us a description of the special weapons that Shamash gifts the duo. It reads quote, and now they brought to them and them is Gilgamesh and his companion Enkidu the weapons. They put in their hands the great swords

17:15

in their golden scabbards and the bow and the quiver. Gilgamesh took the axe, he slung the quiver from his shoulder and the bow of Anshan and buckled the sword to his belt. And so they were armed and ready for the journey. I don't know about you, but I love how the ancients give these special gifted weapons names. Gilgamesh's special axe is actually named the quote, might of heroes.

17:45

And as I just read Gilgamesh's special bow is named the quote bow of Anshan. Anshan is a district in Southwest Persia. So this is probably where they are arguing the supplies to make

the bow or procured. So they're all geared up in their special weapons. Gilgamesh and his companion, Ekidu take their journey to the Cedar forest to where the terrible monster Humbaba resides. And Ekidu says,

18:14

quote, forward, there is nothing to fear. Follow me for I know the place where Humbaba lives. So now that they're armed with these special divine weapons, they have no fear, they're ready. And that's an important point. Together, the two make their journey to the Cedar forest and they travel over many leagues, crossing seven mountains until they come to the gate of the forest.

18:44

And we don't have time to discuss this here, but note that they cross precisely seven mountains before they get to the gate of the cedar forest. And this is another one of those tidbits that you'll want to remember because it's quite important to the story and to the theology of the ancient tradition. And we'll definitely cover it in a future episode. Armed to the hilt, they're standing just outside the gate to the cedar forest and the text reads, quote,

19:11

Together they went down into the forest and they came to the green mountain. There they stood still. They were struck dumb. They stood still and gazed at the forest. They saw the height of the cedar. They saw the way into the forest and the track where Humbaba was to walk. They gazed at the mountain of cedars, the dwelling place of the gods. The hugeness of the cedar rose

19:41

the mountain its shade was beautiful full of comfort. I hope you caught a few of the things we've been talking about the podcast to this point. Note that the first thing that Gilgamesh and Enki do see in the cedar forest is a mountain. A green mountain. The two are awed by this mountain. The text says that they are quote struck dumb. They also see a quote track where Humbaba was to walk.

20:11

like a path. They see a path where Humbaba hangs out a path which we presume leads to the mountain. And know how this is the same theme that we saw in the previous episode among the Norse myths and their trolls guarding the fjord or the pathway that ultimately

leads to a beautiful mountain. The text also tells us that this cedar forest is quote the dwelling place of the gods.

20:39

where in front of the mountain rose a huge cedar tree that quote, it's shade, beautiful, full of comfort. Now, I don't know about you, but I'm starting to see a lot of parallels here between the cedar forest and the Judeo-Christian Garden of Eden. We have a mountain, which if you recall, we argued in episode number four, did God reveal the ancient tradition in the Garden of Eden, that based off of a verse in the book of Ezekiel, that the Garden of Eden was built on elevated ground.

21:09

a mountain. And we also have here a stunning cedar tree, like the tree of life that stands in the center of the garden, which by now you know represents the divine monarch, God seated on his throne. Something that the Epic of Gilgamesh tells us outright. The cedar forest is, quote, the dwelling place of the gods, which is why we are talking about a forest of cedar trees here.

21:39

each tree symbolically represents a god. And as a quick aside, later in architectural forms, these trees are stylized into columns. So a temple or cathedral with a number of internal columns or trees, just like what we saw in Westminster Abbey, is whether the architects recognize it or not, symbolizing a plurality of gods in the Garden of Eden or the Cedar Forest.

22:09

It represents where the gods gather, the assembly place of the gods, which if you remember is exactly what we learned in the Ugaritic literature. The council of the gods met in the Mount of El. I hope you're beginning to see here how cohesive all of these symbols are. They're telling the same theological story.

22:37

So it should come as no surprise that the monster Humbaba lives near the tree. He's trying to thwart anyone who tries to go near it. Just like the dragon in Jason and the Argonauts blocks access to the golden fleece that's nailed to a tree in the sacred grove of Erez. Or the

dragon Fafnir blocks access to his slain father's enormous treasure of gold. At this point in the story, Gilgamesh

23:05

chops down the huge cedar tree in front of the mountain. He wants the wood of it so that he can build a wall around his city Uruk. Again, this is symbolic. Using the timber or the wood of the sacred cedar tree to build a wall to fortify and protect the city. And remember this, because this is gonna be important in our next episode. The text reads, quote,

23:35

Mbaba heard the noise far off. He was enraged. He cried, Who is this that has violated my woods and cut down my cedar? And then something really interesting happens here. Just as the ugly monster raises his voice, Enkidu and Gilgamesh receive divine assistance. God comes to

24:04

their battle. It reads, but glorious Shamash, who's the sun god, called to them out of heaven, go forward, do not be afraid. So here we see the theme of the hero being gifted divine assistance in his battle with the monster. Unfortunately, Gilgamesh's plans are thwarted and he's overcome by, quote, weakness.

24:33

and he falls to the ground frozen. It's like he's paralyzed, which although it's not directly stated in the text, it appears to be the result of Humbaba's demonic powers. And the text tells us that this power seizes Gilgamesh and binds him in some way. He can't move, he can't speak, he's bound. Gilgamesh is clearly wounded here in some way. The text reads, quote,

25:03

But now Gilgamesh was overcome with weakness for sleep had seized him suddenly. A profound sleep held him. He lay on the ground, stretched out, speechless as though in a dream. When Enkidu touched him, he did not rise. When he spoke to him, he did not reply. Enkidu's worried here. He says, quote,

25:33

Enkidu knows that if Gilgamesh stays in this paralyzed state, Humbaba will slay him. Gilgamesh is a sitting duck. He's easy prey for Humbaba's consumption. And like we see in so many of these combat myths, it appears as though the hero is doomed to destruction. Fortunately, after lying there for some time, Gilgamesh is miraculously loosened from the grip of Humbaba's demonic powers.

26:02

and then he regains control of his faculties and his ability to move. It's at this point in the epic that Gilgamesh does something very, very important, especially in terms of the things we discussed in our previous episode, episode number 21, the cloak of invulnerability. Listen to the text and see if you can't work out how this is connected to our previous episode. The text reads, quote, "At length, Gilgamesh heard him. "Him is Enkidu here."

26:33

lie put on his breastplate the voice of heroes of 30 shekels weight he put it on as though it had been a light garment that he carried and it covered him all together so what's the very first thing Gilgamesh does the the second he's released from Humbaba's demonic powers the text tells us that he throws on his special armor that special armor we talked about in our previous episode

27:02

get that armor on fast enough. Apparently this special armor, which the text tells us is named the Voice of Heroes, which I love because it makes me think of divine utterance, was pretty heavy. It was of 30 shekels weight, the text says. But as soon as he's released from Humbaba's demonic grip, he quote, puts it on as though it had been a light garment.

27:30

At this point in the narrative though, I'm asking myself, you know, what in the world was Gilgamesh thinking? He knew what lied in the cedar forest. He left Uruk armed to the hilt with special weapons so that he could successfully defeat Humbaba, who is the most vile, malevolent, profane creature in existence. Yet, Gilgamesh goes into this battle naked?

27:59

without his special armor on, that special protective armor that the gods gifted Marduk in the Enuma Elish, and that God gifted Adam and Eve in Genesis. What was Gilgamesh

thinking? This was inconceivably unwise on Gilgamesh's part. Not smart Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh figures out very, very quickly that without this special armor, the voice of heroes,

28:27

He's vulnerable to Humbaba's attacks. He can't be successful without this special armor on. And he recognizes this now, and he wants that armor on yesterday. He throws the armor on and the text says, it covered him altogether. So now no part of him is exposed. Now he is clothed in a true cloak of invulnerability.

28:54

whatever the special cloak of invulnerability is, it's clear that we all need it if we're to come off victorious against the awful dragon. The point I wanna draw out here is that, like we saw with Osiris and Horus, our hero Gilgamesh is wounded in his battle against the vile monster. Now let's turn to Norris mythology.

29:20

Norris mythology in the ferocious battle between our hero Sigurd and the terrible dragon Fafnir. Fafnir snorts out awful venomous fire and breath and when Sigurd thrusts his sword into the dragon Sigurd's entire arm up to his shoulder is covered in the dragon's venomous blood. Blood that was thought to be fatal on contact. Now Sigurd survives

29:47

But readers are meant to see this as exposure to the wounds that can be caused by the dragon. In the Anglo-Saxon epic, Beowulf, Beowulf journeys to the depths of the sea. And he does this because that's where the mother of the monster Grendel, whom Beowulf slayed earlier in the legend, lives. And note, you should be seeing some parallels here to the sea monster Tiamat in the Enuma Elish. And if you recall, Tiamat spawned

30:17

a whole legion of monsters. And likewise here, Grendel is the malevolent spawn offspring of a sea monster. At any rate, Beowulf journeys to the bottom of the sea to find Grendel's mother. And the text in the Prose Edda reads, and this begins with Beowulf's point of view, quote, he was able to see the sea at its bottom, grisly and greedy, the grim one's dominion.

30:47

I think that's interesting. Dominion here is always has references to reigning and kingship. So this sea monster is the king of the primordial waters of chaos. At this point, Grendel's mother, the sea monster, sends a legion of sea creatures to attack Beowulf. And the text continues, quote, But many a mere beast tormented him swimming, flood beasts no few, with fierce biting tusks.

31:17

did break through his Bernie, the brave one pursued they. So we see here that these vile sea creatures bite through Beowulf's Bernie, and a Bernie is his armor. Earlier in the epic, we're told that Beowulf's Bernie, quote, did shine and sparkle, seemed over by the art of the artist who makes things. This is interesting. So there's some artisan.

31:43

that made this and the shining and the sparkling of it reflects this maker. Because it shines and sparkles, we know that Beowulf's Bernie is some of that special armor that we've been talking about. The point here though is that Beowulf is wounded by these sea creatures. And although the sea creatures are able to temporarily wound Beowulf, even with his special armor on.

32:10

We learn, as you're gonna see in just a second, that the special armor actually protects Beowulf from the sea monster, Grendel's mother, and her fatal blows. It actually will save Beowulf's life. So after the sea creatures attack and wound Beowulf, Beowulf finds that he's in some sort of underwater cavern where the sea monster, Grendel's mother, dwells. The text describes this cavern as, quote,

32:40

firelight flashing resplendent. Note here how we're getting that same connection that we've seen before between the sea monster who lives at the bottom of the chaotic primordial waters and resplendent fire or glory which we argued is meant to remind the audience that this sea monster fell from the heights and was originally a beloved glorious son of the high god who used his moral agency in a way that led him there.

33:10

So in this cavern, Beowulf and the sea monster engage in this really brutal battle and it's Beowulf's armor that saves him. Let's read the text. It says, quote, he shrank not from battle,

seized by the shoulder, the mother of Grendel, then mighty in struggle, swung he his enemy since his anger was kindled that she fell to the floor with furious grapple. She gave him her quiddle earlier thereafter.

33:40

and stretched out to grab him, the strongest of warriors. Faint-muted stumbled till he fell in his traces, foot-going champion. Then she sat on the holgast and wielded her war knife wide-bladed flashing. So she's got him. In the midst of the battle, Beowulf falls, which is symbolic, and the sea monster

34:08

Grendel's mother sits on Beowulf, binding him to the ground. And she draws up her war knife, wide in blade, and she flashes it in front of Beowulf, poisoning to slay him. It looks at this point like Beowulf is doomed to defeat. How can he possibly escape? Let's keep reading. Quote, Then she sat on the holgast, which is Beowulf, which I mentioned, and wielded her war knife, wide bladed flashing. His...

34:37

breast armor woven bowed over his shoulder. It guarded his life. The entrance defended." Now the entrance is talking about here is the entrance of a blade. So this armor, this special armor protects him from the blade to enter him. Against sword point and edges, Ekthau's son there had fatally journeyed, champion of Geetman,

35:06

which is the sea monster, had the armor not given. Close woven corset, comfort and sucker. I love that Beowulf's special armor saves him. And I also love how it says this armor gives him quote, comfort and sucker. And in the next couple of lines, we learn why this armor is so powerful. It reads quote, and had God most holy not awarded

35:37

all-knowing Lord, easily did Heaven's ruler, most righteous, arrange it with justice." Sometimes the authors of these legends, they just can't refrain from sharing with the audience the sacred recondite teachings these legends are meant to express. Here the author, who by the way is unknown, we don't know who wrote Beowulf, we learn that the special armor Beowulf wears, which ensures Beowulf's victory is a gift.

36:07

from God. The text says God quote awarded the victory. This is the author revealing his or her hand. The author is letting us know that we aren't talking about a physical battle here. We're talking about a spiritual battle. A battle that rages in the heavens and on earth between all of us and the awful sea monster. Beowulf's armor is spiritual armor. I don't want to get too far off track here.

36:35

Sometimes there's just so many amazing things in these narratives that I want to tell you about that I find it difficult to stay on track. But for the purposes of this episode, I hope you're seeing that in each of these narratives, the hero is wounded. Wounds that must be healed if the champion is to survive. If the kingdom is to be preserved, the earth is to flourish. In the Mesopotamian battle between the terrifying Ansoobird and the god Narnurta,

37:03

We read how Ninurta prepares for battle by marshaling the winds, just like we always see. And it says, quote, the warrior marshaled the seven evil winds who dance in the dust the seven world winds. He mustered a battle array, made war with a terrifying formation. Even the gales were silent at his side, poised for conflict. On the mountainside, Ansu and Ninurta met.

37:34

Note here, like we've seen in the other myths, that this battle takes place near a mountain, just outside where God or the gods dwell. And this hearkens back to the myth's roots in the primordial Theomache, where the battle begins in the council of the gods, which was held in, quote, the Mount of El. Let's continue. Anzu looked at him and shook with rage at him, bared his teeth like a lion in sudden rage,

38:04

fury shouted to the warrior. So here we're getting the shouting, the fury, and the rage like we always see with the sea monster. He is an absolutely furious, undisciplined creature who loves to live on in his own shouting. The rebel god screams at the god Nanurta. And this is what he screams. He says, I have taken away every single right and I am in charge of all the god's orders.

38:33

Who are you to come to do battle against me? This is really interesting because the rebel God tells Nenurta here that he took away all of the rights. Now, this is not R-I-G-H-T rights. This is R-I-T-E-S rights. So we're talking about sacred religious rights here. And we'll get into this much later in the podcast, but it's important to point out here that the rebel God seems to believe here

39:03

the religious rights he has effectively insured his rule. I mean he says as much. He says quote, I am in charge of all the God's orders now that he's ruined these rights. This tells us that whatever these rights were they seem to have been absolutely critical to the order of the heavens because by destroying the rights the rebel God seems to think that he's insured his victory. Let's continue quote.

39:31

I have taken away every single right, and I am in charge of all the God's orders. Who are you to come to do battle against me? Give your reasons." Instantly his speech rushed out at him. The warrior Ninurta answered Anzu, I am the avenger of Duranki's God. Okay, Duranki actually means where heaven and earth come together. So we're talking about a temple here.

40:01

And this gives us a clue that the rights that the rebel God claimed to have destroyed are temple rights, rights that are critical to the joining of heaven and earth. He says, I am the avenger of Duranki's God who established Duranki, Ea, king of destinies. So, Ninurta is going to this battle so that he can avenge the God who built the temple, Duranki, the temple that joins heaven and earth.

40:30

So let's continue. Anzu listened to his speech, then hurled about furiously amid the mountains. It's here that we see that the evil Anzu begins to inflict his wounds. But you should pay really close attention here that he's not just inflicting wounds on Ninurta. He is inflicting wounds on the land, on the world itself. And this is what it says, quote.

41:01

darkness fell over the mountain. Their faces were overcast. Shamash, the light of the gods, was overcast by darkness. A clash between battle arrays were eminent. The flood weapon masked. The armor-plated breast was bathed in blood. Clouds of death rained down. An arrow flashed lightning. Whizzed, the battle force roared between them.

41:31

The wounds here that are inflicted are darkness, clouds of death and blood. It's at this point that Nunurta, the god Nunurta takes an arrow out of his quiver and he shoots it at Anzu. So let's listen to what the text says happens. Ninhursag's son, which is Nunurta, trusted of Anu, so Anu is the high god, and Dagon, who's the god Enki.

41:59

beloved of the far-sighted one. There's beloved again. Beloved here is the far-sighted one is actually an epitaph for the high god Anu. So he's beloved of the high god Anu. So there's that reference again. Aimed the shaft at him, shaft being the arrow, at Ansu from the bow's curve. Then listen to what happens. But it did not go near Ansu. The shaft turned back.

42:28

So the arrow he shot turned around and came back towards him. The evil Anzu had repelled Ninurta's arrow. He needed this with the tablet of destinies. If you remember, he stole the tablet of destinies, he stole the Enlil ship. So at this point in the story, it appears as though Anzu can't be defeated. Darkness and death will reign. It's here in the story that we see, like we've seen in the other stories, that God intervenes. In this case,

42:55

the quote, far-sighted one, the high god Anu, tells Nenerta in the middle of this moment where he's about to be defeated, not to give up. And he tells him that he needs to keep fighting. In fact, the high god Anu tells him exactly how to win the victory. The text reads, don't let the battle slacken. Press home your victory.

43:26

Tire him out so that he sheds his pinions in the clash of tempests. Take a throw stick to follow your arrows and cut off his pinions, detach both right and left and slit the throat of wicked Ansu." That's pretty fabulous stuff here. So we see the same thing. We see God come in this really critical moment and give him divine assistance, encouraging him to keep fighting.

43:52

So I could give you many, many more examples of the wounded hero here. In fact, if you remember in Mezzo America, we talked about the demonic seven Makkah who ripped off the arm of the hero twin Hunapu during their battle. And there's many, many more. As Forsyte points out in the old enemy, the wounding of the hero during the battle against the sea monster or the dragon or evil is quote, a principal plot construction.

44:19

which Hollywood and television drama continue to exploit. So they put this in all their storylines and that's because the wounding of the hero is what makes the plots compelling because ultimately these stories are about us, our battle with the dragon, our wounds and what we need to do to come off victors. In each of these accounts, the god, the king, the hero, the pauper, the scullery maid, or you and me don't...

44:47

escape the battle unscathed. We are all left wounded and many with serious wounds, life-altering wounds. Although these wounds could represent literal physical wounds, most of the time the wounds in these combat narratives are meant to be understood symbolically. They're meant to be understood as spiritual wounds. So what are these spiritual wounds? What kind of spiritual wounds does the dragon inflict?

45:16

For the answer to that, it's best if we return to the source of all combat narratives, the great Primordial Theomache. The ancients tell us that in the Primordial Theomache, one of the high gods' beloved sons rebelled against the high god's power and authority. He rebelled against the established order of the heavens. He rebelled against the laws of heaven. Those laws that actually led to that order.

45:45

What this means is that if God is order, then the rebel sun is chaos. If God is life, then the rebel sun is death. If God is just, then the rebel sun is unjust. If God is light, then the rebel sun is darkness. To rebel against God, which he did, is to rebel against everything that God is. So with this in mind, it appears that the wounds that the rebel God inflicts

46:15

fit broadly into two categories, into cosmic wounds and spiritual wounds. And this is kind of an arbitrary designation, but I'm going to use it here just for simplicity of discussion. But I do think that they are likely one and the same thing in terms of their eternal implications. On a cosmic level, the ancients tell us that God operates according to laws. Laws...

46:43

which the ancient Egyptians referred to as Maat, truth, justice, and righteousness. Laws which God is bound by if he wishes to bring about order in the universe. And if you recall in episode number 12, the word that changed the universe, and episode number 14, the terrifying second law of thermodynamics, we learned that God abides by these laws, and in so doing the very elements

47:11

obey his commands. When God orders the elements to form into dry land, the elements form into dry land. And we see this in the Christian New Testament in Hebrews chapter one verse three where it says that God quote upholds and upholds here actually means to keep in its ordered state. So the verse says that God upholds

47:40

all things by the word of his power. The very elements honor God's commands because he lives by the statutes of Maat, truth, justice, and righteousness. What this means on a cosmic level is that God, due to his adherence to Maat, has the ability to bring order to the chaotic

48:10

He has the power to command those elements to form a world. And that's exactly what the word cosmic means. Cosmic comes from the word cosmos, which in Greek actually means to order or arrange. So God has the power to command the elements to order and arrange themselves in a world. And not just one world, He has the power to form innumerable worlds.

48:39

which interestingly is also exactly what it says in the Christian book of Hebrews in the New Testament. In Hebrews chapter one, verse two, it says, and this is speaking of the high God's beloved son, Jesus. It says that God, quote, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, by whom also he made the worlds.

49:08

And yes, it does say worlds, plural. On a cosmic level then, adherence to the laws of heaven empowers God to form worlds, to bring about light, life and fertility. Thus on a cosmic level, the dragon who rebelled against the laws of heaven can only bring about its cosmic opposite, chaos, disorder, darkness, sickness,

49:36

death, destruction, and desolation. Those are the wounds that the dragon inflicts on the cosmos and on the earth itself. In a nutshell, the cosmic wounds he inflicts is the second law of thermodynamics, the inexorable cosmic trend towards decay, degradation, degeneration, corruption, disintegration, and death. Only God, because he complies with the laws of heaven, the strictures of moth,

50:03

has the power to reverse it. Okay, there's some really powerful stuff here. On a spiritual level, let's switch to the spiritual level, adherence to the laws of heaven or Maat empowered God himself to become a powerful, glorious being of radiant light. Light which the ancient record tells us is brighter than the sun. It was by abiding by the laws of Maat that God became a being

50:33

of love, generosity, justice, truth, unity, harmony, peace, and righteousness. Thus, on a spiritual level, the dragon, who rebelled against the laws of heaven, can only sow its spiritual opposite. Hate, greed, injustice, deceit, division, discord, betrayal, and unrighteousness. Those are the wounds the dragon inflicts.

51:03

He desires nothing more than that we join him in his shouting, in his misery, in the chaotic outer realms of the universe, in those chaotic primordial waters. So he does everything in his power to tempt or persuade us to reject or violate the laws of heaven, just like he did. And when we do, when we hate or cheat or steal, when we're envious or deceitful or we use other people, we break the laws of heaven.

51:32

The wounds inflicted by the dragon are spiritual wounds. They are sins. These spiritual wounds are what keep us from returning to God's presence, which is represented by the tree of life on the top of the mountain sanctuary. Every time we break God's laws or the laws of heaven, the dragon gains greater and greater victory over us. This is why Marduk, Baal, Nanurta, Sigurd, and Beowulf needed

52:01

And you and I need the special weapons and special armor that we see over and over and over again in the ancient record. From everything I've read in the ancient writings, the battle against the dragon cannot be won without these special aids. The dragon's weapons are powerful. But in the Judeo-Christian biblical canon in the Book of Isaiah, we find this marvelous set of verses, which I can't even believe is in there, in chapter 54, verses 16 and

52:31

In there we read that God has a blacksmith who forges a weapon that he calls the, quote, waster. I love that, which is often translated as destroyer. It's a weapon that's stronger than any weapon wielded by the dragon. And these are the verses, quote, Behold, I have created the

52:59

that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument, which is the weapon, for his work. And I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against the shall prosper. This is the great heritage of the servants of the Lord." Wow, that's an amazing statement. But don't miss the details here. This is a weapon that is the, quote,

53:29

heritage of the quote, servants of the Lord. Servant here is actually a title, a title that we'll definitely need to examine in greater detail in a future episode so that we know what we must do to qualify, to inherit this most essential of weapons. Don't forget, only the rightful heir can pull that sword from the barn stoker tree. It's pretty much says the same thing right here. Only the servants of the Lord can inherit this weapon, which means that we need to figure out

53:58

what we need to do to obtain the divine weapon. Now that we know what kind of wounds the enemy causes, we're much, much closer to figuring out not only what this special

weapon is, but also what this weapon does. Because now we know that by necessity, this special weapon has to have the ability to either prevent the enemy from causing cosmic chaos amongst the elements, or the ability to reverse those cosmic wounds.

54:28

when he does. We also know this special weapon by necessity must have the ability to either prevent the enemy from causing spiritual chaos in our lives or the ability to reverse those spiritual wounds when he does. In other words, this special weapon gives the one who holds it divine power to withstand the enemy's temptations to break the laws of heaven. Whatever this special weapon is,

54:58

Pose order, form worlds, reverse physical death, reverse pride, generate love, bring forth peace, heal sin and foster unity. This is powerful stuff, this is a powerful theology. This special weapon is indeed a spectacular gift. That wraps it up for me. We'll pick it up here on our next episode.

55:27

Until then, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

55:41

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Episode #23 - The Troubling Death of Osiris

<https://theancienttradition.com/23-the-troubling-death-of-osiris/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:28

Welcome to The Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. If this is your first time listening to The Ancient Tradition, it's great to have you along with us. You're in for a potentially life altering experience if you're genuinely interested in the theology of the ancients. See, the ancients taught that a unique, unadulterated religious tradition was revealed either directly by God or his emissaries to human beings from the very onset of time.

00:58

And what's so interesting about this ancient religious tradition is that deep threads of it run through and make up the core religious doctrines of nearly every single religious tradition that we see today. And what's more, this religious heritage not only shows up in the world's religious traditions, it shows up all over in what we would consider to be highly secularized aspects of society. From our banking system to the regalia that we see at graduation ceremonies to

01:27

Asclepius' Rod, which is used to symbolize the healthcare industry, to the eagle atop American flagpoles, to the Christmas tree, to the Seven Days of the Week, to the coronation of kings and queens, and to what might appear to be a trivial pack of playing cards. It's literally everywhere if only you know what you're looking at and if you understand the religious heritage that underpins it.

01:53

For that reason on this podcast, we dig into the world's oldest sacred writings, which are found almost universally in the ancient near East, in ancient Egypt, in ancient Mesopotamia, which today is modern day Iraq, Turkey, Iran, northeastern Syria, and in ancient Persia, Anatolia, the Arabian peninsula and in the Levant, which is modern day Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Cyprus.

02:24

This region of the world is widely considered by scholars to be the cradle of civilization. What we find when we dive into the ancient record of these cultures is that they share not

only the same cosmological conception of the earth and its place in the cosmos, but they also share the same fundamental religious theology, which strongly suggests that they are the offspring of one original source.

02:53

in his book, I've talked about him before, The Temple and the House, said this of the world's earliest religious tradition, quote, As strong is the case for the single origin of inventions and discoveries, it is stronger still for the single origin of rites, customs, and beliefs. I have said that in my view, these formed part of a complex religious system which came

03:23

in the ancient east. For my research, I concur. It definitely seems to have originated in the ancient near east or at least our best records of it come out of that region of the world. He continues, we've seen that some of the features of the ancient cult have been preserved in the religions of today. These features have probably descended in an unbroken tradition from very early time.

03:52

Again, I concur with Lord Raglan. It appears that key theological features of, as he calls it, the ancient cult were passed on intact from generation to generation and culture to culture. And these are the stubborn bits that I always refer to. If, as the ancients claimed, these key theological features represent the original truths that God revealed to human beings from the very onset of time, then these literally are the most important and

04:20

consequential religious tenets known to man. The truth theology, the truth about the nature of the spiritual realm, the truth about the creation of the earth, the truth about why we are here, the truth about how we obtain our highest potential. And it's these truths that make studying the theology worth our time. Nothing could be more important than to learn about and understand and

04:50

the original theology. And when we do, as the doctrines themselves teach, when we gain greater and greater knowledge and abide by its precepts, the trajectory of our life can change, forever altering our eternal destiny. If you're a first time listener though, you have a

bit of homework to do. This podcast is progressive, which means each episode builds off of the previous episode.

05:16

So that means that when you get the time, you'll definitely want to go back and listen to the episodes that you've missed if you truly want to begin to understand the full theology. It's definitely worth your time though. If you're a long time listener, I love having you back. We have a lot of great stuff in today's episode. We're gonna pick up where we left off in our previous episode, where we were talking about the types of wounds that the enemy or rebel son of God inflicted on the cosmos.

05:44

and on the beloved hero's son, or subsequently on the king or the hero of myth or you and me. There's a considerable amount of theological depth in today's episode, some of which I'm going to point out, but some of which I just won't have time. So I hope and I also encourage you to ponder what you learn in this episode on your own. You may even find it useful to re-listen to the episode so you don't miss any of the truly marvelous

06:13

cosmological and spiritual theological principles that are inherent in the theology we find among the ancients. In today's episode we are still talking within the context of the great primordial Theomache, the great battle that took place in the heavens before the earth was formed. We learned in our last episode that during the battle the beloved son of the high God be he named Osiris, Marduk.

06:41

Horus, Baal, or an Inerta is severely wounded in his combat with the rebel son of the high god. In some cases, he is even killed during the battle. We haven't had the chance to talk about the Osiris myth in depth yet. So let's take a minute and talk about it here. Most Egyptologists consider the Osiris myth to be the most important and the most influential in all of Egypt.

07:09

Jan Aschmann, the famous German Egyptologist, I keep quoting, tells us that the Osiris myth shows up in more ancient texts in ancient Egypt than any other myth. And I don't find this surprising since we find that similar divine battles in Mesopotamia and Canaan

constitute the central mythologies in those regions because this is core material. Because it was so popular and widespread, multiple versions of the Osiris myth rose up. Sometimes they contradict each other in their

07:39

And this is an important point to make too, because it illustrates how original material or original religious doctrines can become corrupted over time. But somehow they still maintain a few of those stubborn bits across the various versions. And that allows us to paint a fuller picture of the original. We can find the very first allusions to the battle between Osiris and Set in...

08:06

Ancient Egypt's earliest corpus of religious writings, which you should know by now, are the pyramid texts. They're dated to the 24th century BC. So that makes them about 4,400 years old. The fact that the Osiris myth is in the earliest of texts tells us that the Osiris myth was a core myth from the outset of dynastic Egypt, and likely even earlier. We can find references to the myth in

08:33

all of the major pyramids where pyramid texts can be found in the pyramid of king Unis king Teti king Pepi the first and king Pepi the second and in several of the instances that we have the texts refer to how the enemy god Set murdered the god Osiris in pyramid text 532 which is found in king Pepi the first pyramid it says this quote they found Osiris

09:01

after his brother Set threw him down in Nedit. Now, Nedit is the name that the ancient Egyptians give to the place where Set killed Osiris. In Pyramid Text 576, which is also in King Pepi's Pyramid, it reads, quote, Osiris was placed on his side by his brother Set. Placed on his side, of course, refers to Osiris's murder at the hand of Set.

09:32

Although we see reference to the murder of Osiris by Set in these very early texts, we don't find a full narrative of the event until the Greek writer Plutarch sat down and wrote the myth around 120 AD, which is very, very late. Based on what Donald McKenzie could find, he's a Greek folklorist. He basically went out and tried to find every possible thing he could find about the Osiris myth and then he compiled it together into a historical narrative.

10:00

and put it in his book, Egyptian Myth and Legend, which was first published in 1907. This is the account that he gives of the myth. When Osiris was born, a voice from out of the heavens proclaimed, now hath come the Lord of all things. When Ra, who's the high God, grew old and ascended unto heaven, Osiris sat in his throne and ruled over the land of Egypt.

10:28

Men were but savages when he first came amongst them. Evil were their ways and their desires were sinful. Osiris ushered in a new age. He made good in binding law. He uttered just decrees, and he judged with wisdom between men. He caused peace to prevail at length over the land of Egypt. Isis was the queen consort of Osiris.

10:56

and she was a woman of exceeding great wisdom. Osiris taught the people to worship the gods, to erect temples and to live holy lives. Set, who regarded with jealous eyes the good works of his brother, for his ear was full of evil and he loved warfare better than peace. He desired to stir up rebellion in the kingdom. He plotted to overcome Osiris with guile.

11:26

which is cunning and craftiness and deceit and trickery. A royal feast was held and Set came to make merry. And with him, his fellow conspirators, he brought a shapely and decorated chest, which he had caused to be made according to the measurements of the King Osiris's body. All men praised it at the feast, admiring its beauty. When hearts were made glad with beer drinking, Set proclaimed that he would gift

11:55

the chest unto him whose body fitted its proportions with exactness. There was no suspicion of evil design, so one after another entered the chest on that fateful night, until it seemed that no man could be found to win it for himself. Then Osiris came forward. He lay down within the chest, and he filled it in every part. Ere he could raise his body,

12:22

The evil followers of Set sprang suddenly forward and shut down the lid, which they nailed fast and soldered with lead. So the richly decorated chest became the coffin of the good King

Osiris, from whom departed the breath of life. Set commanded his followers to carry away the chest and dispose of it secretly. As he bade them, so did they do.

12:52

They hastened through the night and flung it into the Nile. So ended the days of Osiris and the years of his wise and prosperous reign in the land of Egypt. So in this version of the myth, the evil God Set nails Osiris into a chest, solders the seams with lead, making it impossible to breathe. And as McKinsey says, the breath of life departs from Osiris.

13:22

It's clear in this myth that the wounds Osiris sustains are catastrophic. By all accounts, it appears as though Osiris, the righteous king, who as McKenzie noted, quote, uttered just decrees and quote, judged with wisdom, a king who abided by the laws of heaven, Maat, is dead. It appears as though his evil, profane brother, the God Set, has won the battle.

13:50

And as we pointed out in our previous episode, Forsyte, Prop, and Fontanrose discerned that the wounding or initial defeat of the hero was a regular, and I would argue, extremely important event in the ancient combat narratives that they studied. It marks the sixth event in Forsyte's table. So it's at this point in the combat narratives that we see the enemy god, the dragon, temporarily ascend. This is the seventh event.

14:17

He's successfully wounded the beloved son of the high god or the earthly king, the hero or the popper or the sclury maid or you and me. It appears as though all is lost. The kingdom is dark. The wounds are grave. The enemy reigns over the kingdom, which is not his. He's blowing his poisonous breath over the land, causing further wounds to the people and to the kingdom. Nearly all hope of victory is lost.

14:46

It's at this point in the narratives that we see the eighth event, the healing and the recovering of the hero. Like we saw in the Epic of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh is paralyzed or he's in some type of coma caused by the monster Humbaba. It appears as though, like in all horror films, he'll be consumed by the monster, but Gilgamesh somehow recovers from his wounds and he rejoins the battle. Okay, this is all well and good.

15:14

It's easy to envision the healing of a physical wound, or perhaps even a spiritual wound. But how is it possible for the hero Osiris in this case to quote, recover from physical death? I mean, that seems pretty final. By nature, his wounds are referred to as fatal because there is no recovery. There's no healing the wounds and then returning to battle. He's dead. This doesn't seem to be a quote, an initial defeat.

15:43

It seems much more like a permanent defeat. So how can Osiris possibly overcome or be healed of the wounds of physical death itself? It seems impossible. Well, for the answer to that, we have to return to our discussion of the types of wounds the enemy inflicts. If you recall in our previous episode, I argued that the dragon has the ability to inflict basically two types of wounds, cosmic wounds and spiritual wounds.

16:11

Wounds that are the direct consequence of breaking or rebelling against the laws of heaven or Ma'at. So let's talk about cosmic wounds for a minute. Cosmic wounds are wounds that disrupt the very fabric of the cosmos. And to understand this, we have to understand that God is a God of order. He strictly abides by the laws of heaven, Ma'at, which enables him by way of power and authority

16:40

command the elements, which he does via divine utterance. His utterance is efficacious precisely because he abides by Maat. When he commands the elements to order themselves into a world or worlds or into a universe of worlds, the elements, because they honor his righteous power and authority, order themselves into a world or worlds or a universe of worlds. And keep in mind that these are not my thoughts.

17:10

The ancients taught this over and over and over again, like we saw in the Shabbakah stone and like we saw in the book of Hebrews chapter 1 verse 3 where we're told that Jesus quote upholds, which is keeps in order, quote, all things by the word of his power. It's right there in Holy Writ. It's God's power and authority as a righteous divine king that keeps the universe in an ordered state.

17:39

And this is really interesting because we find that ancient peoples all over the world, from the ancient Egyptians to the Hopi Indians of Northeastern Arizona, were and continue to be preoccupied with doing whatever they can in a ritual sense to help God maintain the order of the universe. They recognized that the rebel sun was and is a constant threat to the ordered state of the universe. And this is where the enemy sun or the ancient Egyptian enemy God Set comes in,

18:08

He used his moral agency in the primordial realm to rebel against every single law of heaven. Those laws that enabled one to order the elements. He has absolutely zero power or authority to order the elements to form a single thing. He has no creative power. He can only affect its cosmic opposite, chaos, disorder, degeneration, and destruction. Those are the wounds that he affects.

18:38

on the cosmos. Wherever and whenever God allows him to rule and reign, and this is an important point too, God has the ability to restrict where and when the enemy God can operate in the cosmos, we see the consequences of his presence. We see cosmic wounds, which are best represented by the second law of thermodynamics, which is that over time, heat energy molecules become more and more disorganized.

19:07

and dispersed, they become chaotic. And in so doing, they lose their ability to convert heat energy to work. And when this happens, our cells degenerate, we age, our bodies weaken, we're subject to disease and to sickness and to death. In other words, the enemy God, because of his chaotic effect on the very elements that constitute the fabric of the cosmos,

19:37

disease, pain, and death in the world. And this also means that it's by the cosmic wounds he inflicts that we experience very real physical wounds during our earthly experience. Last night I got a pretty severe burn on three of my fingers and I was reminded quite poignantly that the pain I was experiencing I would not be experiencing in a cosmic realm where the enemy God was not allowed to rule and reign.

20:07

The next time you slam your fingers in the car or you fall down the stairs or you cut your finger, don't blame the high God. Blame the rebel sun. In a future episode, we'll talk about why God allows the rebel sun to temporarily reign on Earth. But for our purposes here, it's important to recognize that the enemy God is the cosmic antithesis of God. The ancient record teaches us that the laws of heaven, Maat, are and always will be

20:36

more powerful than anything the enemy can do by way of rebelling against those laws. And this is an unbelievably important point because what this means is that no matter what the rebel sun does to the fabric of the cosmos, God has the power to directly reverse or counter the destructive effect or cosmic wounds the rebel sun causes. What this means is that

21:04

Although the rebel sun has the ability to cause ourselves to degenerate, God has the power to order ourselves to regenerate. God has the power and authority to command the elements, not to move to a state of degeneration. God has the power to reverse the second law of thermodynamics, where everything inexorably moves towards decay, degradation, degeneration, corruption, disintegration, and death.

21:33

you know what this means? It means God has the ability to stop the aging process. The aging process is the result of the rebel sun's cosmic wounds. Once we are purely under God's cosmic authority, we will never age. The ancients knew this or they knew of this. They knew that near a sacred mountain somewhere, which we know what that is now, was a quote fountain of youth.

22:02

A fountain from which if one drank, they would no longer be subjected to the aging process. A fountain which would make older people young again. They would live in perpetual youth and beauty. Think on that too. Wrinkles, acne, thinning hair, all the effects of the rebel sun. And if you aren't feeling particularly beautiful today, now you know why. What this also means is that although the rebel sun has the ability to subject the cells

22:32

the destructive chaotic elements of disease and sickness, God has the power to order the cells of our body to restore themselves to an ordered state of health. God has the power to

reverse sickness, disease. God has the power to reverse sickness, disease, blindness, deafness, and physical deformities of every type, all of which are the cosmic consequences of the rebel sun's effect.

23:01

on the elements. When the rebel sun is no longer allowed to reign, we will have bodies that are immune to every type of sickness, disease, or deformity. The ancients knew this too. They knew that one of the chief characteristics of God was his ability to heal physical wounds. And now we understand why he can. Because the elements honor his power and authority, which was granted to him because of his strict adherence to the laws of heaven.

23:31

What this also means is that although the rebel son has the ability to subject the elements of our body to degeneration and ultimately death, God has the ability to reverse death. He has the power to raise the dead, to resurrect one who has physically died. He has the power and authority to command the elements to order themselves back into their original non-degenerated state. The ancients knew this too.

24:01

They knew that again, on a sacred mountain somewhere, that there was a special plant or tree there, which if one consumed or drank of it, known as the elixir of life, they could live forever and never die. We find evidence of God's power to reverse the second law of thermodynamics, to heal the sick, raise the dead, and affect eternal life all over in the ancient world. So here are just a couple of examples. In the Epic of Gilgamesh,

24:31

Gilgamesh seeks a plant, which I argue is akin to the Tree of Life. This plant grants eternal youth and immortality. After a perilous journey, Gilgamesh finds the plant at the bottom of the Apsu, the primordial waters. And no surprise, after retrieving the plant, while he's bathing in the waters, a sea serpent lurking in the waters smells the plant's beautiful fragrance.

25:00

Did you catch that? Did you notice that this plant or tree has a beautiful fragrance? And if you don't know why this fragrance is important, check out episode number eight, the fragrant dew of paradise. The serpent stealthily swoops up and steals the plant. And as a

result, Gilgamesh fails to attain eternal youth and immortality. We should note in the story how Gilgamesh did not conquer the serpent here.

25:28

which is why Gilgamesh was unable to obtain eternal life, which makes the Epic of Gilgamesh ultimately a tragedy. Eutnapishtim, the Mesopotamian Noah in Tablet 11 tells Gilgamesh this about the plant or tree, quote, let me reveal a closely guarded matter, Gilgamesh, and let me tell you the secret of the gods. There is a plant whose root is like camel thorn.

25:56

whose thorn-like roses will spike your hands. If you yourself can win that plant, you will find rejuvenation.” When Gilgamesh heard this, he opened the pipe. He tied heavy stones to his feet. They dragged him down into the Apsu, which is the primordial waters, and he saw the plant. He took the plant to himself. It spiked his hands. He cut the heavy stones from his feet.

26:27

The sea threw him up onto its shore. Gilgamesh spoke to him, to Ur-Shanabi the boatman. Ur-Shanabi, this plant is a plant to cure a crisis. With it, a many may win the breath of life. I shall take it back to Uruk to the sheepfold. I shall give it to an elder to eat. And so try out the plant. Its name shall be, quote,

26:55

an old man grows into a young man. I too shall eat it and turn into the young man that I once was. Here we see a clear connection between God who is represented by the plant or tree and the ability of God to reverse the cosmic wounds inflicted by the serpent. This plant has the ability to grant eternal youth and immortality.

27:22

In the Christian New Testament, we see a number of examples of Christ reversing the cosmic wounds inflicted by the serpent when he heals the sick and diseased, enables the lame to walk, restores sight to the blind, raises Lazarus from the dead. For example, in the book of Matthew chapter 4 verse 23, it reads, quote, And Jesus went about all Galilee, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

27:52

And now you know why Jesus had the power to heal all types of sickness and diseases among the people. Because as one who strictly abided by the laws of heaven, he had the power and authority to command the elements to, quote, order themselves back into their perfect state. The elements honored his commands. And that's pretty neat. In Matthew chapter eight, verses two and three, it reads, quote, and behold, there came a leper and worshiped him saying.

28:21

Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him saying, I will be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Did you notice here how Jesus helped the leper directly by divine utterance? The text says, and Jesus put forth his hand and touched him saying, I will be thou clean. He's commanding the elements here to return

28:50

an ordered state. In what does the text say happened? It says, quote, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. The elements immediately honored his command and returned to their ordered state. See, Jesus, the beloved son of the high god, has the power and authority to reverse the cosmic wounds caused by the great dragon. For those who understand, this ability is a clear witness of his divinity. Here's one more.

29:19

though there are many, many great examples in the New Testament. In John chapter five, we read of a man who had had an infirmity for 38 years. He's standing near the pool of Bethesda, hoping to be healed by the waters when this happens. Quote, when Jesus saw him lie and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, wilt thou be made whole? Jesus saith unto him, rise, take up thy bed and walk.

29:48

and immediately the man was made whole. So note again how right after the command, the man's body is restored to a perfect ordered state. Jesus has reversed the cosmic blows of the rebel son. Now of course he can do this because of the power that comes from abiding by the laws of heaven, which will always be more powerful than rebelling against those laws.

30:18

In the ancient Egyptian pyramid texts in pyramid text 422 in Pepe the first pyramid it reads and this is speaking of King Pepe who has physically died it reads quote you do not perish you do not come to an end it's a clear reference to immortality there in pyramid text 436 and 437 also in king pepe's pyramid raise yourself

30:47

Pepe. Raise here refers to rising from the dead. You have not died. Raise yourself as Osiris. Egyptologist Jan Asman says this of this text. He says, quote, resurrection is a proper term for this idea because the dead king is constantly summoned to, quote, rise. Quote, raise yourself is the typical address to the deceased. And it means not only to get up, but to ascend.

31:17

heaven. So again, this is a clear reference to overcoming physical death. And in Pyramid Text 537, we read, quote, Ho, Pepe, stand up and sit down on Osiris's chair, which is his throne. Your flesh is complete as a tomb. Stand up and you will not end. You will not perish. The dead King Pepe's flesh is

31:45

fully restored. His flesh is now, quote, complete. His physical body is no longer dead. He's been restored to life in a whole resurrected body. We see evidence of God's ability to reverse or heal the cosmic wounds caused by the dragon all over the place in the ancient record. And this is ultimately why the physical death of Osiris is not a permanent defeat. It's only an initial or temporary defeat. It only looks like the dragon set has won.

32:15

But in fact, the righteous King Osiris, because of his adherence to Maat, has greater power than Set. He has the power to order or restore the fabric of the cosmos, which ultimately will ensure the dragon's defeat. And this is exactly what we see happen in the rest of the Osiris myth. Let's pick up right near where we left off. Says, quote, Set commanded his followers to carry away the chest and dispose of it secretly.

32:43

As he bade them, so did they do. They hastened through the night and flung it into the Nile. The current bore it away in the darkness. And when morning came, it reached the great ocean. It was driven hither and thither, tossing among the waves. Note here for a second

that Osiris' coffin is in darkness. It's being tossed to and fro on an ocean. These images of darkness and water are.

33:08

references to the primordial waters of chaos to suggest that Osiris has lost. He's in the grasp of chaos. He's under Set's reign now. From here, Osiris's consort, Isis, is distraught with grief and she searches high and low for his body. The text continues, quote, meanwhile Set, the usurper, ascended the throne of Osiris and reigned over the land of Egypt.

33:37

Men were wronged and despoiled of their possessions. Tyranny prevailed and great disorder. So here we're seeing the temporary ascendancy or reign of the enemy as foresight outlined. His works are clearly that of darkness and destruction. From here, Isis gives birth to a son, Horus, and the coffin of Osiris eventually comes ashore. And the text continues, quote.

34:05

The coffin of Osiris was driven by the waves to Syria, and it was cast upon the shore. A sacred tree sprang up and grew round it, and the body of the dead ruler was enclosed in its trunk. All right, you know I have to stop here. We have a sacred tree growing around the dead body of the righteous King Osiris? Could the ancients give us a clearer clue that the sacred tree is meant to represent God?

34:35

I think not. This is about as overt as we get in the ancient world. Note too how Osiris' coffin is enclosed in the trunk. He is meant to be understood as the trunk of the tree. This is hugely significant and we'll definitely get to it as the podcast progresses. For now, just note the association between the God, King Osiris and the sacred tree. The text continues. The king of that alien land marveled great.

35:03

at the wonderful tree, because that it had such rapid growth, and he gave command that it should be cut down, as he desired so it was done. Then was the trunk erected in his house as a sacred pillar." So again, take note here of the connection between gods, trees, and pillars, like we've been pointing out. Let's continue. From here, Isis asks the king for the sacred pillar.

35:32

it reads. Then she asked the king that the sacred pillar be given unto her. The boon was granted, and she cut deep into the trunk and took forth the chest which was concealed therein. Embracing it tenderly, she uttered cries of lamentation that were so bitter and keen. Then she consecrated the sacred pillar, which she wrapped in linen and anointed with myrrh, and it was afterwards

36:02

placed in a temple. Did you notice the anointing with myrrh oil there? There's so much to say here, but I'll stay on task. From here, Isis takes the coffin, holding Osiris's dead body, to Egypt, where the evil set finds the chest. It reads, He said, caused it to be opened, and the body of Osiris was taken forth and rent into fourteen pieces.

36:31

which he cast into the Nile so that the crocodiles might devour him. But these reptiles, now think those sea monsters here, had fear of Isis and touched them not. And they were scattered along the riverbanks. The heart of Isis was filled with grief when she came to know what Set had done. She had made for herself a papyrus boat and sailed up and down the Delta waters, searching for the fragments of her husband's body.

37:01

and at length she recovered them all. From here, Isis gravely laments, and it continues, quote, the lamentations of the goddesses were heard by Ra, who's the high god, and he sent down from heaven the god Anubis, who with the assistance of Thoth and Horus united the severed portions of the body of Osiris, which they wrapped in linen bandages. Thus,

37:28

had origin the mummy form of the God. Then the winged Isis hovered over the body and the air from her wings entered the nostrils of Osiris so that he was imbued with life once again. So here the gods restore Osiris' body to its proper order. And the god Isis with her power and authority reverses the cosmic wounds of death

37:57

inflicted by Seth and imbues him with the breath of life. He is resurrected to a perfect state. Osiris is not defeated. Ultimately, the tyrannical god Seth is dethroned by Osiris' son Horus, and Osiris lives on as the judge and king of the dead. Much of ancient Egypt ritual is

38:27

resurrection and the kingship of Osiris. Note that in these accounts that everything the beloved son of the high god does or the gods do directly reverses or counters the cosmic wounds inflicted by the rebel son. We don't have time to get into this now but the beloved son of the high god does the same thing for spiritual wounds. The wounds that come about when we yield to the dragon's

38:57

Such spiritual wounds make us unholy or unclean or unworthy to reside in the holiest of realms where God resides. These wounds are sometimes referred to as spiritual death in part because being outside of the presence of God feels akin to death. The ancients attest that God has the power and authority to reverse or counter every

39:25

and spiritual wound caused by the rebel sun. The ancients attest that God, through his ability to quote, order the elements, keeps the planets rotating, the sun burning and the plants growing. But he also, for some really important purposes, allows the enemy God to maintain some of his chaotic cosmic power. In fact, this is what it says in the book of Genesis chapter three verse 15.

39:55

where God tells the serpent in the Garden of Eden, quote, and I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel. In other words, God is telling Adam and Eve that he's going to allow the dragon to have some level of power during their earthly experience. They are going to have to fight the dragon

40:25

to just like the beloved son. But don't forget, God doesn't expel them from the Garden of Eden until he has gifted them special armor, and we assume a couple of special weapons, which brings me full circle to those special weapons again. Now that we know what those special weapons have to have the ability to do, they have to have the ability to either thwart

or reverse the wounds the dragon has the ability to inflict, we're better prepared to figure out.

40:55

what it is. So what does the ancient record tell us this sacred weapon is? Well, for the answer to that I need to take you to the ancient city of Mari. Mari was an ancient Semitic city-state which is located today in Syria. Between 2900 and 1759 BC it thrived as an important trade center because it was located right on the banks of the Euphrates River.

41:24

And in 1933, a French archeologist by the name of André Perrault headed up an excavation that led to the discovery of 20,000 cuneiform tablets or fragments in the royal palace of King Zimri Lim. Among the tablets were hundreds of royal letters, correspondences between the king and various individuals. In one of these letters, we learn what this special weapon is.

41:53

1968, King Yadun Lim receives a letter from a prophet of Adu. In the letter, the prophet reminds the king that the god Adad gave him his position as king, anointed him, and gave him a special weapon. The letter reads, quote, To my lord say, thus nor sin your servant.

42:23

the Lord of Aleppo. He came to me and thus he said, says Adad, the land in its entirety I have given to Yadun Limh, and with my weapons and equal he did not encounter. This sounds like it could come right out of the legend of Fafnir. A sword, if you recall, the text said, quote, he never bore in hand a better sword than this.

42:50

But of course the text here was written a couple of thousand years before the legend of Fafnir. And this is remarkable. I continue. Yet when he abandoned me, the land which I had given him I gave to Samsi Adad, Samsi Adad Lakuna. Let him restore you. On the throne of the house of your father I returned you. The weapon with which I struck the sea.

43:19

I have given you.” All right, so what is the special weapon that is inherited by the servants of the Lord? This Mari letter tells us that it is, quote, the weapon with which I struck the sea. This is super, super interesting. The prophet of Edu is telling the king that the special weapon that he was given, which we guess was symbolized by a scepter or a staff, because that’s the weapon we see all kings hold.

43:49

is the same weapon that God used to strike the sea. Okay, what sea? You should know this. We’re talking about the primordial sea, the primordial waters. The king was given the same special weapon that God used to strike the primordial waters. The weapon that stirred up the chaotic primordial waters and allowed him to form a world. This weapon was the weapon that God used

44:19

conquer the primordial waters. And do you remember what that weapon was? It was wind, a wind that brooded over the waters. Unfortunately, I have to leave it there, but think on that. We’ll pick it up right here in our next episode. Until then, I’ll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we’re with we fly to heaven. I’m Jack Logan.

44:50

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Episode #24 - O Christmas Tree

<https://theancienttradition.com/24-o-christmas-tree/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:29

Welcome to The Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. A special welcome to all of our new listeners. It's great to have you along with us. And as always, if you're a long time listener, it's great to have you back. I think we're gonna learn a lot together today. Before I start though, I wanted to let you know about our episode show notes. We're working on those. You can find them on our website, The Ancient Tradition. If you click on show notes up in the menu, you'll find a full transcript for each episode.

00:57

And that includes some links and pictures and full quotations if you're interested. I also failed to let you know that you can now find a full recording of the Mesopotamian Ansoobird myth. And you can find that on our sister podcast, the ancient tradition audio writ. That's the myth about the monster who stole the tablets of destiny from Enlil. And we talked about it quite a bit in episode number 22, the wounded hero. So if you're interested in that myth, be sure and check it out.

01:27

Today's episode is, Oh Christmas Tree. We're not gonna really get into the Christmas tree until the very end of today's program, but everything that we discussed in today's episode is relevant to the Christmas tree, so keep that in mind. Today we're gonna pick up right where we left off in our last episode. For the past couple of episodes, we've been talking about the Primordial Theomache, and most of you know what that is. It's the battle that took place in the divine council before the earth was formed.

01:53

Two episodes ago in episode number 22, the wounded hero, we noted that one of the most important features of the theology of the ancient tradition is the wounds that are sustained by the beloved son during his battle with the rebel son. And as well, the wounds that are sustained by the earthly king or the hero or the popper or you and me in our battle with the dragon. In most accounts,

02:21

Whether that account is found in the myth or in scriptures or legends or folktales, we learned that the wounds that the dragon inflicts are so grievous that in the climax of the battle, it appears as though the hero is doomed to defeat. It appears as though the evil dragon was going to come off triumphant. Usually though, the defeat's temporary and then the hero miraculously recovers. He's fully healed from the wounds that were inflicted by the dragon.

02:51

wields his special sword and he thrusts it into the hideous dragon's scaly flesh and then the dragon drops to the ground dead. The hero has slain the dragon and good triumphed over evil. In our last episode however, in episode number 23, the troubling death of Osiris, we saw that that's not always the case. Sometimes the beloved son is murdered by the rebel son.

03:19

that son, he wants nothing more than to usurp his innocent brother's throne. And this murder is pretty troubling. In fact, it's very troubling because it seems to suggest that evil has the ability to triumph over good. And if that is a possibility, that should really trouble everyone. Because in a spiritual sense, what are we to do with Osiris's murder? Because in earthly battles, nothing signals defeat more poignantly than death.

03:49

To die is to lose the battle, so by all appearances, it looks as though Osiris has lost the battle, that evil has triumphed. It appears as though all is lost. And like I said, the possibility of that is very troubling. We learn later in the myth, though, that Osiris' death is not permanent. We learn that the gods, because they adhere to the laws of heaven, or *ma'at*,

04:16

and will always have greater power than the rebel's son. Evil will never triumph over good. By the power that comes from abiding by the laws of heaven, Osiris is resurrected. He's brought back to life. His death is not permanent. His defeat, like we see in all combat narratives, is temporary. You know, many in the modern world consider resurrection to be an impossibility.

04:43

And others, even if they do believe in the possibility of resurrection, they have no idea how it's accomplished. But the ancients did. If you didn't get a chance to listen to episode

number 23, the troubling death of Osiris, or you didn't get a chance to listen to it all the way to the end, be sure and do that because it's in that episode that you will learn how it's possible that Osiris could be raised from the dead. And it's one of the most profound theological tenants inherent in the ancient tradition.

05:12

I want to take a second here and talk about the nature of myth. When many modern day scholars and lay persons read the ancient myths, they usually find them kind of entertaining, sometimes fanciful. And a lot of people are enamored with the fancy weapons and the exotic locales and exciting adventures and fierce battles. But what they don't realize is that just like parables, myths were used by the ancients to house sacred knowledge.

05:41

Philip Wilkinson and Neil Philip who wrote a lot of books on mythology they say this quote myths are sacred stories the sacred quality of myth is its most central characteristic often the full version of a myth or its inner meaning may be known only to priests shamans or initiates

06:08

I hope as you've been listening to the podcast, you're starting to see this. You're starting to see that myths like the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Myth of Osiris, the Epic of Anzu, the Myth of Pata and the Shabaka Stone and the Enuma Elish contain deeper meanings. They contain profound esoteric knowledge about the unseen spiritual world. For example, if we read in myth that a hero is wounded, his eyes ripped out or his arms ripped off or an arrow.

06:37

pierces his flesh. And then we leave our analysis and interpretation there. We're gonna miss so so much of what the ancients were teaching. Myths are sacred. They have inner meanings. So when the ancients talk of quote wounds in their myths, we know there's so much more they mean by these wounds than meets the eye. They're teaching us about more than just physical wounds. Last week I read a

07:07

some of the myths I'm studying, and in nearly all of them, the scholars were attributing the origin of the myth to some feature in the natural world, like the rising sun or the waxing and the waning moon. You know, and I shook my head, I was like, they are completely missing

the sacred inner meaning of these myths. Now, that's not to say that such and such a myth couldn't be connected to the phases of the moon, but what the researchers fell to see is that the ancients used the phases of the moon

07:38

as a symbol to represent something about the spiritual realm, something that was much more significant spiritually. In the particular myth that I was studying, the ancients were using the moon to symbolize the spiritual concept of rebirth. They're using the waxing and the waning of the moon to represent the death and the rebirth of the new man.

08:05

A lot of academic scholars fail to see the inner meanings. They don't think they're there or they just don't see them. They can only see the surface meanings. When that's all they can see, then myths seem fanciful and fictitious and naive. They're like, yeah, there's no such thing as sea serpents or monsters named Humbaba or magic shields or a dragon's venomous breath. But when we understand the inner meanings, we decipher those.

08:36

we conclude the opposite. The ancients appear especially erudite and sophisticated and enlightened. Sea serpents and monsters, we find, represent the malevolent rebel sun. Magical shields represent the special spiritual protection gifted to the hero by God. The dragon's venomous breath represents every single kind of wound the rebel sun inflicts on the universe.

09:02

and the spiritual destruction that he can inflict in the lives of human beings. With that understanding, let's move to the eighth event in Forsythe's table, which, if you remember, outlines the 12 events that scholars see showing up time and again in the world's ancient combat narratives. In the sixth event, the hero's gravely wounded. It appears that defeat is imminent. In the seventh event, like we saw in ancient Egypt with the enemy god Set.

09:32

The enemy temporarily ascends and rules over a usurped kingdom. And while he's reigning, the eighth event takes place. The hero recovers from his devastating wounds. The hero's wounds are healed. This aspect of the con man myth is an absolutely critical element of the

theology of the ancient tradition. Because without the healing of the hero's wounds, the hero is indeed doomed

10:02

to defeat. Without healing, there is no way for him or you or me to survive the dragon's onslaught. In our last episode, we explained how and why it's possible for the sick to be healed and the dead to be raised and the aging process to be stopped. But we didn't really go into how the wounded hero can access the healing power, how he can obtain the healing for his wounds. So we're gonna do that in this episode.

10:30

If you're a long time listener to the podcast, you probably already figured out how the hero obtains healing. But if you haven't, I'll give you a clue. It comes from a tree. In the ancient record, we learned that the hero obtains the healing balm for his wounds from the sacred tree. Just like what we saw in the last couple of episodes where the hero obtained the special staffer sword from the sacred tree.

10:57

So too the hero obtains the healing balm for his wounds from the tree. In fact, you're gonna see in this episode that the sacred tree is truly a giving tree. It offers the hero a number of truly magnificent gifts. Before I jump into that though, I want to stress that the sacred tree, the tree of life, it's sometimes referred to by scholars as the world tree or the cosmic tree. It's some of the best empirical evidence that we have that the religious traditions of today sprouted

11:27

from a common source. The sacred tree literally shows up all over the globe. It shows up as a key feature in nearly every single religious tradition. And we just shouldn't see this unless the religions of today sprung from one original source. Now, you might be thinking to yourself, well, it seems easily explainable that religions would use a tree from the natural world to explain certain religious ideas. So...

11:54

That could explain why it shows up so often. Seems plausible enough. And I'll give you that. But just one problem, and it's a pretty big problem because regardless of where we go in the world, the peoples understand the cosmic and theological significance of the sacred tree in

almost identical ways. It would be one thing if one religious tradition used the tree to represent a ladder.

12:23

And then we had another tradition use the tree to represent sacred writings and another one to have it represent fertility. But that's just not what we find at all. We find that there is remarkable similarity and practically universal correspondence in the way the tree is understood, what it represents and what it gifts to human beings. But what does vary is the type of tree.

12:51

that's used to symbolize the sacred tree. It tends to be a tree that's native to the particular culture's geographical locale. For example, in Norse mythology, the sacred tree was understood to be this immense ash tree. In ancient Egypt, it was either a Persea tree or a date palm. In Rome, it was an olive tree. In Latvia, it was a birch tree. Among the Maya, it was a ceiba tree. Among the Slavs and Finns, it was an oak. Among the Gnostics, it was a cypress.

13:21

Among the Sumerians, it was a willow tree. Among many Native Americans, it's a spruce tree. Among the Mongols, it was a beech or poplar tree. In China, it was a mulberry tree. Among the Hindu and Buddha, it's a fig tree. You get the picture. The particular species of the sacred tree varies by culture and geography. But what doesn't vary?

13:46

is the cosmology and the theology that's associated with the sacred tree. It's virtually identical everywhere we go in the world. And that's remarkable. Among the ancients, the tree was of utmost significance. In fact, the sacred tree, as you're going to see as the podcast progresses, is the literal focal point of the ancient tradition. When we look at and examine what the ancients wrote,

14:14

we learned that every single component of the sacred tree is associated with a gift or a number of gifts. The timber, the trunk, the branches, the bark, the leaves, the sap, the blossoms, the fruit, and even the fragrance in the shade of the tree. So in today's episode,

we're gonna focus on the leaves and the sap because those are consistently shown to be associated with the healing properties of the tree.

14:44

But I'm also gonna touch a bit on the importance of the king's name and special armor again, because those are also strongly connected to the tree's leaves, which is by no means unassociated with healing. While we go through these, try and think about what these gifts mean theologically, because after all, the ancients are teaching us that the hero or you and me can't defeat the dragon without the special gifts that the tree offers. So let's start with the leaves.

15:14

In ancient Egypt, when the king was enthroned, he was given five new names. And these were known as the royal titlari. The god Thoth would write the king's new names on the leaves of the sacred Ished tree, which was a Perseid tree. Melitsa Matthew, who's a Russian Egyptologist, said this in the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology. Quote.

15:39

It is known that at the coronation the name of the new king, or rather the whole of his new titillature, was solemnly proclaimed and then written by the gods on the leaves of the sacred Perseia of Heliopolis. This moment, like that of placing the crown on the king's head, was one of the most important in the ceremony. With this rite was probably connected the presentation of the king's name to the god.

16:08

The importance of the king's presentation of his name to the god is very great. We have but to recall the prominent place held by name Heka in ancient Egypt to realize the significance of this rite. The knowledge of the name of a god or of a man gave the god complete power over him. The supreme importance of the inscribed name as a means of procuring eternal life

16:38

is universally known. In other words, by the king giving God his new names, his new royal names, which were symbolized by writing his name on the sacred tree on those leaves, the king obtained the gift of the tree, eternal life. Let's go to Christianity now. In the very last

chapter of the New Testament, in chapter 22 of Revelation, John the Revelator sees the New Jerusalem,

17:08

quote, and he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. He goes on to say, quote, the throne of God,

17:37

and of the Lamb shall be in it.” Be sure to note here how the text points to God and the Lamb as two separate beings. It says the throne of God and the Lamb. And as a quick aside, you should also note in these verses the pretty explicit connection between the high God, the Father, and his beloved Son, the Lamb, the Tree of Life, and kingship.

18:05

and kingships reflected in the mention of thrones. Our focus though is on what these verses say of the leaves. The passage says that the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. These verses speak of the healing that’s gonna take place in the end times, which we surmise represents both the healing of the cosmic wounds inflicted by the enemy, the restoration of everything to its perfectly ordered state, the full restoration of mother earth,

18:35

the removal of all sickness and disease, and the annihilation of death and aging, and the ability of the tree to heal the nation’s spiritual wounds. Okay, but what did the leaves of the tree represent? We’re talking about religious symbols here, so the leaves of the tree in this verse are figurative. They’re symbolic. In the ancient world, sometimes the leaves of actual literal trees were used for medicinal purposes, kind of like how we use the cactus-like leaves

19:05

aloe vera plant to soothe sunburns or cuts. So the ancients were likely trying to teach how the leaves of the tree of life can do the same thing for the nations. Remember that religious symbols are used to teach us about spiritual reality. They’re meant to teach us what God has the power to do. So the leaves of the tree could represent a number of things. They could represent the balm of righteous people to heal the nations. Recall that just a minute ago we pointed out that in

19:33

who was expected to uphold Ma'at, wrote his name on the leaves. The leaves could also represent the word of God, which is exactly what it says in the Hindu scriptures in the Bhagavad Gita 15.1 to three. And it reads, it is said that there is an indestructible tree. Its roots above, its branches below, its leaves, the hymns of the Veda. Whoever knows it,

20:03

knows the Veda also. Sri Aurobindo who wrote essays on the Gita, the three Purushas, said this, quote, the hymns of the Veda are compared to leaves and the man who knows this tree of the cosmos is the Veda-knower. The knowledge the Veda gives us is a knowledge of the gods, of the principles and powers of the cosmos.

20:30

In Hinduism, the Vedas are the most ancient of all Hindu scriptures. So here among the Hindu, the leaves of the trees represent the scriptures. Scriptures that Sri Aurobindo says gives one quote, knowledge of the gods, of the principles and powers of the cosmos. Sri's statement is pretty intriguing because it suggests that by reading the scriptures, which were given by God, one can understand the principles by which God

20:59

orders the cosmos and defeats chaos. And as we learned in our last episode, such cosmic ordering is the full restoration of all things physical and spiritual to their proper order. It's the total defeat of chaos. Among the ancient Hebrews, we can find another important reference to the leaves in Genesis chapter three verse seven. In this chapter, Adam and Eve have partaken of the

21:28

and they suddenly realized that they're naked. And this is what the passage says happens next. And the eyes of them both, being Adam and Eve, were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. Now, this is really interesting. We've mentioned in previous episodes that naked here is likely meant to be understood symbolically.

21:55

but it could also be literal too. And I don't claim to know. It may just be one of what one of my students once said, that naked is literative. It's a word that he made up to combine the idea that something could be both literal and figurative at the same time. If however naked is meant to be symbolic, then like all religious symbols, it could take on layers of meaning, just kind of depending on what the aspirant ponders about and needs to learn.

22:24

A couple of episodes ago, I proposed that one possible interpretation of naked could be that upon taking the forbidden fruit, which we're told gave Adam and Eve the ability to know good and evil, suddenly recognize that they were completely unprotected from evil, from Satan and his onslaught. If this interpretation is valid, then what they did next is pretty important. The text says that they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

22:54

So here we have Adam and Eve taking the leaves of a tree, a fig tree, to cover up their nakedness. Now, there's a lot of debate in the ancient world and even among modern scholars as to whether or not these fig leaves came from the tree of life or from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. I'm gonna argue here based on everything I've learned about the ancient tradition and the fact that it's in complete conformity with what we see in the ancient world.

23:23

where the sacred tree or the tree of life is the source of all gifts, that the fig tree from which Adam and Eve picked the leaves to make aprons represents the tree of life. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, whether the tree of life is conceptualized as a fig tree or an olive tree or whatever tree it might be, could just depend on what it is that the evangelist or even Jesus himself wants to emphasize about the tree. In fact,

23:52

An interesting little exchange between Nathaniel and Jesus in John chapter 1 verses 46 to 49 seems to indicate that Jesus thought of the tree of life as a fig tree, at least in certain occasions. In this exchange, Nathaniel, who has never met Jesus, walks towards him. When Jesus calls him an Israelite, Nathaniel is surprised. He wants to know how Jesus knows that. And the passage reads, quote,

24:19

Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee. Don't miss the deeper meaning here. Jesus is telling us that he knows Nathaniel.

24:49

and he knows what he's like, he's a man without guile, because of where Nathaniel hangs out. And where does Nathaniel hang out? Under the fig tree, under the tree of life. It's like saying that Nathaniel is known because he abides or abided close to God. And this becomes quite evident in the next verse when Nathaniel recognizes Jesus as the son of God.

25:14

And as a quick aside, don't miss the connection in the verses I just read and the verse I'm about to read between God, the tree, and kingship again here. The verse reads, quote, Nathaniel answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the king of Israel. Nathaniel recognizes Jesus is the king.

25:41

And if you haven't had a chance to listen to episode number six, the King and the Tree of Life, be sure and check that out because it's in that episode that we decipher the strong connection between the King and the Tree of Life. And these verses right here in John are in complete conformity with that. If as I'm arguing that the fig tree in the Genesis account is meant to be understood as the Tree of Life, then it's hugely significant that it's from the fig tree.

26:08

that Adam and Eve take leaves to make aprons for themselves. And don't miss the underlining meaning here either. The ancients are teaching that the aprons Adam and Eve don are of divine origin. And that's just like what we saw with Sigmund when he pulled the special sword from the barn stoker tree. We see Adam and Eve pull the leaves from the fig tree. We're supposed to recognize that the tree represents God.

26:36

and that it's God who gave Sigmund the special sword and it's God who gave Adam and Eve their special aprons. So these aprons appear to be some of that special armor that we talked

about in episode number 21, the cloak of invulnerability. Adam and Eve are clothing themselves with the tree of life. They're clothing themselves in God's armor.

27:02

And that interpretation is further substantiated in the Bible in Exodus chapter 28 verse 4, where it describes the clothing that's worn by the high priest Aaron. This is what it says of the high priest's liturgical clothing, quote, and these are the garments which they shall make a breastplate and an ephod and a robe. And it goes on to describe the rest of the clothing. But I want to focus here on the clothing.

27:28

called the ephod. So what is this ephod that Aaron wore? If we turn to the anchor Bible dictionary, it says this of the ephod, which is worn by the high priest, quote, "It apparently was an apron-like garment suspended from the waist level downward." So here, just like what we saw in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, who wore aprons made from the leaves of the tree of life, the high priest in ancient Israel also wore an apron.

27:57

as part of the high priestly clothing. In both cases, we're meant to understand that these aprons are of divine origin. This is further substantiated 13 verses later when we're told that God himself made coats of skins for Adam and Eve and quote, closed them. So if we had any doubt that the clothing Adam and Eve wore, be it fig leaf aprons or the coats of skins came from God, we don't now.

28:27

They were clothed in divine clothing. If you want to learn more about the Hebraic links between the coats of skins and priestly clothing, be sure and check out episode number four, Did God Reveal the Ancient Tradition in the Garden of Eden? It's towards the end of that episode. And also check out the episode art for episode number six, The King and the Tree of Life, where King Charlemagne is portrayed wearing royal robes and an apron with a tree of life depicted on the front.

28:57

When all is said and done, they were wearing the Tree of Life. They were wearing godly clothing. That's some pretty special armor. Elizabeth Moynihan of the Smithsonian found a similar motif among shaman. She writes, quote, "Often a shaman's ritual garments were

decorated with the Tree of Life to aid him.” And we should note that shaman were known as medicine men.

29:26

because they had the ability to heal, which they obtained from the sacred tree. We find a similar account among the forest-dwelling indigenous Byagya people of the Mandolin Hills of central India. And scholars believe that these people lived in central India for thousands and thousands of years. In this account, known as the legend of Nanga Byagya,

29:56

and Nangi-Bhiyaga, Bhagawan or Bhatta Dev, which means big deity or God, seeks the help of Nanga, and Nanga means nude, Bhiyaga, of Nanga-Bhiyaga, which is the Indian version of Adam, and Nanga-Bhiyagen, who’s the Indian version of Eve. They are found to be without clothing.

30:24

So the Gond people led Bhagawan, the big deity, know. And here’s the account as summarized by Philip Wilkinson in his book, Mythology. Seeing the Byaga had no clothes, the Gond sent to Bhagawan, who tore his own garment in half and sent it to them. Nanga Byaga and Nanga Byagan dressed and began to travel the world.

30:53

Bagoan called all the tribes together to select a king. Everyone came dressed in fine clothes, except Nanga Biaga, the Indian Adam, who was dressed in leaves. Bagoan wanted to make him king over the world. This is another one of those counts that I find super fascinating. I tried to find a date for this myth,

31:23

historical record is hazy here. Still the same, I’m quite astounded that in this myth, we have the Indian Adam dressed in leaves and the statement that Bagoan, the big deity, wanted to make him a king. See, even in the Judeo-Christian tradition, almost no adherents of Judaism and Christianity know the doctrine that Adam was a king. So how did this aboriginal tribe that dates back thousands and thousands of years

31:53

and who primarily lived in the forest, know that God wanted to make the Indian Adam a king. I find this just astounding. And of course, we're seeing all of the same motifs that we see together everywhere else. We have the tree and the leaves of the tree and the clothing made from the tree and kingship. Now let's turn to the sap of the tree. In the ancient texts, it's primarily sap.

32:19

sometimes which is referred to as dew or oil or spit saliva milk or even honey That's most often used to heal the wounds the hero incurs in his or her battle with the dragon And we covered a lot of these examples in episodes number eight and number nine The fragrant dew of paradise and the green eye of Horus and I don't want to duplicate what I covered in those episodes But I want to point out that one of our best examples of the healing of the wounded hero

32:49

by way of the sap of the tree is found in the account of the ancient Egyptian god Horus, whose eye, you'll recall, was ripped out by the evil god Set when they engaged each other in battle. Several pyramid texts tell us that Horus's wounded eye was healed by anointing oils that were infused with the fragrance of trees. Pyramid text number 72, which is found in King Unice's pyramid, reads,

33:19

quote, Osiris Unis, I have filled for you your eye with oil. And then the text goes on to tell us that Unice is anointed with several oils, pine oil and first class cedar oil, et cetera. Pyramid text number 75 reads, quote, Osiris Unis, except Horus's eye, which he rejoined. Now rejoined means healed, made whole.

33:48

In the Pyramid Text, these oils infused with the fragrance of trees is referred to as the quote, ointment of Horus. Pyramid Text 25 connects the scent of the ointment or anointing oil with Horus's healed eye and it reads quote, Osiris Unis, I have given you Horus's eye. Provide your face with it. Let the scent of Horus's eye disseminate to you.

34:18

Okay, the theology that's being taught here is really important. The text is basically telling the dead King Unas that the oil imbued with the fragrance of sacred trees, the same oil that

healed Orus's wounded eye, can heal King Unas's wounds. Wounds which, like Osiris, were so grievous they ultimately led to King Unas's death.

34:47

can not only fully restore Horus's wounded eye, but it can also fully restore the dead king's body. The oil can restore the dead king back to a perfect ordered state, which we call resurrection. It's the oil of the sacred tree that has the power to heal the hero's wounds, even if they're fatal.

35:11

And let's not forget that in our previous episode, we learned that a tree grew around the benevolent Osiris' dead body. From this, we're to understand that the god Osiris is the tree. It's his oil that's being smeared on the forehead of the dead king, which by the way, will make him an quote Osiris Unis, just like he's called at the beginning of each of the pyramid texts that I just read.

35:40

In ancient Egypt, Horus's ointment, the anointing oil of the tree, was smeared on the forehead of the dead king. Pyramid text 77 reads, quote, ointment, ointment, where should you be? You on Horus's forehead, where should you be? You were on Horus's forehead, but I will put you on this, Eunice's forehead. As a quick aside, I want to draw your attention to the performance of

36:09

religious ritual. I hope you can see the link here among the ancient Egyptians between the healing power of the oil of the tree and the performance of rituals which symbolize that theology and may even formally actualize that theology. In other words, ritual is theology. By ritually smearing the oil of the tree on the forehead of the dead king,

36:37

the ancient Egyptians were expressing the profound idea that the tree, which symbolizes Osiris, has the power to heal all wounds, be they physical or spiritual. You might be asking yourself why they smeared the oil on the forehead of the dead king. And there's a really important reason why they did this, but we'll have to save that for a future discussion. Before I close out this episode though, I want to share one more account with you from the ancient world.

37:05

that illustrates the healing power of the oil of the tree. This account comes from a text titled Joseph and Azaneth. This refers to Joseph of Egypt in the Bible and his wife, Azaneth. Scholars believe that the text was originally written in Greek and that it was written sometime between 200 BC and 280. So that gives you an idea.

37:31

In this account, Azaneth, who's the daughter of an Egyptian priest of On, falls in love with Joseph of Egypt, who's an Israelite. Joseph rejects her affections because she worships idols. So Azaneth dresses in sackcloth. She fasts from bread and water, and she seeks forgiveness for her sins, which she does for seven days. Note the number seven there.

37:57

And this is what the text says, and I'll be reading from sections of chapters nine to 15. And this is the HFD Sparks Translation that was published by Oxford University Press. And Azanath was left alone, and she was listless and wept until sunset. She ate no bread and drank no water. She opened her wardrobe and took out a black and somber tunic. She put on the black one and tied a rope around her waist.

38:27

and she removed the fillet from her hair and sprinkled herself with ashes, and she fell down upon the ashes. She wept bitterly and groaned all night until the morning. And in the morning, Azaneth got up and looked, and lo, the ashes underneath her were like mud because of her tears. Okay, so then Azaneth wakes up the next morning and offers this prayer. Oh, Lord, my God.

38:56

To thee will I cry, hear my supplication, and unto thee will I make confession of my sins, and unto thee will I reveal my transgression of thy law. I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned. I have transgressed thy law and acted impiously." So this is a pretty candid expression of repentance, and it goes on for a while. I didn't read all of it to you.

39:25

But then something really interesting happens. And listen to what happens next. The text reads, and I'm in chapter 13 now, quote, and there came a man from heaven and stood at

her head and he called to her, Asenath. And she said, who called me? For the door of my room is shut and the tower is high. How then did anyone get in my room?

39:52

And the man called her a second time and said, Asenith, Asenith. And she said, here am I, my Lord, tell me who you are. And the man said, I am the commander of the Lord's house and chief captain of all the host of the most high. His face was like lightning and his eyes were like the light of the sun and the hairs of his head like flames of fire.

40:22

and his hands and feet like iron from the fire. As a quick aside, note that the divine messenger who appears to Azanath in her bedroom is described as a man. He has anthropomorphic features just like a man, yet he's clearly a glorified man as his face was like lightning. And also note that he seems to know her. He calls her by name. So there's the importance of names again.

40:52

And listen to what happens next, he says, quote, and Azaneth looked at him and she fell on her face at his feet in great fear and trembling. And the man said to her, take heart, Azaneth, and do not be afraid. Okay, now think back, where have we heard this before? If you thought of the account in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch, you're correct. We saw all the same things. We saw two messengers appeared at the foot of Enoch's bed,

41:22

They called him by name. He was afraid. And the first thing the divine messengers told him was to be not afraid. That's pretty interesting. In chapter 15, after a lot of really interesting and important things happen, Azanath desires to make the divine messenger something to eat before he's got to go on his way. And this is what happens next. And keep in mind that the oil of the tree was sometimes symbolically represented as honey in the ancient world.

41:51

And this is what it says. And the man said to her, bring me please a honeycomb. And Azanath said, let me send someone my Lord to my family estate in the country and I will get you a honeycomb. And the man said to her, go into your inner room and you will find a honeycomb there. And Azanath went into her inner room and found a honeycomb lying on the table. And the comb was as wide as snow and full of honey.

42:22

and its smell was like the breath of life. And Azanath took the comb and brought it to him. And the man said to her, why do you say there is no honeycomb in my house? And lo, you have brought me this. And Azanath said, my Lord, I had no honeycomb in my house, but it happened just as you said. Did it perchance come out of your mouth? For it smells like myrrh. Wow.

42:50

What did we just read? This honeycomb smelled like myrrh? If you have no idea why I'm so excited by the fact that this honeycomb smelled like myrrh, you definitely have to listen to episode number eight, the fragrant dew of paradise. It's hugely significant here that the honeycomb the divine messenger wants Azenith to consume smells like myrrh, because myrrh comes from the sap of a tree. See,

43:19

The Kamaphora myrrh tree, when wounded, secretes a reddish-brown colored sap. And when that sap hardens, it forms a rock-like resin that has a warm, earthy, kind of slightly sweet aroma. In ancient Egypt, and in ancient Mesopotamia, and in ancient Israel, this myrrh resin was infused in oil, and it was used in those traditions for their most important religious rituals. It's this myrrh-infused honey.

43:49

which is symbolically equivalent to oil, that we're gonna see heal Azaneth's spiritual wounds or sins, the sins that she's so desperately desiring to be forgiven. And before I jump into that part of the narrative though, I wanna point your attention to what Azaneth is thinking here. See, she asks the divine messenger, quote, did it, the honeycomb, perchance come out of your mouth for it smells like myrrh?

44:16

She's obviously asking this question because the divine messenger himself smells like myrrh. So either we're to understand that this messenger is the divine being, God, who gifted the world the myrrh oil or he's a divine messenger who himself has been healed by the myrrh oil and thus made whole. So let's listen now to what the divine messenger did with the myrrh smelling honeycomb. And the text reads, quote,

44:47

and the man stretched his hand out and placed it on her head. Yep, you heard that right. The divine messenger placed the myrrh-infused honey on her head, just like what we saw the ancient Egyptians do when they smeared the oil of a tree on the forehead of the dead king, Unus. After the divine messengers smeared the honey on Azanus' forehead, listen to how she is transformed, or.

45:16

healed. Quote, You are blessed, Azanath, for the indescribable things of God have been revealed to you. And blessed too are those who give their allegiance to the Lord God in penitence. And Azanath went into her room and opened her wardrobe, and she took out her finest robe that shone like lightning. And she put it on.

45:45

and she tied a resplendent royal girdle around her waist. And then a lot more happens there, which I can't get into into this one, but we're gonna definitely talk about it in our next episode. But don't let it be lost on you that now after having been smeared with the myrrh honey, she appears similar to the divine being who appeared to her. Her robes shine like lightning. And that's exactly what was said of the divine messenger's face, that it shone like lightning.

46:14

So her black somber tunic has been replaced with a splendid robe of lightning. Her spiritual wounds have been completely healed. Before the divine messenger leaves Azanath, he performs a very interesting ritual. One that if you've listened to episode number seven, the King of the Four Corners, you might recognize. And the text reads, quote, "The man stretched his hand out "and put his finger on the edge of the honeycomb.

46:44

and faced eastwards, and the path of his finger became like blood. And he stretched out his hand a second time and put his finger on the edge of the honeycomb that faced northwards, and the path of his finger became like blood. And the man touched the honeycomb, and fire went up from the table and burnt up the honeycomb. And as it burned, the honeycomb gave out a refreshing fragrance that

47:13

filled the room. And of course, from the text, this fragrance had to have been myrrh. So the divine messenger stands at each of the cardinal points, though the text only tells us of two, but I'm pretty darn sure the ritual was conducted to all four cardinal points from all of the other examples that we see in the ancient world. And he holds the honeycomb out and then blood comes out of his finger. So what does this ritual mean?

47:41

From this, the reader's supposed to see the association between the honey, the myrrh, the blood-colored resin of the tree, and the blood sacrifice of Christ. In fact, it's very likely that the divine messenger that appeared to Azanath here could have been Christ himself. And as you long-time listeners know, the number four in the ancient world symbolized geographic totality.

48:10

and point to the four directions of the world and have blood come from his hand, symbolized that his blood sacrifice had the ability to atone for the cosmic and spiritual wounds inflicted on the entire world. That's some powerful symbolism. All of this brings me to the Christmas tree. And you've probably already surmised in this episode that the Christmas tree is a modern day expression or symbol.

48:40

of the Tree of Life. The actual origin of the Christmas trees is a bit hazy, but scholars are pretty confident that it's a descendant of the worldwide phenomenon of the sacred tree in the ancient world. The encyclopedia Britannica says this, quote, evergreen trees became part of Christian rites in Germany. And in the Middle Ages, quote, paradise trees began to appear there, meant to represent the Garden of Eden.

49:09

These evergreen trees were hung with apples. Other decorations were added. Martin Luther reportedly first hung lighted candles on a tree in the 16th century. And paradise trees evolved into Christmas trees. As we've seen in the ancient world, the sacred tree symbolized God.

49:34

So whether Christians recognize it or not, the Christmas tree standing in their living room is meant to be a symbol of Christ. He is the tree. If you're a Christian, this Christmas, as you

gaze upon your Christmas tree, give a little thought to the gifts of the tree, especially the gift of the tree, it's leaves and sap to heal the king, the hero, and...

50:03

hoppers' wounds. That's it for me. In our next episode, we'll unlock the meaning of the Christmas wreath and the partridge in the pear tree and maybe even the mistletoe. For now, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

50:32

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Episode #25 - The King of Kings

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00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:27

Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. It's great to have you with me today. We've got a lot of great stuff. A quick little announcement that I wanted to make you aware of two audio recordings that we've uploaded to our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. So if you're interested, you can find an audio recording of the Osiris myth. And you can also find an audio recording of the pseudepigraphal text, Joseph and Azaneth.

00:57

We talked about that in our previous episode and we're gonna talk about it again today. With that, let's kind of jump right in. In our previous episode, we discussed some of the gifts of the sacred tree. And one of those gifts was the sap of the tree, that special ointment that in the ancient literature is referred to as oil or dew or honey. And this ointment was smeared on the hero to soothe and heal the wounds that he incurred in his battle with the evil dragon.

01:27

In the ancient literature, the smearing of the sap of the tree on the body or the head or the forehead is referred to as anointing, to anoint the hero or an anointing. In the ancient world, almost all kings were anointed with a special healing ointment, which was most often a special concoction or a mixture of oil, usually of olive oil, and then fragrances from trees. And almost universally,

01:56

The primary tree-based ingredient used in the anointing oil was myrrh, which, if you think through this for a minute, is precisely why the three wise men in the New Testament account brought myrrh as a gift to the child Jesus. In Matthew chapter 2 verse 11 it reads, And when they were coming to the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him.

02:25

And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And now you know why they brought the Christ child myrrh, because he is the Christ and as the Christ, which I mentioned before actually means the anointed one in Greek, and as the future king of Israel, the myrrh that the wise men brought actually spoke to Christ's role as the sacred tree and the healing oil.

02:56

that he would gift to the world. And of course, all of this is really highly symbolic. The physical, tangible myrror is really teaching us about the spiritual, intangible power of God to heal all wounds, be they cosmic and or spiritual. So this brings me to kind of the core of today's episode. So for the past couple of episodes, we've been going through the key events, the stubborn bits that Forsythe and other scholars have found from examining the world's ancient combat narratives.

03:26

And in our last episode, we discussed the eighth event, the healing of the hero's wounds. Once the hero's wounds have been healed, the hero rejoins the battle with the enemy, which is the ninth event. Every last bit of the hero's moral fortitude is tested in this climactic battle. But the enemy is no match for the hero's convictions and the enemy is ultimately defeated. The hero triumphs over the enemy,

03:55

10th event. Sometimes the enemy is slain, sometimes he's imprisoned or chained or punished or banished, which is the 11th event. But in all of the cases, the hero comes off victorious. The hero metaphorically slays the dragon. It's at this point that we have to ask ourselves, okay, so what happens next?

04:23

Now that the beloved son or the hero or the pauper or you and me have successfully triumphed over the evil son, then what happens next? What does the hero spend the rest of his or her days doing? Well that's when things get really really interesting. The theology the ancients teach here is quite astounding.

04:49

So let's take a look at the ancient record and see what the ancients taught. Let's start with the oldest known combat narrative in the ancient world where the hero isn't murdered. And we find this account, of course, in ancient Egypt. In the combat between the evil god Set and the god Osiris' son. This account is found in a text called the Chester-Bady Papyri.

05:19

It's dated to the 20th dynasty, which was during the reign of Ramses V, who reigned from 1149 to 1145 BC. And this account is known as the Contendings of Horus and Set. In this account, as a consequence of Set's rebellion against and murder of Osiris, a divine council, under the high god Ra's authority,

05:46

have assembled in a court in a divine tribunal, and they're holding legal hearings over who now should be given the right to rule as king over Egypt. If you recall in episode number seven, the king of the four corners, Egypt is symbolic of the entire world. It represents the

entire earthly realm. And the council's deliberating over whether or not it should be the strong evil god, Seth, or the pious god, Horus, who should be given the right to reign as king.

06:16

over the earth. They hold a series of hearings and contests which were referred to as contendings between Horus and Set. And Horus successfully wins these contests and he avenges his father Osiris and he vanquishes Set. In this scene, Set is brought before Osiris as a captive. And under this subjugation, Atum, the god Atum, questions him about his usurpation

06:45

Osiris's throne. And Seth concedes that Osiris should be king. And the text reads and this comes from the Alan H Gardner translation. Thereupon Isis brought set, he being made fast with bonds and as a prisoner. Thereupon Atum spake to him.

07:08

Wherefore hast thou not allowed judgment to be pronounced upon you, but has taken away for thyself the office of Horus? Whereupon set spake unto him. Not so, my good Lord, let Horus, the son of Isis, be summoned, and let be given unto him the office of his father Osiris. It's here we need to pause for just a second and talk about what's happening. See,

07:36

Horus is the royal heir of the heavenly king Osiris. This is important. And remember this, because it kind of applies to everything we're gonna talk about in this episode. Horus as the royal heir has the right kingship over Egypt, the whole world. But only if he can defeat the dragon, the rebellious murderous set, which from this text he successfully does.

08:03

So what happens next? What happens after Horus defeats the dragon? What happens after Seth acknowledges that Horus is the rightful heir? Let's read. The text says, quote, "Thereupon they brought Horus, the son of Isis, and they set the white crown upon his head, and he was set in the place of his father Osiris." So,

08:31

What happened after Osiris defeated the dragon? He was crowned a king. Now don't underestimate the theology of what is happening here. Horus is crowned the king of Egypt, which is symbolic of the whole world. He is crowned a king and given a kingdom, the earth, over which to reign. There's

09:00

Let's continue reading. Quote, and they spake unto him, thou art the good king of Tomeri. And Tomeri is T-O-M-E-R-I. The good king of Tomeri is kind of interesting here. Tomeri is actually the name the ancient Egyptians gave Egypt and the earth. So they're saying here that Horus is the king of the earth, just like we argued, but there is more to this name than meets the eye. See,

09:29

Ta or to, T-A, means land, and Mary, M-E-R-I, means beloved. So Ta, Mary, the name the ancient Egyptians gave the earth translates as land of the beloved or the beloved land. The ancient Egyptians loved wordplay, so this could be interpreted as the beloved land or the beloveds land.

09:59

Whose land? This is the beloved's land. Well, who is the beloved? Well, this is where it gets interesting. See, in ancient Egypt, just like we see in the Bible, the son of the high God was given the title beloved son. And I haven't really gotten into this yet, but we will in the coming year. So don't think for a second that the ancient Egyptians didn't know what they were doing when they named Egypt or the earth Ta-Meri, which I argue likely has that double meaning

10:28

the beloved land and the beloved's land. And that makes complete sense when we learn that Horus, the beloved son of Ray, has just been crowned the king of the beloved land. It's called beloved because it is the king's, the beloved son's inheritance for conquering the dragon. The theology here, as you're gonna see in a couple of minutes, is really quite astounding.

10:57

Let's keep reading, it says, and they spake unto him, thou art the good King of Tomeri, thou art the good Lord of every land forever and ever. From this text, it appears that Tomeri, the

earth, is Horus's to govern forever. It's an eternal inheritance, it's an everlasting dominion. Let's keep reading.

11:25

quote, and Isis cried aloud unto her son, Horus, saying, thou art the good King. My heart is in joy that thou enlightened the earth. Note how Horus's mother, Isis, is rejoicing over her son's enthronement here and his dominion over the earth. This is gonna show up again in just a second. So from this ancient text, what do the ancients tell us happens after the hero conquers the dragon?

11:54

The ancients tell us that he is made a king. But he isn't just made a king. The title king is meaningless if the king doesn't have a land or a people over which he reigns. In fact, those two things, land and people, are part and parcel to the entire definition of what it means to be a king. A king is only a king if he has a land over which he reigns and a people over which he reigns.

12:23

And it's very, very clear here that when Horus has made a king, he's given a land, the earth over which to reign. And the text ends with this statement, quote, thereupon ISIS said Horus is arisen as ruler the need now a need to just remind you is the divine counsel in Egypt is in holiday, the need is in holiday, heaven is in joy. So heaven is rejoicing.

12:53

Then they took wreaths when they saw Horus, the son of Isis, who risen as a great ruler of Egypt. The Anid, their hearts were content. The entire earth was in rejoicing when they saw Horus, the son of Isis, the office of his father Osiris, the Lord of Dedu, having been allotted unto him." Okay, I wanna focus on the very last part. There's a lot of great stuff in there.

13:24

The text says, quote, the entire earth was in rejoicing. So we get that rejoicing and joy theme here. Having been allotted unto him. Okay. See the text is telling us that the entire earth was the land, which was quote allotted to Horus as his inheritance for conquering the dragon set, but paid super close attention to the verb used in the text here. It says having been allotted.

13:54

unto him. The verb used here is allotted, which comes entomologically from the ancient practice of drawing lots. And this should give you long time listeners pause. Think about this for a moment. Where have we talked about casting lots before? If you thought of episode number 18, the High Council of 12, then you have a pretty amazing memory.

14:22

Because yes, it was in that episode that we read an ancient Mesopotamian text titled, Enki and the World Order, in which the god Enki divided his kingdom among 12 of his sons, giving each of them individual stewardship over one twelfth part of it. And we saw the same thing when lots were used to divide up the land of Canaan amongst the 12 tribes of Israel. And when lots were used by Jesus' council of 12 apostles,

14:49

to decide who would fill Judas Iscariot's vacancy. In the ancient literature, the casting of lots is often directly associated with decisions made by the council of the gods. And we get the very same idea here in this text, the Contendings of Horus and Set. The entire text takes place in a divine council setting with the gods deliberating over who should be given kingship over the earth.

15:19

after a battle in the council, a primordial Theomache between Horus and Set. Horus triumphs and he's crowned king. And then he's allotted the earth as his dominion. The council allots him a world over which to reign. The theology here is jaw-dropping. See, the ancient record tells us that once the hero slays the dragon,

15:48

absolutely monumental happens. He is made a king and of course a queen if the hero's female. In stark contrast to modern day conceptions of heaven is this place where the good go to spend their days basically hanging out on clouds, doing nothing in particular in some sort of perpetual state of bliss. The ancients taught that something much more powerful occurs.

16:14

They taught that those who slay the Leviathan are crowned kings and queens and are given a heavenly kingdom over which to reign. Now that's a theology worth talking about.

16:30

Let's take a look at a couple more examples in the ancient texts. Let's turn our sights now to the god Marduk in the Mesopotamian Enuma Elish in the Epic of Creation. That's dated to scholars to around the ninth century B.C. And we've talked quite a bit about this on the podcast, but I'm just going to refresh your memory for a second. In the Council of the Gods, the god Marduk volunteers to battle the sea monster Tiamat.

16:57

who has been threatening to destroy the high god Anu and the order of the heavens. This Tiamat impedes chaos. And then with the help of several special weapons and special armor and special utterance that had been gifted by the high god to Marduk, Marduk successfully conquers the Leviathan Tiamat. And this is what the text says. Quote.

17:26

Face to face they came, Tiamat and Marduk, sage of the gods. They engaged in combat, they closed for battle. The Lord spread his net and made it encircle her." And then there are a whole bunch more as mentioned. He shot an arrow which pierced her belly, split her down the middle and slit her heart, vanquished her and extinguished her life. So in this account, the god Marduk conquers the evil chaos monster and he imposes order on

17:56

chaos. Okay, so what does the text say happened after Marduk conquered the sea monster Tiamat? Well, let's keep reading. And this comes from tablet number five. Quote, the gods looked and their hearts were full of joy. So there's that joy motif again, that the Leviathan's been conquered. Lamu and Lamu and all the fathers, and these are the older gods, embraced

18:26

And Anshar the king proclaimed that there should be a reception for him. Anu and Lil and Aya each presented him with gifts. Damkina, his mother exclaimed with joy at him. So this is almost exactly the same that we saw with Isis, right, when Isis was rejoicing over the victory of her son Horus over Set. Now we have Marduk's mother Damkina, joying over her son Marduk's victory over Tiamat. Quote, the Igigi,

18:56

and that's the divine council, assembled. And all of them did obeisance to him. The Anunnaki, which is also the divine council, collected together to prostrate themselves. They stood, they bowed. Yes, king indeed. His fathers took their fill of his manliness. They took off his clothes, which were enveloped in the dust of combat.

19:23

Think of the dust of combat here for a second because if you remember in the Joseph and Azanath text, Azanath is in sackcloths and ashes, which is kind of an equivalent here. So they take off the dust of combat, the gods were attentive to him, with Cyprus they sprinkled his body. We're talking about an anointing here. So they are crowning Mardukki king and part of that is sprinkling him with Cyprus. Cyprus, of course, being a tree. So we're talking about

19:53

the anointing here. Quote, he put on a princely garment, a royal aura, a splendid crown. He took up a mace and grasped it in his right hand, in the inner chamber of his throne, in his cellar, the gods, all that existed, Lamu and Laamu, made their voices heard and spoke to the Igigi. Previously Marduk was just our beloved son, but now he is our king.

20:23

take heed of his command. So here we see the divine council, they anoint Marduk with the fragrance of a tree, the Cyprus, then he dresses in royal regalia, robes, a crown and a mace, a mace which we presume was made from the branch of a tree from other Mesopotamian texts. And then he's declared by the divine council to be a king. The divine council invests Marduk with royal power.

20:53

and then listen to what the divine council does next. It reads, quote, "Next they spoke and proclaimed in unison, "Lugal Dimr Ankiah is his name. "Trust in him.' "So after they have enthroned them, "they give Marduk, the king, a new name.' "Lugal' is the Sumerian word for king. "Dimr' means God.

21:21

and Ankiah means heaven and earth. So the new name that they give to Marduk means divine king of heaven and earth. And then towards the very end of the Anuma Elish, Marduk is given some 50 new royal names. All right, the text continues, quote, when they gave kingship to Marduk, they spoke in oration for him for blessing and obedience.

21:51

So it's clear here that upon conquering the sea monster Tiamat, the council of the gods make Marduk a king. And it's clear from the new name that the council give him that the land over which he will have dominion is the earth because that is his name, the king, the divine king of heaven and earth. I hope you aren't missing the magnitude of what the ancients are teaching here.

22:16

E.T. Mullen Jr. in his book that I love, *The Divine Council and Canaanite in early Hebrew literature* says this of this passage, quote, the investiture of Marduk did not make him a rival of Anu, the high god. Rather, it was a method of ritual exaltation of the champion. In other words, what we're seeing here is that the high god Anu

22:43

exalts or makes kings out of his sons who defeat the dragon. And we assume queens out of his daughters, which we're gonna see in a bit. In the Mesopotamian Ansu bird myth, you'll recall that Nunurta, the son of the chief god Enlil, engages in a fierce battle with the evil rebellious Ansu bird, the bird that stole the tablets of destiny from his father. And this is what the text, dated to the early second millennium BC says.

23:11

And I'm reading from tablet three. Ninurta slew wicked Ansu, and warrior Ninurta regained the god's tablet of destinies for his own hand. The wind brought Ansu's feathers. Dagon saw his sign and rejoiced. There's that joy again. Called all the gods and joyfully he spoke. The strong one has indeed slain Ansu on his mountain. Come.

23:39

Let him come to us, let him rejoice, play, make merry. Okay, so pretty clear theme there of joy and rejoicing. And the text continues, quote, let Enlil bestow upon him the rites. Now rites is the R-I-T-E version again. You have one complete dominion, every single rite, R-I-T-E.

24:09

This is interesting because it suggests that there are rites or a series of heavenly rites or rituals associated with being coronated a heavenly king. And having slain the dragon, then he is able to have those rights. The text continues, quote, “Give your great name, Duku, D-U-K-U, for kingship.” Duku actually means Lord of the Holy Mount.

24:37

And the mound that’s being referred to here is the mountain or the mound where God dwells. So his new name here is the Lord of the Holy Mound. Then like we saw with Marduk, the text then gives a whole series of new names after which the new king is to be called. We see a similar thing in the Mesopotamian Labu myth where the God Tishpak slays the serpent dragon Labu. This is what the text says, quote.

25:05

Who will go to kill the Labu? Who will save the vast land and exercise kingship in the land? Go, Tishpak, kill the lion serpent. Save the land and exercise kingship in the land. He shot an arrow and killed the lion serpent. Forsight in the Old Enemy, which we’ve talked about several times, says this of that particular text, quote, we can tell that the victorious hero was offered

25:34

the kingship as his prize. Presumably the kingship of heaven as in the latter Marduk Tiamat variant. The Labu monster is a dragon, not merely dragon-like and he comes from the sea, a widespread motif with many parallels in other combat narratives. So note here that kingship is the prize for conquering the dragon.

26:04

Now let’s take a look at an example that comes from the Ugaritic or the Canaanite literature. And this is the combat between the sons of the high god El. So we have the rebellious son Yam and the beloved son Baal. And in this account, the sea monster Yam sends two messengers to the mount of El. We’ve talked about this before. And he sends them to the divine council to affirm his kingship. And Yam’s messengers insult the council and the text

26:33

tells us that Baal does the following. And this comes from Cuneiform Tablet 1.4.17. Quote, then Baal took heart. He seized an ax in his hand, a bludgeon in his right hand. He smote the two lads. The goddess Atart stops Baal and prophesies of his victory and his everlasting kingship. And the text says, quote, now thine enemy wilt thou smite.

27:03

Now wilt thou cut off thine adversary. Thou shalt take thine eternal kingdom, thine everlasting dominion.” We’re obviously seeing the same themes here where the God who defeats the rebellious son is gifted an eternal kingship, an everlasting dominion. So with a pair of special weapons, he takes a club named Chaser and a club named Driver, Baal defeats Yam, the serpent.

27:32

And in this text, Yam is not permanently killed, but he’s confined or he’s bound to, quote, his proper sphere, the seas, the sphere of chaos. Mullen says this of the high God, El, the council of the gods and the appointment of eternal kingship. He says, quote, the decree and sanction for kingship comes forth from El. Who’s the high God? The

27:59

actual choice and enthronement of a king occurs at the dwelling of El. So we’re talking about in the high god’s temple or sanctuary. In Cuneiform tablet 11.45 to 46, the high god tells his wife, Adorat, quote, here, give one of your sons and I will make him king. Mullen continues, quote, the decree of El is the decree of the gods. It

28:29

meaning El’s decree, establishes the order of kingship within the divine realm. Only El delivers decrees that affect the rule of the cosmos. He declares kingship, grants palaces, and refuses kingships, a fact confirmed by the Phoenician account recorded by Philo when Baal, Hadu, and Atart are given dominion by the consent of El.

29:00

Tart is Baal’s wife. So this passage refers to the high god El making Baal and a Tart a heavenly king and queen.

29:14

In a Hirohita myth, the giant stone monster Ulikumi is ultimately defeated and his brother Teshu becomes the unchallenged ruler of the universe. In Greek myth, Zeus defeats the monstrous serpentine giant Typhon, chaining him inside Mount Etna. And then after disposing of the monster, Zeus reigns as the perpetual king of heaven. To this point in ancient texts, we've been talking about enthronement of gods.

29:43

gods who have conquered the dragon, but what about earthly kings or poppers or you and me? So what do the ancient texts have to say about that? We turn to a really fascinating text. We've referred to this before. This is the Ramayana. It's a Hindu text. It's dated to around the seventh to fourth century BC. And in the text, Rama is a young man of royal lineage. And he's also considered to be an avatar of the god Vishnu. He rescues using his special bow and arrow.

30:12

the Princess Sita, who's the daughter of the King Janaka, from the clutches of the demon King Ravana. And when Sita and Rama returned to Ayodhya, which is their father's ancient home, Rama is coronated a king. So if you don't know that much about Hinduism, the festival of Diwali, you may have heard of that. It's actually the celebration of the victory of Rama's defeat of Ravana or the-

30:40

or the victory of light over darkness or good over evil and his return to his father's home, Ayodhya. Okay, listen to this text. It's an amazing text of when Rama returns victorious to his father's ancient home and you're going to hear the same theme of joy and rejoicing along with a lot of other fascinating correspondences that we see in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. All right, so this is what it says. The Ramayana reads, quote, message from returning Rama,

31:10

righteous Bharat gave his mandate with a holy joy. Let our city shrines and cha-chas with a lofty music shake and our priests be bright immortals grateful gifts and offerings make. Let our Queens and stately courtiers step in splendor and in state. Chieftains with their marshaled forces range along the city gate and our white-robed holy Brahmins hymn and sacred mantras sing.

31:39

offer greetings to our brother, render homage to our king. Pious priest and learned Brahmin, chief of guild from near and far, noble chief and stately courtier with the wreath and water jar. Women with their loving greetings, children with their joyous cry, tottering age and lip-sync infant hail the righteous chief and high. Tokens of thy rule and empire.

32:08

These have filled thy royal throne. Faithful to his trust and duty, Bharat renders back thine own. Bharat's lie is joy and gladness for returned from distant shore. Thou shalt rule thy spacious kingdom and thy loyal men once more. Thou shalt hold thy rightful empire and assume thy royal crown. Faithful to his trust and duty, Bharat renders back thine own.

32:37

14 years of woe were ended, Rama now assumed his own, and they placed the weary wanderer on his father's ancient throne. Vasita the bard of vidas with auspicious rights and meted placed the monarch and his consort on the gemmed and jeweled seat." Okay, there's so much I could talk about in here. I'm not going to talk about all of it.

33:03

I just want to point out, right, we see the holy joy and the greetings, we see gifts again given to the king, we see also that he's been given a crown and also that he is seated now on his father's throne, which is super interesting, and that he then comes with his consort, his wife. So let's continue. Now listen in this section of it where the priests wash and anoint Rama and they make him a king, just like the god Indra was, which suggests that these are heavenly rites.

33:34

So let's read. Guatama and Katya Vamadiva, priest of Yor, Jabali and wise Vijaya, verged in holy ancient lore, poured the fresh and fragrant water on the consecrated king. As the gods anointed Indra from the pure ethiropur springs, juices from each fragrant creeper on his royal brow they place. Okay, you gotta stop there.

34:03

So a creeper is a plant. So we're taking the juices of a plant and they're putting it on his brow. So we're definitely talking about an anointing here. And I'll continue. And his father's crown and jewels Rama's ample forehead grace. So he's being crowned with his father's crown. And as Manu first of monarchs.

34:30

Now I have to stop here too because Manu is the legendary first man. He is the Indian Adam. So the Ramayana is saying here that the first monarch or king was Adam. This is crazy. Let me reread that for you in case you missed it and his father's crown and jewels Rama's ample forehead grace and as Manu first of monarchs.

34:57

was enthroned in days of yore. So was Rama consecrated by the priests of Vedic lore. So the Ramayana is telling us that Rama was coronated a king according to the same rites, R-I-T-E, as the rites that were used to coronate the Indian atom, Manu, the world's first king. That's astounding, just astounding.

35:27

All right, let's go in look at some medieval and early contemporary legends. So we're gonna look at the Germanic heroic legend of Beowulf. It was dated to between 975 and 1025 AD. So we jumped forward a couple of thousand years. We learned that Beowulf, he's the hero of royal blood. And after he defeats the malevolent monster Grendel and his mom, he's crowned the earthly king of the geats. He governs there successfully for 50 years.

35:55

in Norse mythology in the proseda which is dated to the early 13th century AD the god Odin battles the evil frost giant Ymir who threatens chaos and destruction and so the two engage in a fierce battle that lasts for days and then upon Ymir's death and defeat Odin reigns as the chief of the

36:25

as the unequivocal king of Asgard. See Scott Littleton, he's an American anthropologist out of Occidental College. He studied the widespread diffusion of this idea or motif of the kingship in heaven. And this is what he says, quote, one of the most widespread and important of all ancient old world theogonic themes, the so-called kingship in heaven theme can be documented in the Greek Hittite

36:54

Phoenician, Iranian, Babylonian, and Norse traditions. In each of the above instances, a single theme is present. An existing generation of gods is preceded by two and sometimes by

three earlier generations of supernatural beings. Each succeeding generation being presided over by a king in heaven who has usurped the power of his predecessor.

37:21

Moreover, there is generally a fourth figure, a monster of some sort, who presents a challenge to the final heavenly ruler and must be overcome before the latter can assert full and perpetual authority, which is kingship. It's clear from the textual evidence I've presented here that the ancients taught that

37:50

Heavenly kings. Now you might be thinking to yourself, okay, but these examples in the ancient world tell of gods who slayed demonic dragons and became heavenly kings. But what about human beings? Is there any theological evidence that human beings who slay the dragon will also become heavenly kings? And is there any evidence of this theology in the Judeo-Christian tradition? The answer to both of these questions is a resounding yes. And there's

38:19

plenty of evidence. To start, let's look at what John the Revelator teaches in the New Testament in the book of Revelation. In chapter 3 verse 5, Christ says this, quote, he that overcometh, and he's talking about overcoming Satan, which John describes as a dragon in chapter 12. So he's talking about defeating the dragon here. The same shall be clothed in white raiment.

38:47

And remember Ramayana, he came in in white clothing. You'll see that this shows up the same wherever we look. In verse 11, he continues, quote, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Here Christ is associating those who overcome with having a crown. What crown? Verse 12 says, quote, him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.

39:17

Christ's reference here to those who overcome as pillars is super, super intriguing because pillars, as we've talked about, are considered stylized trees. So Christ is essentially saying that those who overcome will become trees of life also in his temple where he dwells. I continue, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him my new name.

39:47

Okay, what Christ says here is super interesting too, because where have we seen new names in this episode? Among kings, that's right. After Marduk slays Tiamat and is crowned a heavenly king, he's given a series of new names. In the Anzu myth, Ninurta, after he slays the monstrous Anzu bird and is made a heavenly king, he is given a series of new names. So here Christ is saying that those who overcome, he will quote, write upon him my new name.

40:17

It's clear here when Christ links those who quote, overcome to crowns and pillars and new names that Christ is talking about making these individuals heavenly kings. You know, I am always amazed when people tell me that they believe in Christ. But when the same people are asked if they believe what Christ actually says in the scriptures, like we see right here, then there tends to be a little more hemming and hawing. See,

40:45

Jesus is actually saying here, just like what we saw in ancient Egypt, ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Ugarit, and ancient Phoenicia, that He will make dragon slayers, in this case heroes and poppers and you and me, human beings, if we conquer the dragon, heavenly kings and queens. And if you don't believe me, take it directly from Christ's mouth in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21. And Jesus

41:15

quote, to him that overcome, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my father on his throne. That's similar to the Ramayana too, where Rama is sitting on his father's throne and here we have Jesus also sitting on his father's throne. The Christian standard Bible translates the same verse this way. It says, to the one who conquers.

41:44

I will give the right, R-I-G-H-T, to sit with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my father on his throne." Now that's a theology. I'm not sure I can fully wrap my brain around the full implications of what Christ is saying here. Thrones are for kings and queens. So here Jesus is saying that those who conquer the dragon have the right, R-I-G-H-T.

42:13

to sit on a throne, Jesus's throne. And let's not forget that to be a king, one must also be given a land and a people over which to reign. There is so much here. And in case you still aren't getting it, Christ caps off this verse in this chapter with the following statement. He says, quote, he that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith. So he said all this really interesting stuff about kingship. And then he's like, if you...

42:43

Those of you who have ear to hear, listen up. In other words, Christ is telling the reader that there's a lot more here than meets the eye. Christ is counseling the reader to seek further revelation by study and by the Spirit. Needless to say, this casts a whole new light on the purpose of this life. There's also another really important theological principle that Jesus is teaching here. And this is the notion of as above,

43:13

so below. Mercea Eliade wrote this fantastic book called *The Myth of the Eternal Return* and in there he says this quote, the familiar paradigmatic myth recounts the combat between the hero and a gigantic serpent. Where tradition is still more or less a living thing great monarchs consider themselves imitators of the primordial hero.

43:40

the enemies whom the Pharaoh fights are identified with the dragon Epophis, while the Pharaoh himself is assimilated with the god Rey, conqueror of the dragon. What Iliad is saying here is that the hero, the pauper, you and me, are meant to follow the pattern, the example of the primordial hero god, Marduk, Horus, Ninurta, and Christ.

44:08

who in the council of the gods stood up and volunteered to battle the rebel god, the monster, the dragon, the god who threatened to destroy the high gods kingdom, were to emulate the archetype, the primordial god. And that's exactly what Jesus says in verse 21 when he says, to the one who conquers, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I also conquered. We're supposed to emulate the way he conquered.

44:39

And for those who do, just like Christ was crowned a heavenly king, so too will they be crowned heavenly kings. And for the record, from what I've read in the ancient world, like the things we've read during this episode, I believe what Christ is saying here. And I'm not talking about a watered down, spiritualized interpretation of what he's saying here, like so many would argue. I think Christ means exactly what he's saying in these verses.

45:07

because that's the doctrine that we see all over in the ancient world. With that, I wanna return to the book of Joseph and Azanith, which we talked about in our previous episode, and read what it has to say about queen making. In our last episode, we read in that text that Azanith, the daughter of the ancient Egyptian priest of On, or Heliopolis, dresses in sackcloth and ashes, and she pleads to God to forgive her for her idolatrous ways. And while she's praying, the heavens tear open,

45:36

and a divine messenger in the form of a man appears before her and calls her by name. The divine messenger instructs Azanath to remove her clothes of pettance and put on a new robe, one that she's never worn before. And he says to her in chapter 14, quote, from today you will be made new and refashioned and given new life and be anointed with the unction of incorruption.

46:06

So what we're reading in this text is that Azanath's battle with the dragon is being expressed in more spiritual terms than the traditional violent combat myths that we've been reading. But the combat is the same. The dragon's persuaded Azanath to worship false idols, and then by so doing, her soul is spiritually wounded. She's breaking the laws of heaven. And then in a rather gripping oration, Azanath pleads for spiritual healing.

46:35

And it's then that a divine messenger appears and tells her how her wounds can be healed with the quote, unction of incorruption. The unction is the oil of the tree, the oil that produces incorruption, that restores the soul to its perfectly ordered uncorrupt state. It's here that the divine messenger takes a honeycomb, a honeycomb that carries the beautiful fragrance of the myrrh tree, and he anoints azaneth on the forehead.

47:04

just like we see done when any king in the ancient world is coronated. The divine messenger is coronating Azanath to be a queen. And this becomes especially clear when after the divine messenger asks Azanath to wash off her ashes and put on a new robe, that he says to her, quote, “Take heart, Azanath, for lo, “the Lord has heard the words of your confession. “Take heart, Azanath, your name,

47:32

is written in the book of life and it will never be blotted out. And you shall no more be called Azanath, but city of refuge shall be your name.” So that’s so interesting, because this is just like what we saw with Marduk when he slayed Tiamat and Nunurta, when he slayed Ansu here, Azanath, after she slayed Satan, she is given a new name, a royal queenly name.

48:00

The divine messenger tells her that her new name is quote, city of refuge. And why is this her new name, her new queenly name? Because the divine messenger says quote, for many shall take refuge in you and under your wings shall many peoples find shelter. And within your walls, those who give their allegiance to God in penance will find security.

48:26

I wish I had more time to go into why City of Refuge is Azaneth’s new queenly name, because there’s some really fantastic stuff here. But it’s primarily because her new queenly name reflects a very important prophecy about her descendants. And I’ll have to save that for another day. For this episode, however, it’s important to note that what’s happening with Azaneth here is precisely the same pattern we see taking place in the ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, and Phoenician texts.

48:54

when they give us the accounts of the heavenly coronation of the beloved son after he won his battle against the rebel son. It’s pretty apparent that the coronation of Azanath here is patterned after the heavenly coronation of the beloved son. Azanath’s newly acquired royal status is further substantiated in the text when the divine messenger commands her to change into her wedding clothing and go out to meet Joseph, her king.

49:24

And the text reads, quote, So listen to me, Azanith, and put on your wedding robe and adorn yourself as a bride and be ready to meet him. For lo, he is coming to you today, and he will

see you and rejoice. And Azanith went into her room and opened her wardrobe and took out her finest robe that shone like lightning. And she put it on and she tied a resplendent royal girdle around her waist.

49:52

And remember in a previous episode how we pointed out that Josephus noted that the girdle represented the dead slain Leviathan. And she put golden bracelets round her hands and golden boots on her feet and a costly necklace about her neck. And she put a golden crown upon her head. And in the crown in front were the costliest of stones.

50:18

The imagery here is clearly one of a queen going out to meet her king. And note again, her royal wedding robes shine like lightning and all of her queenly adornments are made of gold. And all of this is imagery that's meant to convey glory, like the divine messenger who appeared to her. Azanath has become like him, a being of light and glory. And let's not skip over the crown. If you had any doubt that the divine messenger was coronating Azanath, the queen in these passages, you don't now.

50:48

his Azenith's queenship doesn't get any clearer than when it stated that Azenith, quote, placed a golden crown upon her head, one adorned with the costliest of stones. And I haven't mentioned this yet, but earlier in the text in chapter five, when Joseph first visits Azenith's father, the text describes him precisely as a king. The text reads, quote, and the gates of the court that looked east were opened and Joseph came in.

51:17

And Joseph was wearing a marvelous white tunic, and a robe wrapped around him was purple, made of linen woven with gold. There was a golden crown on his head, and all round the crown were 12 precious stones, and above the stones 12 golden rays, and a royal scepter was in his right hand. I don't know that there could be any more kingly description of anybody.

51:46

Joseph clearly arrives at Azenith's doorstep, here clothed in purple and gold regalia as a divine king. And listen to this, listen to what else the text tells us that Joseph is carrying. The

text reads, quote, and he held an olive branch, stretched out, and there was much fruit on it. Wow, Joseph shows up with a branch of the tree of life in his hand.

52:15

The readers to see here that by holding a branch of the tree in his hand, that his, Joseph's divine kingship is sanctioned by the tree of life itself, by God himself. And all of this is powerful theological imagery. The theology of the ancient tradition is teaching that one who has governed him or herself according to the laws of heaven, effectively slaying the dragon.

52:43

has then, as Christ himself said, gained the right, R-I-G-H-T, to sit on a throne and govern others as a king in God's heavenly kingdom. A passage in the ancient Egyptian text, the Condemnings of Horus and Set, say something kind of similar. The God Shue says, quote, "Righteousness is the owner of power." There's a lot there.

53:11

I wanna take a second here and talk about royal crowns before I close this out. At this point in the podcast, it should come as no surprise to any of you that are long time listeners that in the ancient world, the crown appears to have been originally made from the branches and leaves of the sacred tree, the sacred tree of life, the mythic ritual symbol of God. The king is a branch of the God most high.

53:41

Gio Wittgrin, that famous historian of religion we've talked about in his really important book on the King and the Tree of Life says this quote, all interest centers around the Holy Garden of the Divinity. In this garden is found the Tree of Life, the fruits of which are eaten by men, while its oil is used for the anointment of his body and especially his head. As his rod, the branch cut

54:10

crown twined from the shoots of the tree from its leaves and flowers. See the king is adorned in royal regalia made from the gifts of the tree and that like we've seen quite a bit in this episode is some pretty powerful theological imagery. In ancient Near East the practice of crowning a victor with an olive wreath was

54:34

pretty salient in ancient Greece. And we know from a fourth century BC text that what we know today as the Olympic Games were originally known as the Sacred Crown Games. And Wikipedia gives us this very intriguing provenance for the Olympic Crown. Quote, the olive wreath, also known as Cotinos was the prize for the winner at the ancient Olympic Games.

55:04

There was only one winner per event, crowned with an olive wreath made of wild olive leaves from a sacred tree near the temple Zeus at Olympia. Thus we see that the Olympic crown was made from the leaves and the branches of the sacred tree. The origin of the Olympic games is a bit uncertain, but according to legend, the games are patterned after Heracles' 12 labors. Now,

55:33

We haven't talked too much about his labors, but this included slaying the fire breathing multi-serpent headed Hydra and acquiring the sacred golden apples from a tree in the Garden of Hesperides, a tree which was guarded, no surprise, by Lavum, a fearsome hundred headed dragon. You get the picture. The Olympic games appear to have their provenance in the ancient tradition.

56:02

the symbolic labors that all of us must perform, aka slaying the dragon if we are to come off victors and gain the prize of being crowned with a sacred olive wreath made from the branches and leaves of the sacred olive tree. Author Kat Moon notes, quote, "Before the wreath was associated with Christmas, "it was a prominent emblem of victory and power "in ancient Greece and Rome."

56:31

Outside of competitions, a crown of leaves or flowers was an ornament of the priest in the performance of sacrifice, of the hero on his return from victory, of the bride at her nuptials. And now you know the provenance of the Christmas wreath. So the next time you see a Christmas wreath hanging from someone's front door, think on how it represents what happens next. What happens.

56:55

after the hero, the pauper, or you and me defeat the dragon. It represents the theology that the victor will be crowned a heavenly king or queen in God's kingdom. And that's

something. Before I close out this episode, I want to draw your attention to two verses in the biblical canon. In the book of Isaiah chapter nine verse six, we have the famous verse about the advent of the Christ child. It reads, and this is the King James version, quote,

57:25

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” Did you catch in this verse that Christ the King here is given new names? The text says, and his name shall be Wonderful, Counselor.

57:51

the mighty God and in the text each of Christ’s new names is capitalized, capital W wonderful, capital C counselor, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace. These are Christ’s new royal names. And that’s exactly what we saw when Horus was crowned a king in Egypt. He was given five new names, the royal titlature. And what we saw in the Enuma Elish when Marduk slayed Tiamat, he was given 50 new names and we saw with Ninurta slayed the Ansoor bird.

58:19

And this is what we see every time any earthly king like King Charles is crowned. Here Christ the heavenly king is given a series of new names. In Revelation chapter 17 verse 14, we learn of two more of Christ’s royal new names. And the text reads, quote, “The Lamb shall overcome them, “for He is,’ capital L, “Lord of lords,’ “and capital K, “King of kings.”

58:48

and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.” After listening through this episode, you now know one of the reasons why one of Christ’s royal names is King of Kings, plural. It’s because he promises in Revelation, like we see all over in the ancient world, to make those who overcome kings just like he is. Thus, he is the King of Kings.

59:18

plural.

59:20

I should probably leave it there, but I just can't resist sharing one last text with you. And this comes from the Sumerian text Enki in the World Order. We've discussed it on the podcast before. It has traits that harken back to the end of the third millennium BC. It says this between lines 190 and 210. And this passage speaks of the mountain where the high god dwells. And listen to what it says happens in the sanctuary or temple where God dwells. This says, quote,

59:50

great mountain, land of heaven and earth, trailing glory, giving birth to kings, plural, who put on the good diadem, giving birth to lords, plural, who weareth the crown on their heads." It says right in this text that the high god in his temple sanctuary, quote, gives birth to kings and lords, plural.

01:00:19

And the context of the text suggests we're talking about heavenly kings and lords here. Now listen to what else it says and see if you've heard this anywhere else in today's episode. It reads, quote, your Lord, the honored Lord sits with on now on eyes on you, the high God, the king on ons dais, which is the throne. So this is like essentially saying your Lord, the honored Lord sits.

01:00:49

on His Father, the High God's throne. This is uncannily just like what Jesus said in Revelation chapter three, verse 21. He said, He that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on His throne. Wow, it's correspondences like that that just blow my mind.

01:01:15

There's a lot to think on here in this episode, which I hope you'll do. That's it for me. With that, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing we're with. We fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

01:01:32

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Episode #26 - A Cosmic Kingdom

<https://theancienttradition.com/26-a-cosmic-kingdom/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:28

I'm Jack Logan. Welcome to the ancient tradition. Can't wait to get into today's program. Today's episode is honestly mind blowing and maybe even a bit mind bending if we think about it in terms of its implications. And what's even more astounding is that the ancients wrote this theology down. We can go out there and we can read it for ourselves. Thousands of years after they took their little tools and pressed it into the clay tablets.

00:56

I want to start by saying that nothing that we discussed today is my own invention. It's core to the theology that the ancients taught. And that theology we refer to on this program is the ancient tradition. If you're listening to the podcast for the first time, we wholeheartedly welcome you to the program. You picked a great episode to begin with. If you're kind of curious what we do on this podcast, it's pretty simple.

01:26

oldest ancient texts and we search for what I refer to as the stubborn bits, the theological and cosmological themes that inexplicably show up time and time again in the ancient record. Then we take those and we piece those stubborn bits together so that we can get a basic understanding of the theology that was taught in the world's original religious tradition. I take the theology that the ancients taught seriously. A lot of academics don't.

01:54

This is really not so much an academic pursuit as it is a spiritual pursuit. The pursuit of the original religious teachings that were given to mankind as the ancients taught by God in the very beginning. The podcast is progressive, which means that each episode builds off of the previous episode. So if you're a first time listener, you're kind of jumping into the deep end of the pool today. That's okay, but you might not be prepared.

02:22

for the theology we discussed today. It might sound unbelievable, impossible, or maybe even crazy talk. For that reason, I highly, highly recommend if you have the time and the interest that you go back and listen to the episodes that preceded today's episode, because every single episode we've discussed over the past year, the creation,

02:46

the primordial waters, divine utterance, the sea serpent, the council of the gods, the primordial theomachy, and kingship play a critical role in building the theological foundation that's necessary to comprehend the theology that we're gonna discuss in today's episode. In fact, I think that once you've listened to those episodes, you're gonna see that the theology discussed in today's episode is really the only logical successor.

03:15

to the theology the ancients have taught up to this point. You can find all of the past episodes right here on this platform, or you can find it on our companion website, thea And you can also find full audio recordings of some of the ancient texts that we refer to on the program on our sister podcast, the Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. With that, let's jump into today's episode. It's titled,

03:45

In our last episode, the King of Kings, I kind of went over maybe a little bit overboard with the textual evidence. Sometimes I can get a little bit wonky. If you don't know what wonky means, it means someone who's characterized by an enthusiastic or excessive interest in the specialized details of a particular subject or field. And that sounds like a perfect description of how I feel about the ancient tradition.

04:11

So I'm gonna try not to belabor the evidence kinda like maybe I did in the previous episode. Not gonna promise that, but we'll try. And one of the reasons that I presented so much

evidence in the King of Kings is because I wanted you to see that there is so, so much ancient textual evidence that the theology of the ancient tradition is a theology of heavenly kingship. In every single aspect of the ancient primordial combat narratives,

04:41

The battle with the dragon is a battle over kingship. And it's in those narratives that the battle takes place before the creation, before the earth is formed. The battle takes place in the council of the gods, which is held where the high god dwells in the heavens in the sacred mountain sanctuary, the heavenly temple. Desiring to usurp the heavenly throne, one of the high god's sons rebels against the high god and the laws of heaven. Another one of the high god's sons,

05:09

One who abides by the laws of heaven volunteers to defend the high God's kingdom by battling the rebellious son and the two sons engage in combat and with the help of special weapons, the righteous son slays the rebellious son, the dragon, and upon his victory, the high God crowns the righteous son, a king. And all of that is very important if we're going to understand what happens next in the ancient accounts.

05:39

And I want to talk about that, but before I do, I want to point out that over time, when we look at these combat narratives, the divine combat originally took place in the heavens, like we see in the ancient Egyptian combat between Horus and Set, or in the ancient Mesopotamian combat between Marduk and Tiamat, or the ancient Ugaritic combat between Baal and Yam. Those came to serve as the prototype for all types of combat narratives that we see. We can see combats between gods after the earth was formed.

06:09

between gods and men, between earthly kings and enemies, between heroes and dragons, and then down to combats between scullery maids and evil stepmothers. The thing that links all these combat narratives together is their inexplicable tie to kingship or royalty. And I don't think I've heard anyone inside or outside of the literary or mythological field ask why this is. Why is it that every time we look at combat narratives, they're tied?

06:39

directly to kingship or royalty. Why? Why are they always about kings and princes and princesses? Like I've pointed out several times on the program, we just shouldn't see this. There should be a lot more variability in the stories that are told, but the combat kingship link shows up again and again and again. Nearly all of the combat narratives we see in the ancient world.

07:06

on into the world's greatest epics, on into the greatest legends of medieval times and on into the folk tales of modern day are in some way tied to the concept of kingship and royalty. And this is not by accident. It is one of those stubborn bits. The combat kingship connection should be blaringly apparent to everyone, but I think sometimes we miss what's directly in front of us.

07:37

Take note, for example, that in the Epic of Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh is a king, he is king of Uruk. In Jason and the Argonauts, he is the son of Aeson, king of Locos, whose throne was usurped by Pellaeus, Aeson's half-brother. In Beowulf, Beowulf's the nephew of the king of Geatland, and upon the king's death, Beowulf is offered the king's throne. In the legend of Fafnir, the hero Sigurd,

08:06

is the son of King Sigmund, a descendant of the high god Odin. In the legend of Arthur Pendragon, the King Arthur series, King Uther Pendragon dies and Merlin tells Arthur, someone who is a warrior renowned for killing giants and monsters, that if he can draw a mysterious sword out of a stone, then he's going to be the next king. Arthur, of course, succeeds and becomes the new king.

08:34

And of course we have Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Mulan, Tiana, Rapunzel, Merida, Moana, Aurea, and Elsa. All have royal ties within their fictional universes. In Snow White, Snow White is the daughter of a king. She's forced to flee her kingdom after her stepmother attempts to have her killed. She takes refuge in a cottage with seven.

09:04

dwarves and note that there are precisely seven dwarves here who help her defeat her stepmother. And then you see in *Sleeping Beauty* Aurora she's a princess by birth. She's cursed to sleep for eternity by an evil sorceress Maleficent. She's saved by the true love of a prince. In *Mulan*, Princess Mulan disguises herself as a man. She takes her father's

09:33

and defeats the evil Shan Yu, which saves the Kingdom of China. The emperor praises Mulan and offers her a seat on the royal council. In each of these princess movies, the princess has to battle a monster, an evil stepmother, an evil sorceress, or even an evil invading army before their royal status can be fully realized.

10:00

I could of course give you many, many, many more examples, but the point here is that within the theology of the ancient tradition, the defeat of the dragon is universally and unequivocally tied to the full realization of kingship and queenship. It is the honor that's bestowed for conquering the dragon. To say it another way, the ancient tradition flat out attests that there is royal status in all of us.

10:30

Like Sigurd, we're all sons and daughters, royal sons and royal daughters of the divine heavenly king, the high god. And to achieve the full realization of that status as a royal son or royal daughter of the high god, we must first conquer the dragon. I hope you can see here that as far back as we can go in the historical record, right up to the most contemporary combat narratives we find like in the Disney princess films, there's an unequivocal link between defeating the awful enemy.

11:00

and the realization of royalty. And let's not forget that most of these ancient myths are meant to teach us about the realities of spiritual things. And lots of times it's about the realities of the spiritual realm itself. So what we're talking about here, what these divine combat myths are really teaching us is that if we will conquer the dragon, we too will obtain the royal status of heavenly king and queen.

11:30

Let me summarize here for a minute. At its core, the theology of the ancient tradition is a theology of heavenly kingship. Let me say that one more time. At its core, the theology of the

ancient tradition is a theology of heavenly kingship. The heavenly aspect of kingship is particularly pronounced in ancient world. The entire theology,

11:56

of the ancient Egyptian religion, which we're gonna dive into in more detail in the coming weeks, is entirely centered on the attainment of heavenly kingship, entirely. Now lots of people think the ancient Egyptians were obsessed with death, but that's not really a correct understanding. The ancient Egyptians, particularly the royal house, weren't obsessed with death. They were obsessed with obtaining eternal life, which was part and parcel

12:24

to attaining heavenly kingship. And there are proof texts for this all over in the ancient Egyptian pyramid texts, which we've noted several times on the podcast. Which we've noted several times on the podcast are the oldest compilation of religious writings anywhere in the world. The ancient Mesopotamians, as we pointed out several times on this podcast, directly state on the Sumerian King list that, quote,

12:53

kingship descended from heaven. So we can conclude that Sumerian earthly kingship was patterned after or was a continuation of kingship in heaven. This practice of patterning earthly institutions and structures after real heavenly institutions or structures, a notion that's captured really nicely in the Hermetic maxim, as above, so below, is

13:21

one of the most important religious principles that we find in the ancient world. And no surprise, it's most pronounced when we examine the institutionalization of kingship and also the building of palaces and temples. And we're gonna talk more about that in the coming episodes. In ancient Ugaritic and Canaanite literature, we find some pretty detailed descriptions of the heavenly King El and his divine court, the Council of the Gods.

13:49

as well as pretty detailed descriptions of the heavenly king's character, his stewardship, his responsibilities, and his powers. And it's in these texts that we get a pretty good idea of what a heavenly king spends his days doing. And if we take these texts seriously, then we learn that what a heavenly king spends his day doing is awesome. Awesome in the truest sense of the word. And it's for that reason that the Ugaritic texts are some of my favorites.

14:20

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, we find a similar emphasis on heavenly kingship. Graham Goldsworthy, who wrote the Kingdom of God for the New Dictionary of Biblical Theology said this, quote, the idea of the rule of God over creation, over all creatures, over the kingdoms of the world, and in a unique and special way over his chosen and redeemed people is the very heart.

14:49

of the message of the Hebrew scriptures. So I've been reading a lot of interesting things on heavenly kingship and there's this up and coming young scholar by the name of Vadim Yurchenko. And he wrote his thesis on Yahweh's kingship. And this is what he says, he says, quote, God's reign as heavenly king over the world is a fundamental feature of Christian theology.

15:18

The grand theme of God's kingdom functions as a framework for interpreting and organizing biblical revelation and gives biblical theology its coherence and structure. In the Christian tradition, Yahweh or Jehovah is a heavenly king, the heavenly king who is prophesied to return to the earth and reign as a king. So you can see here in each of these ancient near Eastern religious traditions,

15:47

heavenly kingship is the dominant religious theme. And if you know what you're looking at, heavenly kingship is also the dominant mythological, cosmological, theological, symbolic, architectural, and liturgical theme in the ancient world. I mentioned this fact a couple of months ago to one of my students at the university where I teach. A student who happens to be Jewish and

16:16

mind you, in which thousands of prayers are recited every single day that are started with the divine appellation, blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe. And this student said to me, I think the ancients probably made the heavenly kingship stuff up as a way to control people. I think it's important to say here that I really like this student. Her name is Abby. She's a fantastic and smart student.

16:46

So I don't want to throw her comment out or dismiss it. I think a lot of young people today have great distrust in society's core institutions, be they civil or religious. So I wasn't really surprised by her comment. I responded by saying, Abby, you know, I've studied this a lot. I encourage you to do the same. But what I found is that the notion of heavenly kingship and all of the accompanying theology, cosmology, symbolism, and liturgy is so sophisticated.

17:16

multifaceted and exceptionally morally erudite that I find it impossible to believe that a brute Mesopotamian seeking to control a city of other Mesopotamians developed such an elegant and intellectually enlightening and spiritually empowering way to do so. It defies reason. Why would a controlling person create a theology that liberates, illuminates the intellect

17:43

empowers the spirit and inspires the soul. Those things are the antithesis of control. Mark Z. Breitler in his book, *God is King*, understanding an Israelite metaphor said this, quote, we must allow for the possibility that the image of God as king might have shaped human kingship rather than vice versa.

18:12

And I agree. As I just mentioned in the Christian tradition, Christ's heavenly kingship and Christ's kingship over the earth constitute fundamental features of Christian theology. But I don't think I've ever heard anyone ask these very crucial questions. Where did Jesus get the authority, the legitimate right to rule the earth as king? And two,

18:41

Who decreed that Jesus was the king of the world? These are serious questions. Now you might be thinking, well, Jesus doesn't need anybody to grant him the authority to reign as king. And maybe you're right, but that's not what the ancients taught. In a second, we're gonna dive into the ancient record and we're gonna see what the ancients did teach, but think for a moment on how self-declared kingship

19:11

play out today. If a random British gentleman stood up and declared himself to be the King of England, I think nobody in England except for maybe a few gullible people would take him seriously. Legitimate kings are not self-declared. Tyrants? Yes. True kings? No. To be

the legitimate King of England, someone else has to grant that person the authority to rule as a king.

19:40

and that someone be it God or one's own father who had previously reigned as king or through one's royal line, but it's never through self-declaration. So let's turn to some of the textual evidence in the ancient world to see if those texts can shed some light on who gave Jesus the authority to reign as a heavenly king and why that person gave Jesus the authority to reign as the king of the world. Because without the answers to these questions,

20:09

it's quite difficult to have a full understanding of who Jesus is and why he is a king. As we learned in our previous episode, the King of Kings, not just anyone is crowned a heavenly king. There's strict criteria regarding who can legitimately reign as a heavenly king. In the world's oldest combat narratives, only individuals who win the battle against the dragon can rightfully be crowned a heavenly king. And there's

20:37

plenty of evidence in the biblical canon, especially in Isaiah chapter 51 verse nine, that Christ gained the right to rule as a heavenly king because he conquered the dragon, the rebel son Satan. The text says this of Jehovah, quote, "Art thou not it," or some translations, the one, "that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon?"

21:05

Recall that Rahab is the name given in Hebrew for the sea monster, which means pride or arrogance. And in Psalm chapter 74 verse 14, this is also speaking of Jehovah, it says this, quote, thou breakest the heads of Leviathan, which is the dragon, in pieces and gave us him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

21:31

I came across this professor of psychology at Abilene Christian University by the name of Richard Beck, who makes this really insightful remark about Christ. And this is what he says, quote, many doubting liberal and progressive Christians who are drawn to Christus Victor atonement theology generally lack the warfare worldview that allows Christus Victor theology to make sense.

22:00

Specifically, given their great skepticism about the devil, many doubting Christians have no theology of the dragon, no clear sense about what is defeated and tamed in the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, no clear sense about why Jesus is described as victorious, because you can't have a victory if you don't have victory.

22:30

dragon. It's Christ's victory over the dragon that justifies his enthronement as a heavenly king. And Jesus says as much himself as we read in the previous episode in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21 when Christ himself said, quote, I also overcame and am set down with my father in his throne. What's interesting here is that in this first Christ

22:57

directly connects his heavenly kingship, sitting on his father's heavenly throne, to the fact that he overcame his victory over Satan. I love it when I come across Christ's own words in the Judeo-Christian canon because you can't get more authoritative than what Christ himself says. And here Christ tells us in his own words why he was made a king. It was because he victoriously conquered the dragon.

23:25

prize for victory over Satan, as we've seen in all combat narratives, is kingship. Dragon slayers are made heavenly kings and queens. So now we know why Christ had the right and the authority to reign as a heavenly king. He'd been tested and proved and he'd come off victorious. But we still don't know exactly why he had the right to reign over the earth.

23:55

And for the answer to that, we need to return to the Enuma Elish, the Babylonian Epic of Creation. And the answer we're gonna find in there is truly jaw-dropping. And in my humble opinion, it is the greatest theology ever revealed. So let's jump in. In tablet three, we read how Marduk during an assembly of the gods volunteered, quote,

24:23

of his own free will to confront Tiamat, the sea monster. Now listen closely to what the council of the gods, the Anunnaki, which literally means the offspring of On, On being the

high god, the father of the gods, tells Marduk in tablet four. Now speaking to Marduk, this is what the council says. You are honored among the great gods. Your destiny is unequalled.

24:54

your word has the power of Anu. Okay, did you catch what was going on here? Did you catch the reference to the quote word here? Because that's key. The Anunnaki say quote, your destiny is unequalled, your word has the power of Anu. The council just told Marduk that he has the power to divinely utter, just like the high god Anu.

25:24

So Marduk here has been given the power of divine utterance. Let's keep reading. It says, oh Marduk, you are honored among the great gods. Your destiny is unequalled. Your word has the power of Anu. From this day onwards, your command shall not be altered. See, one of the things that makes the high god Anu a god

25:53

is his ability to divinely utter, his ability to command by the word of his mouth, by way of his name, the chaotic elements, those primordial waters, to order themselves into a world. It's by the authority of his command, his divine utterance that he makes assignments and he allots kingdoms and he establishes divine law. In today's vernacular, we might refer to God's power to divinely utter as his priesthood, the divine authority or power

26:22

that he uses to govern the heavens. We covered the importance of divine utterance in episode number 12, the word that changed the universe. So if you haven't had a chance to listen to that episode or you kind of need a refresher, be sure and give it a listen. It'll give you some important theological background for what we see happening here. One additional point, the ancient texts tell us that divine utterance can't be altered by anyone or anything, except the one who has the ability to divinely utter.

26:52

In other words, all things, be they the elements or God's offspring must abide by his divine utterance. That's power. But we can take comfort in the fact that God, because he conquered the dragon, because he passed the tests and temptations of evil, will never abuse that power, which is why he was granted the power in the first place. So let's return to the Enuma Elish.

27:22

After Marduk is granted divine utterance, we read about this interesting little experiment that takes place in the divine council. And I've talked about this on the podcast before, so I'm not gonna rehash it, but basically the council of the gods challenges Marduk to demonstrate his newly acquired ability to divinely utter by commanding a constellation, and sometimes it's translated as a garment, to form. And note how everything in this passage is done entirely

27:50

by the way of voice command. The text says, quote, they, it's talking about the council of the gods, set up in their midst one constellation and they addressed Marduk their son. May you decree, O Lord, impress the gods, command to destroy and to recreate and let it be so. Speak and let the constellation vanish.

28:19

He spoke to it again and let the constellation reappear. He, this is Marduk, spoke and at his word, the constellation vanished. He spoke to it again and the constellation was recreated. I hope you're following what's going on here. See, Marduk now has the ability to command the chaotic primordial elements, the primordial waters.

28:47

to order themselves to form themselves into actual physical stars. And when he does this, the council is super impressed. And this is what the text says, quote, "When the gods his fathers saw how effective his utterance was, they rejoiced and they proclaimed, Marduk is king."

29:17

We have to stop here because this is an absolutely critical aspect of the theology of the ancient tradition. What we're seeing in this passage here is that there is a direct relationship between being crowned a heavenly king and the power to divinely utter, the power to command the chaotic elements to order themselves. In this case, the power to command the chaotic elements to order or form themselves into actual physical stars.

29:47

If you're a long time listener, you may recall that we saw a similar thing mentioned in the ancient Egyptian Shabaka stone. On that stone, we read how the creator God Ptah, who's referred to on a Ramseed stele from Dur el Medina as quote, Ptah, Lord of Maat, King of the Two Lands. That epitaph is pretty interesting because Lord of Maat implies that Ptah slayed the dragon.

30:17

In ancient Egypt, Maat represents the concept of truth and justice and righteousness, which is the antithesis of everything represented by the awful dragon, which in Egypt was the serpent Apophis or Osiris' malevolent brother Set. The second part of his epitaph clearly states that Ptah is a heavenly king. Note how we're starting to see here a strong pattern between lordship, which is righteousness, and heavenly kingship,

30:47

civil authority. In this section of the Shabbakastone it says that Ptah, by way of his heart, which in ancient Egypt was where they thought the seed of the mine was, and the use of his tongue, which is divine utterance, commands into creation everything, all the gods, all men, all cattle, everything. And the text says, quote, for the very great one is Ptah.

31:14

who gave life to all the gods and their cause through his heart and through his tongue. All men, all cattle, all creeping things, whatever lives, thinking whatever he wishes and commanding whatever he wishes. If you wanna hear a full recording of the Shabbat Kaston, you can find that on our sister podcast, the Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. So here we're seeing in both the ancient Mesopotamian Enuma Elish and the ancient Egyptian Shabbat Kaston,

31:44

connection between heavenly kingship and divine utterance. Don't miss what these texts are really saying. These texts are saying that one of the powers given to heavenly kings is the ability to create a world. The ability to create a world. That's what these texts are saying. Now that is what I call a jaw.

32:13

dropping theology. When you think about the power of heavenly kings to divinely utter, to command the elements to form into a world, this makes logical sense because a king cannot

truly be a king without a kingdom, without a land or a territory which they can govern. To shed more light on this, we need to turn to the ancient Ugaritic texts.

32:40

In these texts, like we see in ancient Mesopotamian texts where Anu is the high god who presides over a council of gods made up of his offspring, the Anunnaki. Here, the high god El presides over a council of gods made up of his sons, referred to as the sons of El. From these Ugaritic texts, we learn a lot about the role of the high god El. What he spends his day doing.

33:08

as the heavenly king of the universe. And one of the first things we learn is that the high God El, like all heavenly kings, was granted his kingship because he victoriously conquered evil. E.T. Mullen, he's the one that wrote one of my favorite books, *The Divine Council*, in Canaanite and early Hebrew literature. He wrote it while he was at Harvard. He says this of the high God El, quote,

33:37

as a fierce warrior in the texts, reflecting the influence of ancient Near Eastern mythology are unanimous in their witness that he, El, attained his position through prowess in battle. Now, these texts are not talking about a physical battle. They're talking about El's spiritual battle against the dragon. The high god, El, like

34:05

all heavenly kings won his kingship by winning the battle against evil. Starting to see some of the theology here. Mullen continues. He says, it is this attribute, which is the prowess as a fierce spiritual warrior of El, that places him at the head of the pantheon. The second thing that we learn about the high god El from these texts

34:35

authority to decree what happens in his kingdom. A kingdom, which we pointed out, is entirely made up of his offspring. He doesn't have the power to rule over someone else's offspring. He only rules over his own. Mullen writes, the Ugaritic texts emphasize that the power of the divine decree belongs to El alone. He stands as the king over the gods, his offspring.

35:05

As such, the high god El is the only one who has the power to determine which of his sons and his daughters qualify to be crowned heavenly kings or queens. Mullen writes, quote, The decree of El is the decree of the gods. He establishes the order of kingship within the divine realm.

35:31

He also has the power of removing or denying kingship. From each decree concerning kingship of the gods, it is apparent that El had sole authority over the realm of the cosmogonic deities. Now, cosmogonic is the word for the power to create a world. In other words,

35:55

In the ancient Near Eastern tradition, it's only the high God who can declare that one is or isn't a heavenly king. There is no self declaration of heavenly kingship. One cannot pronounce oneself as a heavenly king. Only the high God can do that. In the Ugaritic tablets, there are all kinds of examples where El's offspring petition him.

36:23

to be made a heavenly king or a queen. And we can see this with the god Atar in cuneiform tablet 2.3.15 to 18, and the god Mott in cuneiform tablet 6.6.23 to 29, and Yadi Yal-Hin in cuneiform tablet 6.1.49 to 52. But in each of these cases, it's only the high god El who has the sole authority to decree whether or not they can become a heavenly king or queen.

36:53

Mullin notes, quote, "L' has the power to reject a king or to accept one. Such decisions belong solely to L." For example, after L's beloved son, Ball, wins his battle against his rebellious brother, Yam, it's the high god L who declares Ball a heavenly king. Cuneiform tablet 2.4.32 reads, quote,

37:23

Verily, Yam is dead. Ball rules. Mullen says this of this text, he says, it's clear that Ball's rule is solely by virtue of his defeat of Yam. So there's that victory over evil kingship motif again. He continues, it is by the decree of El that Ball attains kingship.

37:52

Baal's kingship and sovereignty were legitimized only through the proclamation of the progenitor of the gods, El. That is important to note. But something else happens here too. Mullen continues, quote, "After Yam is defeated by Baal, he no longer receives the title Prince.' Here the high god El demotes Yam, his rebellious son.

38:20

a son who was once a royal prince. The high god El is the only one that can do this. He's the only one with the power and authority to decree such actions. And we read in other combat narratives that this son is cast out and cast down out of the high god's kingdom. This brings me to the third thing that we learn about the high god El from the Ugaritic texts. In the ball cycle in Cuneiform Tablet 2.3, the divine artisan

38:50

Cawther Wacossus says to Baal, who has not yet slain Yam, he says to him, I tell thee, O Prince Baal, I declare, O Rider of the Clouds, now thine enemy, O Baal, now thine enemy wilt thou smite, now wilt thou cut off thine adversary, thou shalt take thine eternal kingdom thine everlasting.

39:20

Here the divine artisan is telling Baal that if he successfully beats Yam, he will gain an eternal kingdom, an everlasting dominion. I have a couple of questions here. What kingdom? What dominion is Kother talking about? We know Baal's reward for his victorious triumph over the sea monster, Yam, is kingship.

39:48

what kingdom will he reign? Well for the answer to that we have to read another Ugaritic text. In Cuneiform tablet 3.3.26 to 28, Baal is enthroned on Mount Sapin and the text reads, in the midst of my mount, divine Sapin, in the holy place, the mount of my inheritance, in the loveliness of the hill of my

40:19

I'm gonna have a lot more to say about this passage in our next episode, but I wanna focus on the word inheritance here. The passage says that Baal is enthroned on the mount of his

inheritance. In Ugaritic, the word for inheritance is nalatia, spelled N-A-H-L-A-T-I-A. Mullen says this of this passage, quote,

40:48

NHL is the feudal practice of granting property to faithful servants. In Ugaritic, the noun NHLT always refers to the domain of the god and the locus of his power. The term refers to the territory gained by the god through his victory in warfare, precisely the manner in which Baal

41:16

Nalatu, which is inheritance. The meaning of NHLT is clear. It is the territory won by the deity through battle. Like I argued earlier, a king cannot be a king without a kingdom over which to reign. And in the Ziggurita text, the artisan god Cawther tells Baal he will receive a kingdom

41:46

I just read, Yam is given an inheritance, which Mullen points out directly refers to a territory or property. Well, what would that heavenly property or territory that Baal inherits be? Mullen writes, quote, El's most vivid role in the texts is that of dispenser of kingdoms. El's function as the god who dispenses kingdoms

42:16

is reflected in the Synkaniathan. The Synkaniathan are writings that were written sometime before 1200 BC by a Phoenician author. And Mullen says this, quote, in the Phoenician theogony, El divides the land among the various gods as their territory. El is clearly in charge of the distribution of the kingdoms of the gods, allotting their portions.

42:45

L distributes the rule of the cosmos to his sons. Here, Mullen is telling us that in the Ugaritic texts that the high god L's quote, most vivid role is that of dispenser of kingdoms. He divides the land up amongst the gods and there's that word allotted again. And we've talked about the word allotted previously on the podcast, but

43:13

Here again, we see that the Ugaritic high god, like we saw in the Mesopotamian text, Enki in the world order, and like we see by the Greek high god Zeus, allots a portion of his kingdom to his offspring as an inheritance for winning the battle against the dragon. Again, I have the question, what land exactly is Baal allotted as his inheritance?

43:41

What land is Baal given by the high God to be his kingdom? And the same goes for Marduk after he slayed Tiamat and Christ after he slayed Satan. What land were they allotted as their inheritance? What land were they given as their kingdom? Well, for the answer to that, we have to return to our discussion on divine utterance. We read in the Enuma Elish, tablet five, that upon defeating the chaos monster Tiamat, Marduk

44:10

did the following with Tiamat's dead carcass. It says, quote, he placed her head heaped up, opened up springs, water gushed out. He opened the Euphrates and the Tigris from her eyes, closed her nostrils. He piled up clear cut mountains from her utter. He set her high to make fast the sky. With half of her he made a roof. He fixed the earth. All right, so what's going on here? That's a little hard to follow.

44:39

This text is telling us that after Marduk slayed the sea monster, he made the heavens out of half of her carcass and the earth out of the other half. He made the lands and the rivers, the waters and the mountains from her dead body. But don't miss what's taking place here. After slaying the sea monster, Marduk created a world, a new land, a new territory,

45:09

Kingdom. We've talked about this on the podcast before. To most of this, this doesn't make sense. How and why would Marduk make the earth out of the sea monsters carcass? If you haven't listened to episodes 11 to 15, or you need a refresher, I'd recommend going back and listening to those episodes because it's in those episodes that we cover the theology of what's happening here. I'll see if I can do my best to give a brief explanation here though.

45:36

The sea monster represents the high gods son who before the earth was formed, rebelled against the high god and all of the laws of heaven. Wherever the rebellious son is allowed to

dwell in the universe, the effects of his presence are felt right down to the very arrangement of the elements themselves. In scientific speak,

46:05

The effect of his presence on our universe is the second law of thermodynamics. His presence causes all of the elements to go from a state of order to a state of disorder, from a state of incorruption to a state of corruption, from a state of life to a state of degradation, decay, and death.

46:29

In the ancient writings, the ancients universally refer to the primordial state of the elements as primordial waters. And the ancients always describe these elements in the same way, as a dark, lifeless, amorphous mass of chaotic elements. And the ancients teach us that the hideous dragon dwells in these waters, which is why he's almost always described in the ancient record as an awful sea serpent or awful marine monster.

46:56

He dwells in the bottom of the soupy, chaotic mass of elements, which are the effect of his rebellion against the laws of heaven. What this means is that when Marduk triumphed over Tiamat, he not only slayed her, but he also slayed the chaotic effects of her presence. Where there had been chaos, now there could be order. Where there'd been death, there could now be life.

47:26

So to say that Marduk made the earth out of her dead carcass is just another way of saying that because the dragon had been slain, death itself had been slain. And now life and ordered flourishing life filled earth could now be formed. But how was this done? Well, those elements would stay in a perpetual state of chaos unless someone, someone

47:54

who did abide by the laws of heaven or Maat, came along and commanded the elements to order themselves into a world, which is exactly what we saw happen in the Shabaka Stone when the Lord of Maat, the King of the two lands, Bataa, commanded the elements by divine utterance to form a world. And it's also what we saw when Marduk, a heavenly king, commanded the stars to form by divine utterance.

48:23

when he stood in the council of the gods. See, Marduk and Bataa, because they conquered the dragon, because they proved themselves to be faithful followers of Ma'at, truth, justice, and righteousness, were crowned heavenly kings. And as heavenly kings, the high god gave them the power and authority to command the elements through divine utterance. The newly crowned heavenly kings then

48:52

used that power to build a world, a world that would be their inheritance, the kingdom over which they would rightfully reign for having conquered the dragon. Now that is a theology. Mullen says this, quote, Marduk's victory is followed by an account of his creation of heaven and earth.

49:19

creation by nature involves the defeat of the forces of chaos as its beginning. Indeed, the containment of the sea, which is the dragon, is creation. The battle and creation motifs must be seen as belonging together from the earliest times. I agree with Mullen, but I'd amend his words by adding heavenly kingship to the mix. I'd argue that the battle, heavenly kingship,

49:48

and creation motifs must be seen as belonging together from the very earliest times. All of this brings me back to the Judeo-Christian tradition and the question that I asked at the onset of today's episode. Who gave Jesus the authority to reign as a heavenly king? From what we've seen in the ancient record, it seems pretty clear that Christ, like we see in the Ugaritic, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian records.

50:15

had to have been given the power and authority to reign as a heavenly king from the high god, the king of the universe, his father. From everything we see in the ancient world, heavenly kings are not self-declared. They are appointed. They are appointed by the high god after they have victoriously conquered the dragon.

50:41

Now, I recognize that this goes counter to what is taught in the creeds. The creeds state that there is one God, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one being. And needless

to say, my study and research over the past 20 years has led me to take issue with a lot of what was voted on in the creeds. And let me point out that the creeds came way, way thousands of years later.

51:08

In particular, take issue with the creed that the Father and the Son are one being. Such a statement would mean that Christ would have to have had declared himself a heavenly king. And that's problematic, especially after everything we've covered on heavenly kingship in this episode. And furthermore, such a belief would require one to believe that as the Christ, which we pointed out before means the anointed one, would have to have anointed himself king as well as a god.

51:37

crowned himself king. After reading all the ancient texts I have, including the biblical canon, this does not mesh. Not to mention that there's plenty in the biblical canon said by Christ himself that leads one to question this particular creed. It makes much, much more sense that God the Father and Jesus Christ are two, two separate beings. That God the

52:07

actually Christ's actual father. It makes much more sense in terms of where Christ got his power and authority to reign and by whom he was anointed and crowned a king. All of this got me thinking. I wondered if there was anywhere in the biblical canon where we see the same thing we see in these combat narratives. Anywhere in the canon where defeating the dragon, kingship, and creating the earth are linked together.

52:35

And holy cow, there absolutely is. If you turn to Psalm 89, it's all there. Like we see in a lot of the ancient combat narratives, Psalm 89 takes place in the council of the gods before the earth was formed. The author is searching for a strong, mighty member of the council. Verse six reads, quote, who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?

53:04

Here we have the sons like we see in all the other combat narratives and they're looking for one out of the sons who is strong and mighty, one who can defeat the dragon. In the Enuma Elish we see a similar search for a mighty son who can defeat Tiamat. In tablet two we read

quote, will no god come forward? Will no one go out to face Tiamat? Then the god Ea points the gods to Marduk and the

53:33

perfect one, whose heart is perfect, the mighty heir who was to be his father's champion, who rushes fearlessly into battle, Marduk the hero. Then in verses 9 and 10 of Psalm 89, right after pointing out that none of the members of the Council of the Gods are comparable to Jehovah, the text tells us how Jehovah won the battle against the dragon.

54:02

The verses read, quote, "Thou rulest the raging of the sea. "Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces as one that is slain." Now, you'll never guess what the very next verse says. And keep in mind that this verse comes right after we learned that Jehovah slayed the dragon in verse 10. In verse 11, we're told how Jehovah created

54:32

the earth. Yep, that's exactly what it says. Verse 11 reads, speaking of Jehovah, quote, the heaven is thine, the earth also is thine. As for the world and the fullness thereof, thou hast founded them. Founded here of course refers to creating, to creating the earth. So here we learn that Christ after slaying the

55:02

the earth. And don't miss the other really, really interesting thing said in this verse about the earth. The verse says, quote, the heaven is thine, the earth also is thine. Thine here is possessive. This verse is telling us that the earth is Jehovah's. The earth is his. The earth is Jehovah's kingdom. The earth is his inheritance. And why? Because

55:31

created it. Vadim Yurchenko, the young scholar I mentioned earlier in the episode says this, quote, Yahweh's act of creation provides natural justification for his position as king. And then he goes on to say, it is reasonable to suggest that the concept of Yahweh's kingship is rooted in and stems from the creation of the heavens and the earth. Yurchenko goes on to argue

56:00

The creation is kingdom building. But what about kingship in Psalm 89? Are there any references to kingship? We have the divine council, the battle with the dragon, and the creation of the world, but what about kingship? Well, Psalm 89 does not disappoint. Verse 18 reads, quote, the Holy One of Israel is our King. And why is Jehovah the King of this world?

56:30

Well, now you know he's the king of this world because he slayed the dragon, was given the power to divinely utter, which we see in John chapter 1 verses 1 to 3 where we're told Jehovah is the word and that by the word, quote, all things were made by him. And because he made the world, it is his. He is the rightful king. It's his inheritance. It is his kingdom over which to rule, which I argue was allotted to him.

57:00

by his father, the King of the universe. And all of this is in complete conformity with the other combat narratives that we've read in the ancient world. I know this is a lot to think about, but I want to give you one more thing to ponder before I close out this episode. If as a heavenly king, Christ has the power and authority to command the elements, to form a world, what precludes Christ from forming another world?

57:31

and another world and another world. If you recall in the Ugaritic Baal cycle, Baal was told that his inheritance for gaining the victory over the dragon would be a quote, eternal kingdom, a quote, everlasting dominion. The exact same thing is said of Christ's kingdom in Psalms 145 verse 13.

58:00

Verse 13 reads, quote, thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and thy dominion enduring throughout all generations. According to Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, an everlasting kingdom is an eternal kingdom. It's a kingdom that goes on and on and on and never ends. From this definition, it's impossible to see this earth as being Christ's only creation.

58:29

If so, his kingdom would be very, very small, especially considering how incomprehensible, immense our universe is. Astronomers estimate that there are between two and 25 times as many planets in the known universe as there are stars. And if we low-balled it, and we

estimated that there were only two planets per star, there would still be more than four trillion planets in the observable universe.

58:58

If this scripture truly means what it says, then Christ must have created millions and millions and millions of worlds like ours, and must still be creating millions and millions of worlds. That would truly be an everlasting eternal kingdom. His would be a cosmic kingdom, and he would be a truly cosmic Christ.

59:27

And let me throw one more wrench into your thinking. Don't forget that Christ promised the same thing in Revelation chapter three, verse 21, to all human beings who conquer the dragon. To all who overcome, he promised to make heavenly kings and queens and to sit on his throne with them. And you can't be a king or queen without a kingdom. Now, if you think on that,

59:57

It should blow your socks off. That's it for me. If you liked today's episode, take a second and leave a rating, write a review, post a link to this episode on your social media accounts so that all might learn about the greatest theology ever revealed. As always, I leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we're with when we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

01:00:29

You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #27 - Universes Beyond Universes

<https://theancienttradition.com/27-universes-beyond-universes/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:29

Welcome to the ancient tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. We have a good one for you today. I'm super excited about the opportunity to share a lot of the things that I've put together. Hopefully the episode will cause you to ponder and think about things a little more deeply than you normally would. It might even be somewhat mind bending. I've titled this episode, Universes Beyond Universes.

00:58

If you're a long time listener, we've been working our way towards coming to many of the conclusions that we make in today's episode. If you are a first time listener, first of all, welcome to the program. We're really glad that you've joined us. You might need to do a little bit of homework though. After you've listened to this episode, you might need to go back and listen to the earlier episodes because those are there to set the foundation that helps bring us to where we are today. In our last episode.

01:27

We read an ancient Ugaritic text, Cuneiform Tablet 2.3, in which Baal, now Baal was the Ugaritic selfless son, he was told that upon defeating the rebellious son, Yam, he would be given, quote, an eternal kingdom, a promise that we also find made to Christ in Psalm 145:13, in which Christ is told that his kingdom will be, quote,

01:56

everlasting kingdom. And we learned in our last episode when we looked into Strom's Hebrew dictionary that everlasting kingdom was the same thing as an eternal kingdom. A kingdom that goes on and on and on and on. A kingdom that's literally without end. An infinite cosmic kingdom. In that episode I argued that you can't really have an eternal kingdom with one world.

02:22

And since newly crowned heavenly kings are granted the ability to divinely utter the power to create a world, then we must ask the very important question, couldn't that same power

be used to create another world and another world, even thousands upon thousands or millions and millions of worlds? After all, Baal was promised that his kingdom would be an eternal kingdom. From the ancient texts like Keneah form tablet 2.3,

02:50

and Psalm 145.13 were left to conclude that the newly crowned heavenly king could and would create world after world after world. This would be an eternal kingdom, a kingdom of innumerable worlds. A hundred years ago, this theology would likely have been considered unfathomable, really, really fanciful. But today, modern astronomers confirm that our universe is packed.

03:19

with billions and billions of planets. And they're just beginning to identify Earth-like planets, planets that could potentially harbor life. Now, modern day astronomers still consider life to be a rare occurrence in the universe. But there's more and more evidence that's being accrued every single day that suggests, especially considering the sheer size of our universe and the sheer number of planets in our universe, that other Earth-like life-filled planets

03:48

are not only a possibility, but an inevitability. I love this. Here we see modern astronomers playing catch up with the ancients. Ancients who thousands and thousands of years ago wrote down on cuneiform clay tablets or on the skin of sheep or goats that the selfless dragon slaying sun was granted the power to create an eternal cosmic kingdom.

04:16

a kingdom of innumerable life-filled worlds. I find this incredible. If what the ancients are teaching us is true, then one day, given enough time, I expect that every single cosmogonic doctrine taught within the ancient tradition will be validated by astronomers, which is exactly what we're already beginning to see. As of right now though,

04:45

astronomers are still playing catch up with what the ancients already knew. At this point, we need to start talking about you and me. See, up to this point, most of the textual evidence we've covered has focused on the heavenly enthronement, the bestowal of divine utterance

and the inheritance of an eternal kingdom by the selfless son, who conquered the rebellious son in the heavens before this world was created.

05:14

But what do the ancient texts have to say about human beings who are dragon slayers? We've already shown that there are many, many ancient texts and myths and legends and folk tales that attest to the doctrine that dragon slayers are made kings. But the majority of these narratives tell of human dragon slayers who are enthroned as earthly kings and queens, not heavenly kings and queens. Now, of course,

05:44

I've studied this enough to know that earthly kingship is an echo of heavenly kingship. The whole as above, so below thing that I've hinted at. But still the same, I wanted to know if there was anything in the ancient record, any textual evidence of the enthronement of dragons slaying human beings as heavenly kings and queens. The catalyst for this exploration came from a very, very intriguing...

06:14

and very, very important verse in the Christian New Testament in Revelation chapter three, verse 21, which I mentioned at the end of our last episode. In this verse, Christ promises human beings who overcomeeth, who triumph over evil, who are dragon slayers, that they too will join him on a heavenly throne. And I had asked myself, is Christ really saying what I think he's saying here? If he is,

06:44

then number one, this is the most mind blowing and mind bending theology I've ever heard. And second, if he's saying what I think he's saying, then there has to be more evidence of this theology, not only in the biblical canon, but also in the ancient world, which of course is exactly what I found. So let's take a look at some of the textual evidence. We've discussed many of these texts on the podcast already.

07:14

But today I want to focus primarily on what they say about the enthronement of human beings as heavenly kings and queens. Let's start with one of my favorite ancient texts, which is one of the most important in the ancient world and to the ancient tradition, the Book of

the Holy Secrets of Enoch. In this account, Enoch, a living human being, is taken by two messengers into the divine

07:44

After passing through several heavens, the messengers stop in the seventh heaven. And this is what Enoch sees, starting in chapter 20. It reads, then those two men took me up to the seventh heaven, and I saw there a very great light and fiery armies of great archangels. I became afraid and trembled in great terror. And those men took me

08:13

and led me with them and said to me, be brave, Enoch, and don't be afraid, and showed me the Lord sitting far away on his highest throne." Here, Enoch sees a supernal light, and in it he sees the Lord, who if this text is Jewish, is Yahweh, or if this text is Christian, it's Christ. Though this is really sixes, because more and more biblical scholarship is showing that the

08:43

Christ of the New Testament is the Yahweh of the Old Testament. They're one in the same. We'll save that discussion for a future episode. Enoch sees the Lord, who I'm going to refer to as Christ from here on out, sitting far away on his highest throne. The glory of what Enoch sees, even as far away from Christ's throne that he is, is terrifying to Enoch, especially as a mortal. The messengers calm him down.

09:12

And the text continues by describing what Enoch sees around Christ's heavenly throne. Chapter 21 reads, the cherubs and the seraphs. Now these are varying ranks of angels. The cherubs and seraphs surrounding about the throne. The seraphs did not leave, but remain before the Lord's face doing his will.

09:39

humming with gentle voices before the Lord's face. And this is what they hum, holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabbath, the heavens and earth are full of your glory. At this point, the messengers tell Enoch that they can't go any farther with him. Enoch's left alone in the heavens for a terrifying minute. And then the archangel Gabriel appears. The text reads,

10:09

The Lord sent one of his glorious ones, the archangel Gabriel, and he said to me, be brave, Enoch, do not be afraid. Rise before the Lord's face forever. Rise and come with me. I answered him, my Lord, my mind had left me from terror and trembling. Enoch, as a human being,

10:38

is still terrified by the glory of Christ's throne, even though he's still seeing it from far away. Here the archangel Gabriel takes Enoch up to the highest heaven, to Christ's throne room, and escorts him into Christ's presence. Listen to Enoch's amazing description of Christ. The text reads, quote,

11:08

and placed me before the Lord's face. Chapter 22. In the 10th heaven, I saw the Lord's face like molten iron and poured out and emitting sparks and glowing. I saw the Lord's face, but the Lord's face should not be talked about. It is incomprehensible, marvelous, and supremely awesome, and supremely terrifying.

11:38

Who am I to describe the indescribable being of the Lord, or of his very strange and wonderful face? I cannot describe his many instructions and various voices or the Lord's supremely wonderful throne which was not made with hands, or the number of those standing around him, armies of cherubs and seraphs with their never-ending singing. Who could describe his immutable beauty?

12:09

who will tell of his incomprehensible and wondrous glory. I fell down and bowed before the Lord. And the Lord with his own lips said to me, be brave, Enoch, don't be afraid. Rise and stand before my face into forever.

12:35

In another episode, we'll talk a lot more about what Enoch sees here and what's taking place. But for this episode, it gives us one of the most detailed descriptions, if not the most detailed description of Christ as a heavenly King and of his heavenly throne that could be found anywhere in the ancient texts. So it's very important in that light. But it's also incredibly important for what happens next. And for the question that I asked before we started reading this text,

13:04

Is Christ in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21 really saying what I think he's saying? Is he really saying that human beings who overcome, who triumph over evil, who are dragon slayers will be made heavenly kings and queens? Let's keep reading to see what happens next. Quote, the chief general Michael carried me up.

13:32

and led me before the Lord's face. And the Lord said to his servants, let Enoch stand before my face into forever. The Lord said to Michael, go and disrobe Enoch from his earthly clothes and anoint him with my delightful oils and put him into the clothes of my glory. Michael did as the Lord commanded. He anointed me and dressed me.

14:02

The oil was as bright as the rays of the sun, cool like dew, and smelled like myrrh. I saw myself, and I saw I was like one of his glorious ones, and there was no observable difference. This passage is absolutely astounding. It's theologically breathtaking.

14:28

Here we're seeing the same royal enthronement ritual that we see all over in the ancient texts and in the ancient world. But this time, the royal enthronement ritual we see taking place is the enthronement of a human being in heaven, directly before the throne of Christ, who, let me remind you, in Christianity, is the son of the high God.

14:57

who selflessly conquered the malevolent son Satan and gained his throne upon which Enoch sees him seated. In this text, Christ is making Enoch a heavenly king. Astounding. In this passage, Christ invites Enoch to stand before him. Remember, Enoch had fallen to the ground upon witnessing Christ's glory. Christ's invitation to Enoch to stand

15:26

is actually a really important doctrinal point that we'll talk about sometime in the future. Christ then commands the chief archangel Michael to remove Enoch's earthly clothing. Clothes, which are in part symbolic of Enoch's individual battle with Satan the dragon. Why? Because it was while Enoch was a human being on earth.

15:53

that he fought or battled against Satan, a battle which according to the ancient record, he must have won to be standing like he is before Christ to be made a heavenly king. As a human being, when the temptations came to violate the laws of heaven, Enoch did not bend. Or when he did, he used the ointment of the sacred

16:23

tree to heal his wounds and continue the battle. Either way, Enoch came off victorious. In this text, we have an interesting sequence of events. First, Christ asks Michael to help Enoch remove, quote, his earthly clothes. Second, Christ asks Michael to anoint Enoch with delightful oil. Oil which Christ calls

16:51

my delightful oil. So the oil with which Enoch is anointed is directly connected to Christ. Third, Christ asks Michael to robe Enoch in the clothes of my glory. Third, Christ asks Michael to robe Enoch in the clothes of glory. Clothes which Christ calls the quote clothes of my glory.

17:17

The removal here of Enoch's earthly clothing, the clothing that represents his earthly battle with Satan, is an incredibly interesting aspect of this account because this is exactly what we see happen in tablet five of the Mesopotamian Enuma Elish. When Marduk, after having conquered the sea serpent Tiamat, returns to Anu, the high god, and the council of the gods, wearing clothing covered in, quote,

17:47

the dust of combat. The text says, and we're talking about the Mesopotamian Marduk here. This happened when Marduk returned. Quote, the Anunnaki, which is the council of the gods, each and every one kissed his feet. They, they being members of the council of the gods, took off his clothes, which were

18:16

in the dust of combat. Here we see that the first thing the high god Anu and the council of the gods do after Marduk slays Tiamat is remove his clothes. Just like we saw Michael, whom I presume is a member of the council of the gods under Christ, helped Enoch do.

Amazing. But what does the council of the gods do after they take off Marduk's battle clothing?

18:45

Let's continue reading. Quote, the gods were attentive to him. With Cyprus, they sprinkled his body. He put on a princely garment. After the council removes Marduk's dusty clothes, they sprinkle his body with Cyprus. And what is Cyprus? Cyprus is a tree.

19:12

Council of the Gods is sprinkling Marduk's body with a tree. Why is the council doing this? Well, you long time listeners should know. And you also know that what's going on here is a royal anointing. The council is anointing Marduk with the oil of the sacred tree. They're anointing Marduk a heavenly king. And what happens after this? The council invests Marduk in, quote,

19:42

princely garments, royal robes. Here, after slaying the dragon Tiamat, Marduk returns to the high god Anu and the council of the gods, and we see the exact same sequence of events occur. First, the council removes Marduk's battle clothing. Second, the council anoints Marduk with the sacred tree. Third, the council robes Marduk in a princely garment.

20:13

I hope you recognize how remarkable this is. So here we have two texts. One, the Enuma Elish, a Mesopotamian text believed by scholars to date back to the time of the second dynasty of Ishan, which flourished between 1953 and 1717 BC. And another text, the Book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch, a Jewish writing.

20:39

believed by scholars to date back to sometime between 100 BC and 200 AD. So here we have two texts that are separated in time by 2,000 years, yet they're nearly identical in content. Content that attests to the enthronement of heavenly kings, one of whom was a human being.

21:09

What we're seeing happening here in this Mesopotamian text is almost exactly what we see happening in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch. Listen again to what chapter 22 of the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch says. The Lord said to Michael, go and disrobe Enoch from his earthly clothes and anoint him with my delightful oils and put him into the clothes of my glory.

21:36

This sounds exactly like what happened in the Enuma Elish, from the events mentioned right down to the order in which those events are mentioned. The text continues, quote, "Michael did as the Lord commanded. He anointed me and dressed me. The oil was bright as the rays of the sun, cool like dew and smelled like myrrh." Just like what we saw with Marduk in the Enuma Elish,

22:06

Here, Michael removes Enoch's battle clothes, anoints him with a delightful oil that is bright and golden like the rays of the sun, and smells like myrrh. And you long time listeners should know why this oil smells like myrrh. And then according to Christ's command, Michael robes Enoch in glory, the clothes of Christ's glory.

22:38

If you go back and watch the enthronement ceremony of King Charles III, you'll notice that before he's anointed with the chrism oil, Charles is dressed in very humble, plain linen clothing, known as the Colobium Sindonis. After he's anointed a king, just like we see in these accounts of Marduk and Enoch, Charles slips into another room, changes his clothes,

23:07

and returns in a stunning golden gown known as the Supertunica. He literally looks like the sun incarnate. He looks robed in Christ's glory. Now, why would Charles do this? Why would any earthly king do this? Why would any king wear plain clothes, be anointed with sacred oil that smelled like myrrh, and then change into golden robes?

23:37

Why? Well, that's an incredibly difficult question to answer. Unless, unless you know about the theology of heavenly kingship. And when you do, it makes complete sense. Even if you don't fully understand what it all means, you know and understand why Charles wears plain

clothes, is anointed, and changes into a majestic, full length golden robe that shimmers and glistens

24:06

like the glory of the sun. Charles does this because he is replicating the sacred enthronement rites that we've learned take place in the heavens. Every British coronation ceremony ever conducted has replicated or modeled right in plain view the theology taught by Christ in Revelation chapter three, verse 21.

24:35

that all human beings who overcome it will be given a throne. And what's more, there is extensive, and I mean extensive ritual evidence of this theology all over the world. A.M. Hocourt, in his compelling little book, which is one of my favorites too, titled Kingship, found that all over the world,

25:03

whenever and wherever monarchies have been established, be they in India, Germany, Japan, Tonga, New Zealand, Russia, France, Finland, among the Inca, the Aztecs or the Mayans, not to mention among the ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamian and Israelites, perform coronation rites that follow virtually this same ritual pattern. They model earthly enthronement rites after

25:32

heavenly enthronement rights. Hohkart, who wrote kingship, writes, speaking of earthly kingship, writes, quote, we find as many correspondences between Fijian and old Indian ritual as between old Indian and modern Cambodian. We have no justification for rejecting a common origin, but every reason in favor of one. The coronation ceremonies

26:00

strongly support a common origin. In other words, not only does the British enthronement ceremony attest to a theology of heavenly kingship, but every single coronation rite ever performed on the planet, from the rites performed for ancient Chinese emperors to enthronement rites performed for the King of Hungary, attest to and replicate

26:29

the sacred enthronement rites performed in the heavens, the ritual enthronement of dragon slayers as heavenly kings. That is a powerful worldwide witness to the theology of heavenly kingship. It's when we start seeing things like this that we have to start taking the notion of a theology of heavenly kingship seriously.

26:56

And furthermore, when we see this theology show up in the world's earliest religious writings, in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ugarit, and among the ancient Hebrews, then we have to start taking the notion of a common source, or a single primordial religious tradition, seriously too. The textual and ritual evidence begs us to do so. So let's return to our original question.

27:24

Is there anything in the ancient record, any textual evidence of the enthronement of dragons slaying human beings as heavenly kings or queens? Clearly, yes. In the book of the Holy secrets of Enoch, we have an unambiguous example of a human being, Enoch, being enthroned by Christ as a heavenly king. But are there more examples? Yes. Let's return to the book.

27:54

of Joseph and Azanath. If you'll recall, in that text, which we discussed in episodes number 24 and 25, Azanath is dressed in sackcloth and ashes. Her battle closing, seeking repentance for not having followed the laws of heaven, when suddenly the heavens tear open and a divine being appears. A being who appears strikingly similar?

28:23

to Enoch's description of Christ. Let me reread you a bit of chapter 14 and take note how much of what happens to Azanath mirrors what happened to Enoch. Keep in mind that what happened to Azanath, who is a human being, happened in her own home. The text reads, quote, and lo, the heaven was torn open near the morning star and an indescribable light appeared.

28:53

and Azanath fell on her face upon the ashes. So just like Enoch, Azanath falls to the ground, afraid at the sight of this glorious being. Then listen to what this being, who I'm going to call

Christ from here on out, says to her. Stand up and I will speak to you. Just like what we saw with Enoch, Christ invites Azanath to stand in his presence.

29:23

that's something. Listen to Azaneth's description of Christ and how similar it is to Enoch's quote, his face was like lightning and his eyes were like the light of the Sun and the hairs of his head were like flames of fire and his hands and his feet like iron from the fire. At this point,

29:53

I can't stand before this glorified being, it's too much. And she drops back down to the ground like Enoch, terrified. The text continues, quote, and Azanath looked at him and she fell on her face at his feet in great fear and trembling. And Christ said to her, take heart, Azanath, and do not be afraid.

30:22

but stand and I will speak to you. Just like what we saw with Enoch, Christ tells Azaneth not to be afraid of him, and he once again invites her to stand before him. Now listen to what he tells Azaneth next. It's the exact same thing we saw with Enoch. Christ says, quote, "And Azaneth got up and Christ said to her,

30:50

Take off the black tunic you're wearing and the sackcloth round your waist and shake the ashes off your head and wash your face with water and put on a new robe that you have never worn before and tie your bright girdle round your waist. This is just like what we saw with Enoch and Marduk and Charles III. Here.

31:17

Christ invites Azanith to take off her battle clothing, her clothes enveloped in the dust of combat, the sackcloth that is literally dusted in ashes, and put on the royal garments of the victorious. Did you notice how Christ asks her, along with putting on a new robe, to quote, tie a bright girdle round her waist?

31:44

All of you long time listeners should know why Christ asks her to do this. If you don't know or you need a refresher, be sure to give episode number 15, Sea Monsters, Sea Serpents and Leviathans a listen. I'm not going to give away the answer here, but it's clear for those of you who know what the girdle represents, that Christ, by inviting Azanath to wear the girdle, is declaring her victorious. The girdle is.

32:13

the ultimate symbol of her victory over the dragon. She has won. Then just like what we saw with Marduk and Enoch, here Christ anoints Azanath with a substance that Enoch said was bright as the rays of the sun. In this text, this substance is referred to as honey. And like in the Enoch text, it has the fragrance of myrrh.

32:41

The passage in chapter 16 reads, quote, and Christ stretched his hand out and placed it, the honey on her head and said, you are blessed as an, for the indescribable things of God have been revealed to you. Here we're seeing the same thing we've seen in all of the other accounts. We're seeing the enthronement of a heavenly queen.

33:10

I want to stress here that in both the Azanath and Enoch accounts, the texts are telling us about the enthronement of human beings, just like Christ promised in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21. The New International Version of the New Testament translates this verse like this,

33:39

just as I was victorious and sat down with my father on his throne. If what Christ says is true, which appears to be the case from the ancient accounts we've covered, then we would expect that Azanath and Enoch would take on the glory of Christ. They'd become like him. And that's exactly what the Enoch and Azanath texts say. After the archangel helps Enoch remove his earthly clothing,

34:08

anoints him with the sacred oil of the tree and invests him in robes of Christ's glory, the texts say this, quote, I saw myself and I saw I was like one of his glorious ones and there was no observable difference. Enoch looks around and he can see no difference between his glorious light and the glorious ones.

34:37

are referred to as one of the glorious ones. So Enique's telling us that he looks no different than the chief archangel Michael, the highest ranked angel in Christ's kingdom. Who I argue, when compared to the text in the Enuma Elish, is equivalent to a member of the Council of the Gods. Recall that in the Enuma Elish, it was the Council of the Gods who removed Marduk's battle clothing and anointed him with Cyprus.

35:04

And here in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch, it is Michael who helps Enoch remove his battle clothing and anoints him with oil. So the two correspondences between the texts strongly suggest that Michael is a member of the Council of the Gods under Christ and as such is a God. And Enoch looks at him and he says, hey, I saw myself and I saw I was like one of his glorious ones and there was no observable difference.

35:35

But what about Azaneth? Did she experience a similar transformation when she was asked by Christ to change out of her battle clothing of sackcloth and ashes and then anointed her with honey? Yes. Let's read a bit from the text. In chapter 18, we read, quote, "And Azaneth went into her room and opened her wardrobe, "and she took out her finest robe "that shone like lightning, and she put it on. "And she tied a resplendent royal girdle

36:04

her waist. I pointed this out in a previous episode but note here how her dress shone like quote lightning and this is the exact same description she gave Christ. In chapter 14, Azaneth said this of Christ quote his face shone like lightning. So she's telling us that she's become like Christ. Let's go back to chapter 18 and keep reading. In this passage Azaneth catches a reflection of

36:33

in a basin of water. The text reads, an asinus bent down to the water in the basin and her face was like the sun and her eyes like the rising morning star. She looks down at her reflection and she realizes that she has become a glorious being of light. She's donning the robes of Christ's glory. She looks like the sun.

37:03

It's pretty clear from these two accounts that there were those in Jewish and early Christian circles. Scholars have dated both the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch and the book of Joseph and Azanath at some time between a couple of hundred years before Christ and a couple of hundred years after Christ who understood the theology of heavenly kingship. Even though Jude, the brother of Jesus,

37:29

quotes directly from one of the books of Enoch in Jude chapter 1 verse 9, neither the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch nor the book of Joseph and Azanath are included in the Catholic biblical canon affirmed by the Council of Rome in 382 AD. My guess is because this doctrine had been lost or rejected by this time. Despite this there is still plenty left in the biblical canon

37:59

that attests to the enthronement of human beings as heavenly kings and queens. I don't have time in this episode to go into a lot of those examples, but I want to give you one. In Psalm chapter 2, which most Jewish scholars consider to be about the enthronement of King David, though it's not conclusive, it could be about another Israelite king, begins in verse 1 with a reference to a cosmic battle between good and evil.

38:28

The verse that follows, verse two mentions Yahweh's anointed. Psalm 89 20 explicitly mentions that King David was anointed by Yahweh. The verse reads, quote, I have found David my servant. With my holy oil have I anointed him. As a quick aside, note how the oil mentioned here is referred to as quote, my holy oil, Yahweh's holy oil.

38:58

just like what was said of the oil Enoch was anointed with. It's also super interesting here that Yahweh says, I have anointed him. When did Yahweh do this? And why would Yahweh do this? Well, with an understanding of the theology of the enthronement of human beings as heavenly kings and queens, and from what we saw happen when Azanath, a human being was anointed by Christ, this doesn't seem so perplexing.

39:27

Looks like a similar thing must have happened to King David or one of the other Israelite kings. And who knows, perhaps at one time, a heavenly enthronement anointing may have

been a requirement or a prerequisite for one who was chosen to reign as an earthly king. There are definitely several verses in the canon that hint at such an interpretation. Back to Psalm two, verse six, Yahweh says, quote,

39:55

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.” What holy hill is Yahweh talking about here? In a couple of episodes, I’m going to have a whole lot to say about this holy hill. But for now, recognize that this holy hill is God’s holy mountain, the sanctuary where God dwells. And don’t forget that it’s on the summit of this sacred mountain sanctuary that God sits on his...

40:25

So for Yahweh to say that the earthly Israelite king will sit upon his holy hill is akin to saying that this earthly king will sit on Yahweh’s throne. Something I yet again remind you Christ promised in Revelation chapter 3 verse 21 to all who over cometh. It says to him that over cometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne.

40:55

Seems pretty clear here in Psalm two that this is exactly what we see happening. Yahweh has made an earthly king, a human being, by placing him on his Yahweh’s throne, a heavenly king. In this episode, all of the textual evidence I provided of God enthroning human beings as heavenly kings or queens has come from the Jewish or early Christian writings.

41:23

But some of you are likely wondering if there are any examples of the enthronement of human beings as heavenly kings and queens in other parts of the ancient world. Well, the answer to that question is a resounding yes. In fact, it turns out that the entire objective of the ancient Egyptian religion was to secure

41:53

in the afterlife so that he could reign as a heavenly king. All of the rites and rituals in the ancient Egyptian religion centered around this primary objective. We’ll get into this more in the coming weeks, but in order to understand the theology of heavenly kingship among the ancient Egyptians, we have to start with the god Osiris. Remember Osiris? He was the selfless son, the righteous son.

42:21

who battled his evil brother, the rebellious son Set, who wanted to usurp his throne. During the battle, Set suffocates Osiris, killing him, after which Set tears Osiris' body into 14 pieces. If you need a refresher, check out episode number 23, The Troubling Death of Osiris. After Osiris' death, Isis, Osiris' wife,

42:49

gathers up the parts of his body and rejoins the fragments together. And this is where ancient Egyptian mummification comes in. At least mythologically speaking, Osiris is understood to be the first mummy, the prototype after which all mummies are mummified. And then Isis imbues Osiris with the breath of life. Osiris is restored to life and he triumphantly rises from the dead.

43:18

Upon his resurrection, Osiris is enthroned in the afterlife, the heavens, as a heavenly king. The Papyrus of Annie, known by most as the Egyptian Book of the Dead, dated to 1240 BC, is unambiguous in describing Osiris as a heavenly king. The text says, quote, homage to thee, Osiris.

43:48

Lord of eternity, King of the gods, whose names are manifold. Thou art the great chief, the prince of the company of the gods." Which likely refers to the Council of the Gods. This text clearly describes Osiris as a heavenly king. But listen to what else this text tells us about Osiris' reign. It's quite interesting. The text continues.

44:18

quote, thou art the great chief, the prince of the company of the gods, establisher of right and truth throughout the world, the son who was set on the great throne of his father, Geb. So whose heavenly throne does Osiris reign on? He reigns on his father's great heavenly throne. Huh. Where else have we heard this?

44:48

heard of a heavenly king reigning on his father's heavenly throne. If you thought of Revelation chapter 31, then you're absolutely right. Revelation 321 says, and this is Christ speaking, even as I overcame and am set down with my father on his throne.

45:17

that the text reminds us that Osiris conquered the dragon. The text reads, quote, “The son who was set on the great throne “of his father, Geb, “thou art the beloved of thy mother, Newt, “the mighty one of Valor, “who overthrew the Sibau fiend, “who is the dragon,’ Osiris’s evil brother said. “Thou didst stand up and smite thine enemy.”

45:48

This is interesting. Here the papyrus of Annie tells us that Osiris reigns on his father’s throne. And then the text directly connects Osiris’s heavenly reign to his having conquered the dragon. And when we compare this to Revelation 3, verse 21, we have Christ telling us he conquered the dragon, he overcame it, and then he directly connects that to now reigning on his father’s throne.

46:17

This is remarkable. I’m starting to see a very convincing theology of heavenly kingship here. And then you’re not gonna believe this. A couple of lines after that, the papyrus of Annie tells us that Osiris created the world. The text reads, speaking of the heavenly king Osiris, thou hast made the earth with thy hand.

46:46

and the waters and the winds and the vegetation and all the cattle and all the feathered fowl and all the fish and all the creeping things and all the wild animals thereof. The two lands, now the two lands is another way of saying Egypt, which you know also represents the entire world. Are content to crown thee upon the throne of thy father like Ra. So let’s walk through what we’re seeing here.

47:16

Here we have an earthly king who died, Osiris, who after his death is resurrected and coronated a heavenly king for having conquered the enemy. A heavenly king who now reigns on his father’s throne in the heavens and who we are told created the world. We’re starting to see a very strong pattern in the ancient text between slaying the dragon, heavenly kingship,

47:45

reigning on one's father's throne, who was also a heavenly king, and the creation of a world. But listen to what else the papyrus of Annie tells us. Before I read it to you, I need to give you a little bit of background. The ancient Egyptians believed that when a pharaoh died, he ascended to heaven and became a quote, imperishable star. Imperishable stars refer to the circumpolar stars that never fell below the horizon when the ancient Egyptians gazed into the night sky.

48:14

There are probably some scholars out there who think that the ancient Egyptians actually believed that the dead pharaoh turned into a star. But like 99% of what we see going on in ancient Egypt, this is symbolic. It's symbolic of the late pharaoh ascending to the heavens and becoming a glorious being of light. And the ancient Egyptians believed that all dead pharaohs who passed the test of Ma'at

48:44

which was essentially akin to slaying the dragon, became imperishable stars, became beings of glorious light. In other words, the ancient Egyptians believed the heavens were full, just like the night sky of dead earthly kings like Osiris, who had become glorious beings of light and who now reigned as heavenly kings. They believed the heavens were

49:13

loaded with heavenly kings. And let me remind you that each of these heavenly kings the ancient Egyptians saw sparkling in the night sky had previously been a human being. If I were able to take you down into King Pepe II's tomb, which I so wish that I could do, you would notice that the ceiling above the dead pharaoh's sarcophagus was literally

49:42

in golden five-pointed stars, the five points of which represented the arms and legs and head of a human being, a resurrected human being who now resided in the heavens as a heavenly king, a glorious being of light. And don't forget, that's exactly what we saw happen to Enoch and Azanath when they were anointed a heavenly king and queen.

50:12

glorious beings of light. Enoch saw himself and saw that he was, quote, like one of the glorious ones. And Azanith looked at her reflection in the basin of water and saw that her

face was, quote, like the sun. The ancient Egyptians, Hebrews, and early Christians are all teaching the same doctrine here. So let's return to the Papyrus of Annie and keep reading.

50:39

Homage to thee, Osiris, Lord of eternity, King of the gods, whose names are manifold. Thou art a shining spirit body, the governor of spirit bodies. Permanent is thy rank, establishes thy rule, gracious is thy face, and beloved by him that seeth it. The stars in the celestial heights are obedient to thee.

51:07

The imperishable stars are under thy supervision, and the stars which never set are thy thrones. Okay, this passage is crazy. The text says, quote, the imperishable stars are under thy supervision. So here we learn that there is a royal hierarchy in the heavens, a rank order to the heavenly kings.

51:35

This passage tells us that Osiris reigns over other heavenly kings, kings who are obedient to him. The next part of this passage is mind-blowing. Sometimes I'm floored that some of this stuff was written down. The passage says, quote, The imperishable stars are under thy supervision, and the stars which never set are thy thrones.

52:05

Let me read that again. The imperishable stars, who are deceased human beings, who now reign as heavenly kings, are under thy supervision, are under Osiris's supervision, and the stars which never set, which are again the imperishable stars, deceased human beings, who now reign as heavenly kings, are thy thrones, plural. Okay, so what does this mean?

52:34

Well, basically, the papyrus of Annie is telling us here that the heavenly kings who reign under Osiris have thrones and that those thrones are a part of Osiris' greater cosmic kingdom. We established in our last episode that kings must have a kingdom over which to reign, else the title king is meaningless. Kings must have a people and a land over which to reign if they're truly to be considered a king.

53:02

We showed in our last episode that Marduk, after he was coronated, was given the power of divine utterance, the power to create a world, which he did with the carcass of Tiamat, the dead sea monster. Dragon slayers who are made heavenly kings and queens are given the power to create worlds, to create a kingdom, a cosmic kingdom. That's what all of these texts are telling us. We see all of this to come together in pyramid texts.

53:31

213 and 214. In this text, the Pharaoh King Unas, a human being, has died and ascended to the afterlife. And listen to what the text says, quote, Climb to the place where your father is, where Geb is, and he will give you what is on Horus's brow. Here King Unas is told to go to where Geb is. Geb is Osiris's father.

53:58

King Unas is told to go where Geb is to Geb's throne and he will give King Unas what is on Horus's brow. Okay, so what is on Horus's brow? I've talked about this in previous episodes so you should know, but in case you've forgotten, it's oil. If you recall, when Horus battled Set, Set tore out Horus's eye, leaving him severely wounded. And then through the help with the god Thoth,

54:24

Horus is anointed with the oil of several trees, pine oil and cedar oil, which are mentioned in Pyramid Texts 72 to 78. And the injured eye, the wound that he received in battle, is fully restored. He's healed. So what we're reading about here is an anointing of a heavenly king. The dead King Unas is told to go to Geb and get the same thing that is on Horus's brow, an anointing.

54:52

Then in Pyramid Text 213, the dead King Unas is told, quote, Ho Unas, you have not gone away dead. You have gone away alive. Sit on Osiris's chair, which is Osiris's throne, with your baton in your arm. Note what's happening here. Here the dead King Unas is enthroned as a heavenly king and placed on Osiris's throne.

55:21

And we see a similar thing in pyramid text 422. This time it's the dead king Pepi I. The text reads, Ho Pepi, you take your ba within you, your control about you, your crown atop you.

He, now I'm not sure who he is here, but I think it sounds like a heavenly escort of some type, takes hold of your arm, leads you into the sky, and puts you on Osiris' throne.

55:51

You take up your position, Pepe, on Thy's forwards throne, saved, provided as a god, and equipped with Osiris's form. So here King Pepe I looks like Osiris. No observable difference? I don't know. On foremost of Westerner's throne, and do what he used to do. It's fascinating. We're reading about the enthronement and coronation.

56:20

of a human being as a heavenly king here, one who sits on quote Osiris' throne. And the text says that the newly enthroned king will quote, do what he used to do. And what did Osiris used to do? Well, we learned in the Papyrus of Annie, the Egyptian book of the dead, that Osiris created a world. All of this sounds

56:47

uncannily like Revelation chapter 3 verse 21 which again reads and this is Christ speaking to the one who is victorious I will give the right to sit with me on my throne breathtaking did you notice in this translation it says I will give you the right that's very interesting Christ tells the victorious here that it's their right to sit on his throne

57:15

I think the language there is worth pondering. Well and good, we have some pretty strong textual and ritual evidence of the enthronement of human beings as heavenly kings and queens. But now we have to think through the cosmic implications of this, which I'm not so sure is possible with our finite minds, but I'm going to try. Of course, I have no idea how all of this works, but let me propose one possibility.

57:43

Let's start with a heavenly king. This heavenly king is promised, quote, an eternal kingdom. So he uses divine utterance to create a kingdom, which we can conceptualize as a single universe. He reigns over that universe. It's his inheritance for conquering the dragon. Within that universe, he creates worlds upon worlds.

58:11

Worlds where other human beings are born and who have the opportunity to conquer the dragon themselves and later become heavenly kings and queens And then they go on to create their own kingdoms their own universes Where they create worlds upon worlds? Where other human beings are born? Who have the opportunity to conquer the dragon and later become heavenly kings and queens themselves?

58:41

And so on and so on and so on, each new heavenly king and queen would be subordinate to the heavenly king and queen above them. The cosmic implications here are astounding, but this is what the texts we've covered are telling us. The book of Joseph and Azanath is an absolutely remarkable text because it gives us an actual account of Yahweh or Christ.

59:10

anointing a human being, Azanith, as a heavenly queen. The Book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch is an absolutely remarkable text because it gives us an actual account of Yahweh or Christ anointing a human being, Enoch, a heavenly king. This is the reason the Book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch is such an important ancient text. And I haven't covered this yet.

59:38

But after Enoch is made a heavenly king, what is the very next thing the Lord does? The Lord summons an archangel named Vervoil and asks him to fetch a pen and a paper for Enoch because Enoch is about to need to take some notes. And what was Enoch gonna be taking notes on? Well, you'll never believe this. But for the next 10 chapters, Enoch is taught by Vervoil.

01:00:07

and by the Lord's own lips, the secrets of creation. Which is why the book is titled The Book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch. For the next 10 chapters, Enoch is taught how the Lord created the world. Enoch is taught how to create a world. Chapter 24 reads, quote, "The Lord summoned me and said, "Enoch, sit down to my left with Gabriel.'

01:00:36

I bowed down to the Lord and the Lord said to me, Enoch, beloved, all you see, all things that are standing still or moving around were built by me. I myself will explain them to you. OK, so how amazing would that be to have the Lord sit down and teach you how he created the world or worlds? This is amazing. Listen, Enoch.

01:01:05

and pay attention to my words, as I have not even told my secrets to my angels, and I have not told them their origin or of my endless realm.” His endless realm? When the Lord tells Enoch here to listen and pay attention to my words, it very much sounds like the Lord wants Enoch to understand how to create his own world or worlds, his own kingdom. The Lord is giving Enoch

01:01:34

the secrets of how it’s all done. As we’ve seen up to this point in the podcast and as you’ll see in the coming months, heavenly kingship is always tied to creation. This is a truly stunning theology, not only in light of what it says about the true potential of human beings, but also in terms of its cosmic implications.

01:02:02

In the passage I just read, the Lord tells Enoch that he’s going to give him the secrets of his quote, endless realm. So think on this. If the Lord’s realm or kingdom is endless and the kingdoms inherited by the heavenly King Enoch and the heavenly Queen Azanath are endless and the kingdoms of all of the myriad other heavenly kings and queens are endless and on and on and on, then there would have to be

01:02:30

universes beyond universes beyond universes. In fact, there would have to be an infinite number of universes out there. To wrap your brain around this possibility, you could think of each universe like a tiny little bubble, like a little drop of water. Then think of billions and billions and billions of these tiny little bubbles.

01:03:00

filling the infinite expanse of the cosmos. Think on that the next time you gaze upon the night sky. Now, if you think this all seems just a little too much to digest, or if you think it seems just too improbable, let me leave you with the words of one of my favorite astronomers, Alex Philippenko. He’s an astrophysicist and professor of astronomy at Cal Berkeley.

01:03:28

You know how I mentioned that modern day astronomers are playing catch up with the ancients? Well, this is another good example of that. Listen to what Dr. Filippenko has to say about what modern astronomers think of the possibility of innumerable universes. The idea of multiple universes has now gained real respectability. I mean, card-carrying physicists, astrophysicists are thinking seriously about the possibility

01:03:58

We could discuss this later on, but ideas about how our universe was born and evolved with time naturally lead to other pockets that are essentially independent of ours. And so there could be a gazillion of them, or there could be an infinite number of them. So there you have it. Modern day astronomers are now taking the possibility of an infinite number of universes very seriously. Something the ancients already seem to have known.

01:04:27

thousands and thousands of years ago. That's it for me. If you're interested in listening to a full audio recording of the Enuma Elish, the book of the holy secrets of Enoch, the Osiris myth, or the book of Joseph and Azaneth, you can find them on our sister podcast, the ancient tradition audio writ. With that, I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing we're with, we fly to heaven.

01:04:57

I'm Jack Logan.

01:05:02

You've been listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production.

Episode #28 - Who is God? - Lord of Ma'at / King of Tzedek

<https://theancienttradition.com/28-who-is-god-lord-of-maat-king-of-tzedek/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:29

Welcome to The Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. Glad to have all of you listening in. Before I jump into today's episode, I wanna let you know that you can listen to the second half of the book of Joseph and Azanath. It's available on our sister podcast, The Ancient Tradition Audio Rit. Yesterday, I was getting ready to head up to campus to teach a class and it suddenly occurred to me that I made an error in something that I said in episode number 26.

00:59

cosmic kingdom. Towards the end of that episode I said that according to estimates by astronomers that there are some four trillion planets in the known universe. But what I meant to say was that according to estimates by astronomers there could be as many as four trillion planets in our galaxy, in the Milky Way galaxy, not in the known universe. That's a big, big difference. I think God was pricking my mind being like, hey you're low balling it there.

01:28

So according to current estimates, astronomers estimate that there are between 100 to 400 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy. And they estimate that there are somewhere between two and 25 times as many planets as there are stars. So if we take the middle estimate of around 250 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy, and we times that by four, which is kind of a conservative estimate, which represents

01:57

the average of four planets per star, we'd estimate that there are around one trillion planets in the Milky Way galaxy. But of course there could be trillions and trillions more. Now, if we take an estimate of one trillion planets in each galaxy and we times that by the number of estimated galaxies in the known universe, which astronomers now place at around two trillion, two trillion galaxies.

02:27

then we have to times one trillion planets by two trillion galaxies to get the number of estimated planets in the known universe. And that works out to be two quadrillion planets in the known universe, two quadrillion. That's two with 15 zeros behind it. But even that is an extremely conservative estimate. There's this astrophysicist by the name of Eric Zacharison.

02:56

who simulated the evolution of the universe on his computer and he found that according to the laws of physics, there should be seven times 10 to the 20th power planets in the universe. That's seven followed by 20 zeros or 70 quintillion planets, quintillion. Now that's a cosmic kingdom.

03:25

In other words, there are literally more planets in the known universe than there are grains of sand on planet Earth. Think on that the next time you're at the beach. Put a little single grain of sand on the tip of your finger and contemplate that there are more planets in the universe than all of the grains of sand on planet Earth. Speaking of grains of sand, at the outset of the podcast, I noted that the ancients placed an extraordinary amount of importance on the creation.

03:55

and that because of that, we'd start the podcast there, which we did after we finished up the episodes on the coronation of King Charles. But I don't know if you've noticed or not, but we haven't even gotten to the creation of a single grain of sand yet. And that's because we learned from the ancients that a lot of really important events took place in the heavens before the creation took place, events that we needed to discuss in order to fully understand how and why the creation took place.

04:24

Which brings me to today's episode. We still need to cover a little more ground before we get to the creation of that single grain of sand. And in order to do that, we need to learn more about God, who God is and how the cosmos operate. The knowledge we gain from the ancients about who God is will be critical to our understanding of how the universe and our beautiful marble of a planet was formed. So,

04:51

what did the ancients teach about who God is? For some of you long time listeners, it will probably come as no surprise to you that the ancients, be they ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Canaanites, Hittites or Israelites, describe God and who God is in a remarkably similar way. So over the next couple of months, as the occasions arise, I'm gonna add an episode here and there as part of a

05:19

Who is God series, a mini series within the podcast. In that series, we'll hone in again on the stubborn bits, the characteristics of God that we see show up time and time and time again in the ancient record. The ancient texts give us some of the most comprehensive, detailed and consistent descriptions of who God is that can be found anywhere in the world. And it's the consistency with which the ancient texts describe God that attests

05:48

yet again to the notion that a single religious tradition, the ancient tradition, was revealed to human beings in the beginning, and that that tradition served as the fount from which all of the other religious traditions sprung. So let's get started. Today's episode is Who is God? Lord of Mott, King of Zedek. I'm pretty excited about this episode.

06:16

because I've been wanting to talk about the ancient Egyptian concept of Maat for a little while now. And we're at that point in the podcast that it's critical that we do so. In ancient Egypt, the gods, Rae, Ptah, Osiris, Horus, Thoth, and a bunch of others were given the very important epitaph, Lord of Maat. For example, in the pyramid texts,

06:43

in pyramid text 577, which is found in King Pepi the first's pyramid. It says the following of Osiris. Quote, Osiris appears, the Lord of Maat goes on high. We also learn from a text known as the Hymn of Osiris. It's dated to the 18th dynasty, which is around 1500 BC.

07:10

that the Egyptians referred to the assembly of the gods as the, quote, lords of Maat. The hymn of Osiris says the following, speaking of the god Horus, who's Osiris' son, quote, the

assessors of Maat gather together unto him, and with them are assembled the company of the gods, the lords of Maat. Right after this,

07:38

We learned something very interesting about the concept of Ma'at. We learned that it's directly connected to divine utterance. Listen to what the text says. It says, quote, the voice of Horus hath found the power of Ma'at. We're going to talk about that in our next episode. But since we were already here, I thought I'd point it out. Keep the connection between Ma'at and the power to divinely utter in your back pocket.

08:08

So what is this Ma'at that the ancient Egyptians are talking about? This concept that the divine council of gods and the god Osiris are the Lord of? Well, without question it's the most foundational principle in the ancient Egyptian religion. And as you're going to see in virtually all of the other major religious traditions across the world, there really isn't a way to overstate the importance of Ma'at if we want to truly understand.

08:38

pretty much everything. How the earth was created, how wounds are healed, how human beings are resurrected, what constitutes evil, what constitutes sin, how one becomes like God, how universes are created, how the cosmos operate. It all starts with Ma'at. Ma'at is the very foundation of the cosmos. So let's start with the word itself.

09:08

The word ma'at, and this is according to scholars, is connected to the idea of straightness, levelness, and measure. And it may be linguistically derived from the words meaning direction and sacrifice. If I have time, I'll come back to the connection between ma'at and sacrifice, but for now, let's focus on its meaning as straightness and direction. Ma'at means

09:37

fundamentally to go in a straight direction. In Latin, the word for straight is rectus, which in late Latin is rectitudo, or as we would say it in English today, rectitude, rightness. In modern day vernacular, we'd refer to this concept as righteousness. But righteousness doesn't exactly capture the magnitude of what the ancient Egyptians meant by the concept ma'a.

10:07

When most of us think of righteousness, we think of it in terms of personal ethical behavior. And yes, the ancient Egyptians meant that too, but the concept implies so, so much more than righteousness for righteousness sake. The rightness or righteousness the ancient Egyptians are talking about here is righteousness on a cosmic level. It's the notion that the very foundation of the cosmos is governed by a

10:36

principle of rightness. So we aren't just talking about an ethical system of morality here. We're talking about a concept with profound metaphysical implications. Ma'ad is the notion that the very fabric of the cosmos, including everybody and everything in it, operates according to a grand principle of rightness. And it's only by upholding, adhering to, following, or doing

11:06

rightness or ma'at that any type and I mean any type of true order is established be that cosmic order, political order, social order, family order, marital order, or the order of the natural world itself. Adherence to the cosmic law of ma'at produces order. Rebellion against ma'at produces

11:36

Cosmic disorder, political disorder, social disorder, family disorder, marital disorder, and the disorder of the natural world itself. The ancient Egyptians referred to this disorder as Isfet, I-S-F-E-T, Isfet, which means chaos, injustice, violence, or to quote, do evil. So Isfet is the antithesis of Ma'ad. Now,

12:04

It's probably pretty easy for most of us to see how rightness or as the ancient Egyptians would say, doing ma'at, like not stealing from our neighbor, not cheating on our spouse or not telling lies, can lead to greater social, family, and marital order. Pretty easy to see. Or we can see how not accepting bribes, not conspiring to usurp power, or not attacking another country unprovoked.

12:32

can lead to greater political order. The connection between doing right and ma'at and greater social, political, and marital order is pretty easy to see. But what about doing right or ma'at and the natural order? Well, the ancient Egyptians are teaching us that just like how

adhering to ma'at produces social, political, and marital order, so too doing right produces order in the natural world.

13:00

And this is a little more difficult for most of us to conceive, but it actually might not be as difficult as you think. We know, for example, that when factories fail to uphold Ma'at, by dumping toxins in their fields and streams, that crops can't grow and bacteria and viruses thrive. Cells mutate, children get cancer, entire ecosystems get destroyed. When human beings don't uphold Ma'at, the entire natural order suffers.

13:30

The ancient Egyptians aren't just saying this though. They're also telling us that it's doing right or conforming to the cosmic law of Ma'at that's keeping the natural order today, right now in a state of order. It's upholding Ma'at that's keeping the elements from returning to a dark amorphous, lifeless mass of chaos like they were before the earth was formed.

13:57

The ancients are teaching us that it's the upholding of ma'at that's keeping the natural elements in their proper ordered positions as a world, a moon, a tree, a cup, or even a pencil. Now that's a little more difficult for most of us to conceive, but this is what the ancients are teaching us. They're teaching us that the effect of right living extends to the very depths of subatomic particles.

14:26

and reaches to the very heights of solar systems and galaxies and universes. If you're beginning to see how Ma'at is connected to the creation, then you're right on target. To create a world, the elements have to be placed in their proper order. That's how worlds are made. And as we just noted, it's only by adhering to Ma'at that anything in the cosmos takes on a true ordered state. So a world can only be formed by someone who...

14:55

perfectly adheres to the cosmic law of Ma'at. Which is why we see in ancient world that only beings who have conquered the enemy, the sea serpent, the one who epitomizes everything contrary to Ma'at, has the power to create a world. It's because only they can create a world. Worlds can only be brought about by rightness. So even if the sea serpent had been told he had the permission to form a world, he still wouldn't be able to do it.

15:24

Because according to the law of the cosmos, only adherence to rightness can produce order, including the ordering of the elements. And since the sea serpent perfectly rebelled against rightness, he's completely powerless to bring about any type of order, ever, including the ordering of a world. For a couple of decades now, astrophysicists have been searching for a grand, unifying theory, a theory of everything.

15:53

theory that could encompass all known physical phenomena in a single comprehensive framework. So far, a grand theory of everything has eluded them. But as we can see here in the world's oldest corpus of religious writings, the pyramid texts, that the ancient Egyptians already knew what that grand unifying theory was. They knew some 5,000 years ago that the entire

16:23

overarching cosmic law, rightness, the law of Ma'at. They realized that Ma'at governed every single aspect of the cosmos. They realized that all things functioned according to Ma'at, and they realized that nothing and that no one could escape its demands. That last statement that no one can escape the demands of Ma'at takes us into some really interesting territory.

16:53

Because what does this mean? Does this mean that even God is subject to or subordinate to Ma'at? Yes, that's exactly what the ancient Egyptians are telling us. Miriam Lichtheim, an Egyptologist out of Switzerland who has written extensively on Ma'at says this, quote, Ma'at is the Egyptian term for the moral order that governed men.

17:22

and gods. The ancient Egyptians are telling us that just as men and earthly kings are bound by the cosmic law of rightness, so too is God. They're telling us that not even God has the power to change, circumvent, alter, or destroy the law that governs the cosmos. Dr. Lichtheim writes,

17:52

moral precepts. See, the reason that God can't change, alter, or formulate Ma'at is because Ma'at didn't originate with him. It was not created by him. Rather, Ma'at is an intrinsic

characteristic of the fabric of the cosmos. As one author expressed it, it's an, quote, all-encompassing impersonal order.

18:20

which is built into the fabric of the cosmos itself. It's eternal. Nobody or nothing can change it. It's the law that has always governed the cosmos and will always govern the cosmos, regardless of anyone's attempt to alter, eliminate or circumvent it. This is why in ancient Egyptian texts, the king or God is always described as being an upholder or a lover of Ma'at.

18:46

For example, in the ancient Egyptian texts, the god Thoth is given these epitaphs, quote, the one who loves Maat and the one who makes great Maat in Egypt and the prince of Maat. Listen to this tomb inscription of a priest and judge from Saqqara, who gives us a couple of examples of how he has complied with Maat, Maat, which the gods love. Quote.

19:15

I have made this tomb from my rightful means and never took the property of anyone. I never did anything by force against anyone as the God loves a true thing. Here the priest is letting us know that he's never stolen or forced another, which are examples of him doing ma'at, behavior which God loves. God is a lover of rightness.

19:41

In another tomb inscription, this time of a nomarch, a nomarch is a chief magistrate of a gnome in Egypt, the text says, quote, I have made this tomb for my rightful means and did not take the property of anyone. I am a lover of goodness, a hater of crookedness. Doing the right thing is what the God desires.

20:09

In this inscription, we see the nomarch expressing his love of Maat, just as he knows the gods love it. We can see from many, many, many more texts, just like these, that God loves rightness. God loves Maat, God loves doing right. God loves truth, justice and righteousness. God loves upholding the law that governs the cosmos. For that reason, God is a, quote,

20:39

Lord of Maat. Let's take a minute here and outline a few of the things that we know about Maat from the ancient Egyptians. Number one, Maat is eternal. We learned from the ancient Egyptians that Maat is built into the fabric of the cosmos itself. The cosmos have always operated according to rightness and will always operate according to rightness forever and ever. Nothing and no one will alter its permanence.

21:09

text known as the instruction of Ptahotepe, Ptahotepe was a visor in ancient Egypt, says it like this, quote, great is Maat lasting in effect, undisturbed since the time of Osiris. In the end, it is Maat that lasts. Dr. Lickthime says this of that text, she says, quote, these verses convey

21:38

primordial condition, one firmly founded and lasting. Number two, Maat governs everything in the cosmos, every single thing, every electron, every photon, every quark, every blade of grass, every fish, every bird, every antelope, elephant and cheetah, every human being who ever lived. Nothing can circumvent Maat's

22:08

grasp. It is the eternal law by which all things in the cosmos operate. So if I were to put this in an actual law form, in its simplest form, the law of Maat states that

22:36

The greater the rightness, the greater the order. That is the law of the cosmos. It is the cosmic constant. According to this cosmic law, there's absolutely no other way to produce true order in the cosmos than by abiding by the precepts of rightness. The law of righteousness is the law of the cosmos. Number three, not even God can escape Ma'at's grasp.

23:07

For a lot of us, this might be difficult to conceive of. To conceive of an omniscient, omnipotent God being bound by a force greater than himself. Especially when the word omnipotent means all powerful. If God is all powerful, couldn't he just change or alter the fabric of the cosmos? Well, according to the law of Maat, he may be able to do that, but he never would.

23:37

It was by following the law of righteousness that he became a God in the first place. According to the law of Ma'at, only rightness can produce a human being of perfect order. Only rightness can produce a God. So to alter the law of Ma'at would be to alter himself. And when he altered himself, he would no longer be a God. And so he would no longer have the power to circumvent or alter.

24:06

the law of Ma'at. I know that what I just said requires a lot of mental gymnastics, but just keep in mind that according to the cosmic law of the universe, the only way to produce a God is through Ma'at, rightness. For one to become a God, one must love rightness, rectitude, and righteousness. A person who doesn't love those things will never become a God. The law of Ma'at prohibits it.

24:36

So those who are made gods deeply love rightness and would never destroy it. It wouldn't be in their nature. Thus, the law of Maat would never be under threat or destroyed by a true God. This brings us to an interesting possibility, however. Could a God choose to stop adhering to Maat? And if he did, would he cease to be a God?

25:06

Well, according to the law of Maat, yes and yes. Theoretically, if a God chose to forsake rightness, he would change too. His essence would become less and less ordered, and he would lose the associated power of his ordered state, and he would cease to be a God. Now, I say theoretically, because I don't think any true God would ever choose to stray from Maat.

25:35

It's not in their nature. See, to become a god, one must first conquer the enemy, must first show that they will choose maat over istaf or rightness over evil. One who has been made a god has already shown that he will make that choice. So it doesn't seem very likely that once one is made a god, one would suddenly rebel against maat because God is a lover of maat. Now, having said that,

26:02

The ancient record is pretty clear from all of the combat narratives we read that one of the high gods sons, one who seems to have been pretty darn close to becoming a god, though he hadn't been given a kingdom yet. And so that's something we'll talk about in a couple weeks. Chose to forsake rightness and conspire to usurp his father's throne. As a consequence, he was thrown out of the divine realm and he fell from the heights to the depths of the realm of chaos

26:32

the primordial ocean. So this is clearly an example of someone who was close to becoming a full-fledged god, but who chose to rebel against Maat and lost his nearly divine stature. No matter how you spin it, the ancients taught that not even God could break the law of Maat without experiencing the consequences. Upholding Maat was the supreme responsibility of...

27:01

a god and of earthly kings. Number four, this one's interesting. Ma'at is a force. We'll get to this a lot more in our next episode, but ma'at is a force that governs the cosmos. It's a power, a power that causes things to happen. For example, we learn in Pyramid Text 249, it's a text that's found in King Unus's Pyramid,

27:31

used rightness to remove disorder and to create the world. Atum says, quote, I have come from the Isle of Flame. Now the Isle of Flame refers to the birth of the universe or the earth, having put Ma'at in it, in place of disorder. He's telling us that he placed righteousness in the primordial waters in the place of disorder.

27:59

and that it was that rightness that caused the birth of the universe. That's remarkable. It was through the power of righteousness that Atum caused the chaotic elements to form into a universe or a world. That's power. In our modern day vernacular, we'd refer to this power as the power of God. You may have never thought about this.

28:27

But why does God have power and you and I don't? And where did God get his power, his power to create the world? Well, here we learn from the ancient Egyptians that God got his

power from upholding rightness, from his righteousness. And why did God's rightness give him power? Well, because the entire cosmos operate according to a law, the law of Ma'at.

28:57

where rightness is the principle that causes and maintains order in the cosmos. So as one conforms more and more to the principle of rightness, the greater and greater power they will obtain. And since God loves Maat and perfectly upholds rightness, He has perfect power. He has the power to order all things. Number five, Maat is universal and impartial.

29:27

What this means is that the law of Ma'at has the same implications for all things and all people. When it comes to human beings, this means that Ma'at doesn't care, whether you're male or female, black or white, tall or short, rich or poor, Chinese or Norwegian. The effects of adhering or not adhering to the law of Ma'at are the same for everyone. The implications of this are quite profound. See,

29:53

What this means is that the more and more you and I align our lives with the principle of rightness, the more and more ordered our lives will become, and the more and more power we'll obtain, and the more and more we'll become like God. But don't forget that God has the power that he does, and that God is a God, precisely because he perfectly upholds rightness, because he embodies Maat, righteousness. Maat is God's way.

30:22

and God's way is Ma'at. Mythologist David Leming said it like this, quote, Ma'at was essentially an all Egyptian gods and goddesses as the principle of divinity itself. In other words, God is the incarnation of Ma'at. What the widespread implication of this for you and me is, is that any one of us, if we chose to uphold rightness, can also become like God.

30:52

And if rightness becomes the very essence of who we are, we can become a God. The effects of adhering or not adhering to the law of Ma'at are the same for everyone. Adhere to rightness and become like God. Don't adhere to rightness and don't become like God. That's the law of Ma'at. That's the law of the cosmos. So amazingly, what this means is that the path to Godhood

31:21

is built right into the very fabric of the cosmos. It's crazy. Okay, so what does this rightness look like? You might be thinking to yourself, okay, I'd like to do that. I'd like more power and more order to come into my life. I'd like to become more like God. I want to uphold rightness, but I don't know exactly how to do it or what that means.

31:47

So let's take a look at a couple of ancient Egyptian texts to see if we can get a better feel for what upholding Ma'at meant. For starters, we don't have a comparable word in English for Ma'at, but in general it seems to be associated with three distinct concepts in English, truth, justice, and righteousness. The ancient Egyptians often spoke of, quote, doing Ma'at and, quote, saying Ma'at, or doing right and speaking truth.

32:17

Inscribed on the entrance of Vizier Kegomenid's tomb in Saqqara is a reference to his speaking and doing Ma'at. The inscription reads, quote, O you, do what is right for the king, and right which the God loves. Speak what is true to the king. What the king loves is truth. Dr. Lichtheim?

32:45

wrote an entire book on how Ma'at was expressed and understood in ancient Egypt. And she found that doing and speaking Ma'at were the most prevalent expressions. Doing right still seems a little vague. Are there any more details in the Egyptian tombs or texts that tell us what this doing looks like? Yes. Listen to this inscription found in Suet tomb number four of Kedi, an ancient Egyptian nomarch of the 10th dynasty.

33:11

Listen closely, you may hear some incredible similarities to other religious texts you may be familiar with. Here is Kedi's description of his having done Ma'at. Quote, I have come from my town, I have descended from my gnome, having done what people love and God's praise. I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked. I listen to the plea of the widow.

33:41

I give a home to the orphan. I answered evil with good." This description in ancient Egyptian of how Ma'at is done is not an unusual one. It's actually a standard description. Dr.

Lichtheim found similar descriptions in the instruction of Ptahotep, maxim number five, and in several other texts. Some of you may have heard in this description a similarity to what Christ said in Matthew chapter 25.

34:10

when Christ commanded his followers to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit the sick. In verse 46, Christ tells his followers that those who don't do these things will quote, go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous unto eternal life. See, one who loves rightness will do these things. They'll naturally seek to ease the suffering and the burdens of others because rightness is the very essence

34:40

of who they are. The ancient Egyptians used a large white ostrich feather to symbolize Ma'at. If you search up a picture of Osiris, you'll find that he's often depicted wearing what's referred to as the Ateph crown, which is the white conical crown of Upper Egypt, and it's flanked by two large ostrich feathers whose tips curl downwards, which is something that ostrich feathers naturally do. The feathers represent Ma'at.

35:09

So why did the ancient Egyptians choose to use a feather to represent Ma'at? For the answer to that, we need to turn to the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead, also known as the Papyrus of Annie. On plate 31 of this papyrus, we read of a ceremony that took place called the weighing of the heart. In this ceremony, the heart of the deceased person is placed on one end of a balance, and it's weighed against the feather of Ma'at on the other end of the balance.

35:39

If the deceased's heart proves heavier than the feather, it signifies that the deceased has not lived his life or her life in accordance with Ma'at. And because of that, he or she has then denied entrance into the afterlife. As part of the ceremony, the deceased stands before the court of Osiris and declares his or her conformity with Ma'at. It's known as the negative confession.

36:05

In the confession, the deceased confesses to what he or she did not do rather than what he or she did. So here's a taste from Plate 31, and this comes from the E.A. Wallace Budge translation.

36:35

Hail Fentiu, who cometh forth from Cheminu, I have not stolen. The negative confession goes on to declare the deceased innocent of a total of 42 violations of Ma, including not having committed fornication, not having caused others to shed tears, not having acted with guile, not having lied, not having burned with rage, and not having judged hastily.

37:04

It's from these declarations that we get a much clearer picture of what constituted Ma'at, or doing right and speaking right. But don't lose sight of the larger theological picture the ancient Egyptians are painting here. See, Ma'at isn't just some man-made moral code socially constructed to keep human beings in line. And it's not even understood to be a God-made moral code. It's more than that. It's a cosmic law built...

37:33

right into the fabric of the cosmos itself. A law that if adhered to can imbue the adherent with power. The power to produce order. Marital order, family order, social order, political order, natural order, and cosmic order. That's powerful stuff. At this point, you might be wondering, okay, but is this just an ancient Egyptian conception?

38:02

or do we find the same conception of the fabric of the cosmos in other ancient cultures and religions? This far into the podcast, you know the answer is yes. Nearly all of the major ancient civilizations and religious traditions either make the assumption that the cosmos are operating in accordance to a concept similar to Ma'at or they develop an actual cosmic concept that's nearly identical to Ma'at.

38:30

Scholars have written a number of papers on this subject, so know that the cross-cultural counterparts I'm gonna give to you are coming out of a large body of literature on the subject. And I don't have time to go into each of these examples in detail, but know that scholars see a number of very important correspondences between Ma'at and other cosmic

concepts, which of course speaks to me of a common source. For example, in the Vedic tradition,

38:58

The Hindu believe in the cosmic concept of rita, which is R-T-A. The Sanskrit for rita is translated as, quote, order, rule, and truth. Maurice Bloomfield refers to rita as, quote, the most important concept, not only of the

39:25

Barbara Holdridge, a professor of religious studies at UC Santa Barbara, describes Rita like this, quote, the principle in the natural order, which regulates and coordinates the operation of the universe and everything in it. In the hymns of the Vedas, Rita is described as being responsible for the natural, moral and sacrificial orders. In the Phoenician tradition, in Zoroastrianism,

39:56

The Zoroastrians believe in the concept of Asha, A-S-H-A. Similar to Ma'at and Rita, it's a concept that's pretty difficult to translate into a single English word. Asha means something akin to truth, right, righteousness, order, and sometimes right working. And like with Ma'at and Rita, Asha plays a cardinal role in the theology and doctrine of Zoroastrianism.

40:24

One interesting note here is that Asha, which is often translated as truth, is derived from the Indo-Iranian word Sūtya, which means being or existing, suggesting the Zoroastrians saw a connection between truth and really existing or being brought into full realization. And we're going to talk about that much more in our next episode.

40:49

In the Chinese tradition, in Taoism, Tao is, and this comes from the dictionary, quote, the absolute principle underlying the universe, signifying the way or code of behavior that is in harmony with the natural order. Among the Sumerians, Akkadians, Canaanites and Hittites, we don't necessarily find an explicit concept or principle similar to Ma'at like we do in other cultures, but the combat narratives that we find among these peoples

41:18

which are based on the combat between chaos and order, the enthronement of kings who conquer chaos, and the power of those kings to create worlds, all depend on an underlying belief in a cosmic principle similar to Ma'at. Other scholars have connected Ma'at to the Greek concept of Metis, the Native American concept of Orenda or Hosso, and the Australian Aboriginal concept of Chukoraw.

41:49

To me, however, the most fascinating parallel is found among Judeo-Christians in a concept known as tzedek, T-Z-E-D-E-K. Like with Maat, Rita, and Asha, we don't exactly have a word for word equivalent in English for tzedek. English translators of the Bible have translated tzedek into a number of English words, rightness, righteousness, just, justice, fair,

42:19

quote, what is right. In the biblical canon, the concept of tzedek, similar to what we see in ancient Egypt, is most often associated with kings, rulers, seats of government, and sovereigns, most of whom must uphold maat or tzedek if the kingdom is to have any chance of flourishing. Of greatest interest to me and to this podcast is the use of tzedek as part of an epitaph or title.

42:46

If you recall, we mentioned earlier in today's episode that in ancient Egypt, Ma'at was sometimes used as a title or epitaph of God, like Lord of Ma'at or Prince of Ma'at. We see the same thing in the biblical canon. In Hebrews chapter 5 verse 6, Paul teaches the Hebrews that Christ was ordained a high priest after, quote, the order of Melchizedek.

43:15

order here refers to a priesthood order. And we'll talk a lot more about this priesthood order in another episode, but for this episode, I wanna focus on the meaning of the word itself. Did you notice that the word tzedek is in the name, Melchizedek? Melchizedek. When we look at Melchizedek in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, we learn that Melchizedek is a compound word, Melchi and tzedek.

43:41

We already know that tzedek means righteousness and rightness, like ma'at. But what does the word malki mean? Well, considering everything we've talked about on this program

regarding kingship, heavenly kingship and earthly kingship, it should come as no surprise here that the word malki means king in Hebrew. So when you put them together, the words malki and tzedek mean king of righteousness or king of righteousness.

44:11

Al-Quedzadeq. Anyone out there find it interesting that Christ was ordained a priest after an order that includes kingship right in the title? Well, we'll have a lot more to say about that down the line. King of righteousness is obviously being used here as a title or an epitaph for Christ. The text is talking about Christ's order of priesthood. But it's the emphasis on Christ's rightness or righteousness that I want to emphasize here.

44:41

This is just like what we see in ancient Egypt where the god Osiris is given the epitaph or title Lord of Ma'at, Lord of Righteousness. Here Christ is given the epitaph, King of Tzedek, King of Righteousness. We began this episode by asking the question, who is God? From today's episode, it's clear. The ancient texts attest.

45:11

that the God of heaven at his core is a being of tzedek, a being of righteousness. There is no istef as the ancient Egyptians would say in him. Earlier in today's episode we noted that the ancient Egyptian texts don't just say that the gods are lords of Ma'at. They also tell us that they are lovers of Ma'at. They don't just do

45:40

A similar thing is said of Christ in Psalm 33 verses 4 and 5. Listen to how these verses first speak of Christ's Zedek, both speaking and doing Zedek, and then his love of Zedek. The text reads, quote, For the word of the Lord is right, and all of his works are done in truth. He loveth righteousness.

46:09

God isn't just just, he loves justice. God isn't just true, he loves truth. God isn't just honest, he loves honesty. God isn't just faithful, he loves faithfulness. God isn't just kind, he loves kindness. God isn't just virtuous, he loves virtue. God is

46:39

God perfectly conforms to the cosmic standard of right. We can take comfort in knowing that he is perfectly just. He will never judge us unfairly, never. And we can take comfort in knowing that he is perfectly kind. He will never do us harm, never. And we can take comfort in knowing that he is perfectly faithful. He will never fail us, never.

47:09

is the very essence of who God is. We have to start there, because without this knowledge of who God is, nothing else in the ancient tradition makes sense. God is a God because He upheld and continues to uphold the cosmic law of righteousness. God's laws and commands are the laws and commands of righteousness.

47:36

God's power is a witness to and a product of his righteousness. As I close out this episode, I hope you have a much better understanding of who God is. And I especially hope you have a much better understanding of the constitution of the cosmos and the cosmic law of righteousness that underpins every aspect of it. Without it, there is no order. There is no world.

48:04

No trees, no you, no me, no happy marriages, no functioning governments, no meaningful relationships, no children, no peace, and no light. The Cosmic Law of Righteousness is the grand unifying law that explains every single thing in the cosmos. All of you astrophysicists out there may just wanna give it a look. That's it for me.

48:33

I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare, knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

48:45

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Episode #29 - Who is God? - A Glorious Being of Ineffable Light

<https://theancienttradition.com/29-who-is-god-a-glorious-being-of-ineffable-light/>

00:00

Music

00:10

You're listening to The Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. He is your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:29

Welcome to the ancient tradition. I'm Jack Logan. Welcome to all of you. Welcome to all of the listeners listening in. Are you new listeners? I'm sure there's plenty. And all of you long time listeners, thanks for sticking with us. For you new listeners, I just wanna give you a quick heads up at how the program is kind of organized. It's set up to be progressive, which means that each episode kind of builds off the previous episode. And the hope is that we get this really comprehensive understanding of the theology.

00:58

that we see showing up in the ancient record. So you can listen in on this one, but I recommend if you have got the time to go back and give a listen to the previous episode so you can get the full picture. So let's jump into today's episode. It's titled, Who is God? A Glorious Being of Ineffable Light. In our last episode, we started looking into the ancient record to see if we could learn about who God is.

01:26

And the reason that we're doing this is because the things that we learned about God in the last episode and the things that we're going to learn about God in this episode are indispensable to an understanding of what happens next in the creation accounts. We've kind of put those on hold a little bit so that we can develop this, but we're going to return to the creation in our next episode. So this is a precursor to kind of get us ready to understand what happens next. In the last episode, we learned from the ancients that God is

01:56

the Lord of Maat or the King of Tzedek. And both of these words, Maat and Tzedek, mean about the same thing. They mean truth and justice and righteousness. In the Bremener Rhined Papyrus, we've talked about this on the program before, it's dated to around the fourth century and it's presently housed in the British Museum, if you wanna check it out. We read a remarkable ancient Egyptian account of the creation.

02:24

which tells us in the beginning that Maat, the cosmic law of rightness, was present when Ra created all things. I haven't read this account to you before, so I wanna read it. This is the Wallace Budge translation, and I wanna focus on that last part about Maat. So here we go. These are the words which the god Nebiarcher, now Nebiarcher means Lord of the uttermost limit.

02:54

after he had come into being. I am the creator of that which came into being. That is to say, I am the creator of everything which came into being. Now the things which I created and which came forth out of my mouth, interesting, so we've got divine under it's there, after that I had come into being myself were exceedingly many. The sky had not come into being, the earth did not exist, and the children of the earth and the creeping things had not been made at that time.

03:23

I myself raised them up from out of new. Now remember, new is the primordial waters. From a state of helpless inertness, I found no place whereon to stand. I worked a charm upon my own heart. Now remember, the ancient Egyptians thought the mind was in the heart. So he's talking about conceiving the creation in his mind here. I laid the foundation of things.

03:52

by Ma'at. It's pretty clear from that passage that the ancient Egyptians believed that Ma'at was a primordial force, a force that existed before and enabled the creation of everything Ra desired in his heart to create out of the dark, inert, chaotic elements, the primordial waters of new. This passage tells us that it was through Ra's upholding and or adhering to right, truth, justice, and righteousness,

04:23

that he was able to command the elements to order themselves into a world. It was by way of his rightness that Ra was able to impose order on chaos. So now I wanna go to another book. We wanna go to the Egyptian Book of the Dead. And we've talked about this in the last couple of episodes, The Papyrus of Annie. It's dated to around 1250 BC. In this text, we learn that Ma'a

04:53

unalterable. It's a permanent characteristic of the cosmos. So this comes from Plate 20. It reads and lo Osiris Annie triumphant in peace. The triumphant one. We got to stop here for just a second because note how Annie's dragon slaying status is used as an epitaph here. Triumphant is used throughout the entire text as an epitaph for Annie. Every time his name is mentioned,

05:23

he's referred to as Annie, the triumphant one. He's reinforcing over and over again that he has triumphed over the enemy. I think that's really, really fascinating. I continue. Sayeth homage to thee, O thou who risest in the horizon is raw. Thou art established by a law. And the law that's being referred to here is Ma'at. Which changeth not.

05:51

nor can it be altered. That text almost sounds like I wrote it myself, that Ma'at doesn't change, that it can't be altered, but I didn't, that text is written in 1250 BC. From this passage, we conclude that Ma'at has always been a part of the fabric of the cosmos and that it will always be a part of the cosmos. It's unalterable. And as such, order, any type of order, cosmic, divine, natural, political, religious, marital, and familial order,

06:22

can only be produced by following the law of rightness, which God who is the embodiment of rightness loves. We also noted in our previous episode that since the cosmic law of rightness was embedded in the very fabric of the universe, that not even God could escape its grasp.

06:44

Yesterday morning, I was flipping through a book on Chinese mythology by a lady by the name of Shuiting Ni. She's an expert in Chinese culture. And I came across the exact same point. Ni writes the following about China's high god who is Di Qu'in. Now, this is what she says, quote, Di Qu'in is the oldest and highest ranking deity known as the Jade Emperor. He is the ruler of heaven.

07:13

and is only subservient to the Tao itself. Now, if you remember from our last episode, the Tao is the counterpart in China to the Egyptian concept of Ma'at and the ancient Hebrew concept of Tzedek. So she's saying here that the ruler of heaven is subservient to nothing but the Tao. I think that's fascinating.

07:38

All of this appears to be tied to another very fascinating characteristic of God, one that we find all over in the ancient writings. And I mean, it's all over in there. The theme is so prevalent that I had to exercise some restraints so they didn't overwhelm me with the textual evidence. I'm not really sure if I succeeded, but at least I tried. So let's jump in.

08:01

In nearly every single religious tradition, from the descriptions of God that we find in these, the oldest writings in the world, right up to descriptions by people who are presently living, who have endured near death experiences, God is universally described as a glorious being of ineffable light. And of course, I wanna know why. Why is God described as a being of light?

08:29

And why is he a being of light? What does this mean? Why is he a being of light and we are not? So we have a lot of questions to answer here. Let's take a look at some of the evidence, the textual evidence in the ancient writings that describe God as a glorious being first. If we start with the ancient Egyptians, this is pretty easy to see. Most people have heard of the ancient Egyptian God Ra, sometimes referred to as Ray, who is the oldest

08:59

and arguably the most important god in the ancient Egyptian pantheon. Richard A. Wilkinson, in his book that I've referred to on the program, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, he says this about Ray, quote, Ray was the first king as well as

the creator of kingship. The god ruled on earth over his creation until according to legend he became old.

09:27

Then Reh departed to the heavens where he continued to rule. So there's the heavenly kingship motif. And also acted as the ancestor of the King of Egypt. In the pyramid text, we find the combined Reh Atum, called the father of the king. By the fifth dynasty, the quote, son of Reh Epitaph, the king's titular, formalized this mythical relationship for the rest of Egyptian history.

09:56

rulership under Re was synonymous with right rulership or rule according to Ma'at. I wanted to start with this description of Re first because some scholars argue that the ancient Egyptians believed that the sun was actually the god Re and that the god Re was actually the sun. Now there may have been some ancient Egyptians who believed this and there's plenty of ancient

10:25

Like most of what we see in ancient Egypt, the equating of Ray with the sun is probably meant to be understood symbolically, which seems much more probable since we just learned from Richard Wilkinson that ancient Egyptians also taught that Ray created the world, reigned on earth as a king, departed and now rules in heaven as a heavenly king. It's kind of hard to reconcile that description of Ray with the notion that he is literally the sun, S-U-N.

10:55

I can think of many, many ways in which the actual sun can serve as a very outpropose symbol for God. For example, the sun could symbolize that God is the source of life, that he resides in the center of all things, that his light illuminates the world. We could go on and on and on. And in a couple of minutes, we're gonna look at that. We're gonna explore a couple of direct comparisons along those lines. So let's jump into the ancient texts.

11:24

Let's start with the pyramid text. In pyramid text 405, which is found in King Tete's pyramid, the dead King Tete compares his exalted appearance in the afterlife to the god,

Ray. And the text reads, quote, “Oh, Ray, you shine as me. “I shine as you.” Very intriguing. In pyramid text 409, the dead King Tete exclaims, quote,

11:54

I am the bull of light. Bull here refers to one who is a god. So a bull of light is a god of light, which they often associated with celestial objects in the sky like the sun or the moon or particular stars. In ancient Egypt gold was used to represent the flesh of the gods. Flesh which is brilliant and radiant like light. Which interestingly,

12:23

is why in the Indiana Jones movies, the idol is always made of gold. The fact that idols are almost always made of gold, whether they be in Egypt, Cambodia, Japan, or among the Hindu, is actually further evidence that the ancients understood God to be a God of effulgent, radiant light. In Pyramid Text 9, in King Pepe the First Pyramid, the deceased King Pepe is referred to as, quote,

12:52

the golden one. In pyramid text 467 the deceased King Pepe says quote, here am I Ray, I am your son, I shine in the east like Ray, I row Ray in the sky's span, a star of gold. In pyramid text 508 the deceased King Pepe tells us how Ray's

13:22

I have gone up to raise place. I have laid down for myself that sunlight of yours as a footpath under my feet. I love that text. In Pyramid Text 540, the deceased King Pepe says this of Osiris's heavenly temple. Quote, I have come to you Osiris in the compound of gold. Okay, let's go back to the Egyptian Book of the Dead in the Papyrus of Annie.

13:53

We get even better descriptions of God as a being of light. On plate two, the hymn to Osiris, it says this of the God Osiris, quote, homage to thee, king of kings, Lord of lords, prince of princesses, thy body is of gold, beautiful in countenance. On plate 11, it says this of Osiris, quote, Osiris shineth.

14:22

On plate 20, it says this of the god, Ray. Quote, hail thou disk, thou lord of rays, shine thou with thy beams of light upon the face of Osiris Annie, who is victorious. Sheddest thy beams of light, thou art beautiful, yea, beautiful, all the gods rejoice when they behold thee, the king of heaven. Plate 21 reads, quote, oh, thou mighty light.

14:51

who shinest in the heavens, thou art glorious by reason of thy splendors, glorious in majesty.” And also on this plate, we see God’s light associated with terror, which is a theme that we see quite often. Speaking of Ray, it says,

15:18

On plate 28, Annie says this of the girdle or the robe of God. Quote, it shineth and shedeth light, which abideth in his presence and sendeth forth light into the darkness. As the deceased Annie gets closer and closer to where the God Osiris dwells in the afterlife, he says this of the change in environment on plate 11. He says, quote, lo, the blazing fire.

15:47

the flame whereof cannot be quenched with tongues of flame which reach afar. Okay, let’s turn to the Mesopotamians. A professor by the name of Dr. Thavipallan, she earned her degree from Yale and she presently works at the Department of Egyptology and Assyriology at Brown University. She’s done a lot of research on the gods and light in Mesopotamia and this is what she says, quote,

16:15

The concept of brightness was highly significant for Mesopotamian religious thought, in which the gods were conceptualized as numinous beings imbued with an active radiance. Akkadian religious poetry is richly laden with language that emphasizes both the visual — namru, which means dazzling and shining — and psychological — melumu, which means awe-inspiring radiance.

16:44

aspects of this divine brilliance. We can see a little bit of this in the hymn to Shamash, and it refers to the God Shamash like this, quote, “Illuminator of all, the whole of heaven, who makes light the darkness for humankind above and below. Your radiance spreads out like a net above the whole world.” We can find in another hymn to Shamash, it says this.

17:13

quote, Oh, most exalted, perfect one, air of nom, rat, sit, Oh, ever renewing light who brings happiness to the people who sets free, Oh, sham us, who brings order. Very interesting to the dead and the living who sees everything. Oh, shamash light of heaven and earth, radiance of the lands. Dr. Thavapalan continues. She says, quote,

17:42

In everyday practice of religious worship, the concept of divine radiance found visual expression through the shining of colorful metals, mainly gold, silver, and their alloys, and gemstones with which cult statues and spaces were fashioned. Anthropomorphized statues of the gods were made of gold, silver, bronze, and precious colored gems. Again, just like we see in the Indiana Jones movies.

18:12

Do you remember King Ashurnasurpa II, who reigned between 883 and 859 BC? We've talked about him on the program. Well, in one of his inscriptions, he notes that he fashioned a temple to the god Ninurta. Do you remember Ninurta? Ninurta was one of the Mesopotamian selfless sons who fought the wicked on Superd. King Ashurnasurpa II fashioned a temple to Ninurta using gold.

18:40

so that it matched Nunerta's glory in the divine realm. And the inscription says, quote, "I decorated the suite of the shrine "of the god Nunerta, my lord, "with gold and lapis lazuli." Dr. Thavapala notes that the luminous associated with Mesopotamian gods was actually understood by the Mesopotamians to be more than just a visual description of the gods. And this is what she writes, and this is really important. She says,

19:10

The concept of Melamu, whose semantic range includes aspects of literal energy, splendor, efficacy, supernormal potency, and majesty, is said to be a property of gods, kings, and weapons. The word is often explained as luminosity or splendor in modern Akkadian dictionaries, but these translations fail to capture the idea that Melamu is both a

19:39

property and an active force capable of protection and destruction than a mere attribute. A king endowed with *mellomu* may easily overwhelm a foe. *Mellomu* describes their vital life force with the implication of awe and terror. What Dr. Thavapalan is saying here is really, really intriguing. She's telling us that the Mesopotamian gods radiated in effulgent light.

20:09

precisely because they embodied a literal energy and power, an energy and power that shined, an energy and power that emitted a splendid light. And this sounds similar to what we see with physical light. Visual light is energy we can see. When the electrons in an atom are heated up, they emit a photon, the tiniest known particle of light. Photons are a quantum or packet of energy.

20:39

Quantum actually means quantity or amount, and it refers to the tiniest possible particle of any substance on the subatomic level. So now we're in some pretty interesting territory and possibilities when it comes to God's light. Of course, at this point, I wanna know how God got this luminescent energy and power. And we'll get to that, but we won't be able to get to that until our next episode.

21:09

Before I leave Mesopotamia, I want to note that in the *Enuma Elish*, the light that the gods emit is referred to as, quote, the mantle of radiance. In tablet four of the *Enuma Elish*, the author describes Marduk in the following manner. This is what it says, quote, his body was filled with an ever blazing flame. His head was crowned with a terrible radiance. I love how the ancients write.

21:38

Okay, among the ancient Israelites, in Deuteronomy chapter four, verse 24, Yahweh's described as fire. It reads, quote, for the Lord your God is a consuming fire. In the Old Testament, Ezekiel sees the glory of God on his throne. And you're gonna be able to easily catch the references to precious stones and fire and gold and light here.

22:04

But I also want you to note in these verses how God is described as a man, a glorified man who sits on a throne, who has loins and who speaks. So give this a listen. This is Ezekiel chapter one, verses 26 to 28. It reads, “And above the firmament that was over their heads

“was the likeness of a throne “as the appearance of a sapphire stone. “And upon the likeness of the throne

22:33

was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw the color of amber as the appearance of fire round about within it. From the appearance of his loins even upward and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire and it had brightness around about as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain,

23:02

So was the appearance of the brightness around about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face and I heard a voice of one that spake. Now listen to this. Listen to what God tells Ezekiel to do in chapter two, verse one. This is what happens. And he said unto me, son of man,

23:32

stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.” So did you catch what God asked Ezekiel to do? He asked him to stand. Now where have we heard this before? This is the same thing Christ asked Enoch to do and Azanath to do when they fell to their knees when they witnessed his glory. I find this theme so interesting. In Psalm 104 verse 2,

24:00

it says the Lord quote, coverest thyself with light as a garment. Okay, let’s turn to the Christians now. My favorite description of God is found in the New Testament in Revelation chapter one, verses 12 to 17. Here, John the Revelator is shown Christ’s full glory. Now keep in mind, John walked the earth with Christ when he was on the earth.

24:30

And now he’s experiencing God’s full glory. So you’re gonna easily catch the description of God’s glory here, but also note in this passage how God has hair, eyes, feet, hands, and a voice. Okay, this is what it says, quote, and I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. This is the menorah, the stylized version of the tree of life.

25:00

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one likened to the Son of Man. From this verse, we've pointed this out before on the podcast, we're clearly supposed to see that Christ is the tree of life. He's standing in the midst of the tree. Quote, closed with a garment down to the foot and girt about the paps with a golden girdle, which he wears because he slayed the Leviathan. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.

25:28

and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet likened to brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." At this point, what do you think John did?

25:59

Well, he did what Enoch and Azanath and Ezekiel did. He fell to the ground, overcome by the fullness of Christ's glory. He had no idea. In verse 17, it reads, quote, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Now, John must have been terrified. As the ancient texts tell us that most are when they

26:27

come into the presence of God in the fullness of his glory and light because Christ does the following in the rest of verse 17 and I find this so tender. The text reads, speaking of Christ, quote, and he laid his right hand upon me saying unto me, fear not. I love that. I think it's great.

26:51

Mircea Eliade notes that the peoples of the Arctic and Central Asia, the Tatars of the Altir, refer to God as the quote white light. The Ostiax and the Vogels refer to God as quote luminous, golden white, and good golden light from on high. The Buryats speak of where God dwells as quote the house dwelling with gold and silver, and the Alti peoples of a palace with a gold door.

27:21

and a golden throne. Eliade also says this of Indo-European gods. Certain it is that the Indian daios, the Roman Jupiter, the Greek Zeus, the Germanic god, Tiazio, whose very names reveal the original twofold meaning of light and sacred. You know, there's a litany of cultures who have associated God with the glory of the sun. The Maya god Hunapu,

27:49

the Arabian god Malachabel, the Buddhist god Syria, the Canaanite god Baal, the Turkic god Goyash, the Persian god Mithra, the Basque god Ikki, the Greek god Apollo, the Slavic god Horus, and I could go on and on and on and on, but I think you get the picture. The ancient record is rife with descriptions of God as a glorious being of ineffable light. In Hinduism, in the Hindu scripture,

28:19

The Bhagavad Gita, chapter 11, verse 12, it says this of the God Vishnu's supreme form. It says, quote, if there were a thousand suns rising up in the sky, they might resemble the radiance of the supreme person in that universal form. Among the Hopi of the American Southwest, Tawa, the supreme being who created the earth, says this of himself.

28:47

in the Hopi creation story that was recorded by New Mexico history. It says, quote, I am Tawa. I am light. I am life. Of course, what I've just given you is a very small sampling of all of the ancient texts and myths that speak of God as a being of splendid light. In modern times, we have additional witnesses to God as a being of ineffable light in near-death experiences. Now,

29:15

I don't believe everything I hear in near-death experiences. You never know what motivates people to put things on the internet. And there's actually quite a few contradictory accounts out there. But when we stick to the stubborn bits, those parts of near-death experiences that seem to show up time and again, we find that seeing and or experiencing God as a being of light is one of the most persistent themes. So in this episode, I'd like to share a couple of these accounts.

29:42

As you listen to these individuals share their experience, note how they both describe and experience God's light. The first account comes from a woman named Diane Sherman, who died during a routine knee surgery. And I thought if I can just find one little tiny glimmer of light, one little speck of something to hold on to, I'll be okay.

30:12

And as I see this one little spot of light, I think, I'm gonna just hang in with it and it's gonna be okay and I'm gonna be okay. And you know, I just worked that inside of myself. And as I'm staring at it, it's starting to get bigger and bigger and bigger and it's coming closer and closer. And all of a sudden it's just, it's everything around me.

30:40

And I'm looking at the light and I'm thinking, what is this? Because it was like clouds. The white is a color I've never seen before. It almost has like all the colors of the rainbow in it, but it's white. You know, it has this glistening effect to it. It wasn't just light, it was substance and feeling. And it's all around me. It's all I can see, all I can feel, all I can experience.

31:10

and I don't have words for it. How do you describe unconditional love? I don't know how to describe it. All I know is I have never felt so cared about, adored, cherished, safe. Anything you'd ever wish for to have in the world in that moment is what I felt.

31:33

This next account comes from Tony Secoria, who died when he was struck by lightning.

31:41

It was like I had suddenly fallen into a river of pure positive energy. There was a bluish white light that this energy emanated from. If you could imagine an energy that's completely composed of love and peace, there were no other emotions, no other senses that I had except that.

32:09

and it was it was just earth-shaking to feel that much love and peace coming from this source.

32:21

And it came to me that this must be the God energy. This is what makes everything. And I thought, you know, this is the greatest thing that could ever happen to somebody to have

this realization and to have this feeling. And that's the only time I've ever experienced anything like that. And...

32:50

in my whole life.

32:54

This final account comes from a man named Bill Tortella who died from a virus.

33:02

I left my body!

33:08

through this beautiful fluorescent glowing mist hovering over my body, looking down upon myself. And when I recognized that body wasn't alive anymore, this beam came from behind me so bright, it lit up everything underneath me. And it drew me right into the gateway, this beautiful tunnel.

33:36

The tunnel was made up of magnificent color. And now I am starting to move. But I'm feeling this amazing feeling. I have a feeling like I never had before, a love. The love was so incredible that you actually become the love.

34:01

Now you're in this light, you're part of this light, and I'm moving at what seems to me like the speed of light. No debris, no nothing, just light, beautiful colors whizzing by me, going through me. And this love is growing stronger and stronger. By the time I get to my destination, I remember distinctively saying, I'm home.

34:30

I'm finally home.

34:35

I think those experiences do a really nice job of highlighting the importance of God's light. From the ancient Mesopotamian descriptions that were studied by Dr. Thavapalan to the ones that we just listened to in modern times who have experienced God's light as part of a near-death experience, it's pretty clear that God's light is something far more than what you and I know as physical light.

35:00

God's light seems to have the capacity to do so much more than what physical light in our temporal existence has the capacity to do. God's light appears to be much, much more powerful and efficacious than the light of the sun. Even though there are likely considerable differences between God's light and physical light, there's a scripture in the Bible in Psalms, chapter 19, verse one, that implies that the physical light that God created is patterned.

35:29

after God's divine light, or at a minimum that it's a type of God's light. Psalm 19 verse one reads, quote, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. We haven't had a chance to talk about this yet, but the ancients recognized that God created everything in the temporal world to testify of him, to teach us stuff about him.

35:57

And there's actually quite a few nifty parallels between the physical creation and God. We'll explore those in a future episode. But just to give you a quick example, the ancients recognized that the sun and the moon and the seasons and even the days of the week all attested to the reality of physical resurrection and spiritual rebirth. And these were very important theological components of the ancient tradition.

36:27

I think it's perfectly plausible to surmise that when God created the world, He patterned physical light after His divine light so that we could learn more about Him, so that we can understand more about who He is. So let's look at what we can learn about God's light from what the ancients wrote down and some of the things that we just learned in those near-death experiences. Let's look at a few of these.

36:57

it's pretty clear that God's light has this unique capacity to transmit God's love directly from his being into every single particle in the cosmos. And even more importantly, directly into

the very essence of human beings. From those accounts, God's light seems to be a really immersive experience. Being wrapped in God's light is akin to being wrapped in God's love.

37:26

And did you know how the closer that Bill got to God, the closer to the light, the more intensely he felt his love? This is pretty similar to the physical light of the sun. The sun is 93 million miles away, but it has the capacity to warm every single particle on the earth. As we move closer and closer to the sun, the more intensely we feel the sun's warmth. So much so that if we drew too close,

37:56

and we didn't have proper protection, we would find the heat unbearable. And if we stayed there too long, we'd be utterly consumed by unquenchable fire. And these are actually very similar to what things are said in the Bible about those who approach God when they're unprepared or they approach God unworthily. Although light seems to operate in some ways that are pretty analogous to physical light, there's actually some really important and

38:24

actually pretty amazing differences too. For starters, we see here that God's supernal light has the unique capacity to transmit love, to directly transmit his love and adoration to all of his creations. When I've stood in physical sunlight, I've felt warmth, but I have never felt love. Only God's supernal light seems to be able to do that. Okay, number two.

38:54

We learned from Tony Socoria's account and from Dr. Thavapalan's research in Mesopotamia that God's light was understood to be quote, a literal form of energy. In physics, so if we're gonna look at some physics, energy is the word used to describe the capacity to do work. In our lived experience here on earth, energy is required to accomplish literally every single aspect of our existence.

39:24

For example, energy is needed to grow rice. Energy is needed to transform that rice into rice krispies. Energy is needed to box up the rice krispies. Energy is needed to transport the rice krispies boxes to the store. Energy is needed to power the car that gets us to the store to purchase the rice krispies. Energy is needed to make the bowl that holds the rice krispies. Energy is needed to pour the rice krispies into the bowl.

39:52

Energy is needed to lift the spoon, holding the rice krispies into our mouth. So you get the picture. Literally nothing can be accomplished without energy. What the angels are telling us is that God's light is radiating a literal form of energy, an energy that has the capacity to do great work. And as we'll talk about more in just a second,

40:18

God's light radiates an energy that has the capacity to do never ending work, eternal work. We know here in the temporal world that physical light and energy are inextricably connected. See, physical light, as I mentioned earlier, is made up of those photons, quantum packets of light, and it's those quantum packets that carry energy through space.

40:46

When plants and trees tap into the photons of physical light, work is accomplished. The trees grow and oxygen for you and me is produced. And when Joe hangs a solar panel on his roof and taps into those photons, work is accomplished. Joe's lights turn on in his fridge and his dishwasher and his TV work. The ability of light to carry energy across vast distances and through the vast expanse of space itself

41:16

is one of the most remarkable aspects of physical light. We can harness the energy of the sun precisely because light carries that energy from the sun right down to us here on earth. And it's that light energy that fuels the very existence of life on earth. Just ask the flora and fauna. God's supernal light appears to be similar to physical light in the sense that God's light can carry

41:45

or is imbued with energy, the capacity to do work, and accordingly then the capacity to bring about life. This is a remarkable feature of God because it indicates that God has the ability to send energy into any region of the cosmos that he so chooses directly by way of the light that radiates from his being. This is amazing.

42:13

Although God's light appears to be similar to physical light, it also appears to be somewhat different. Here on earth, scientists are constantly looking for what are referred to as

renewable energy sources, energy that can be replenished or regenerated naturally. But even this is problematic, because as we learned in episode number 14, the terrifying second law of thermodynamics, that our sun will eventually burn out.

42:41

and will be left without a source of energy to sustain life on planet Earth. We'll all die. This is where the energy radiated by God's light appears to be different. See, the second law of thermodynamics states that, quote, in an isolated system, entropy will always increase with time. This means that without a force to reverse it, everything in an isolated system will eventually move from a state of order to disorder. And when that happens,

43:11

disease, decay, degradation, disintegration, and death are the result. In this scenario, disorder triumphs. That's terrifying. I hope you're all following where we're going with this. See, the ancients taught that there is a force in the cosmos that produces the opposite effect of the second law of thermodynamics, a force that causes everything in the cosmos

43:40

to move from a state of disorder to order. And when that happens, peace, harmony, immortality, health, abundance, fertility, and unity are the result. Order is the result. And what is this force? This force that moves everything from a state of disorder to order? Now take a minute and think about this. In our last episode,

44:09

What did we learn from the ancients was the only thing that could produce order in the cosmos? Any kind of order.

44:20

If you said ma'at or tzedek, you are correct. The ancients taught that adhering to the cosmic law of rightness is the only thing that can produce order, period. There's no circumventing it, not even God can circumvent it. It's the law that governs the cosmos. So what are the implications of this law for the energy that radiates from God's being?

44:48

Well, what this means is that because God fully adheres to the cosmic law of rightness, that he's not subject to the second law of thermodynamics. He's not subject to disorder of any type. It's the antithesis of who he is. Whereas in the temporal world, due to the second law of thermodynamics, all energy, because it moves from a state of order to disorder, will eventually lose all of its work potential.

45:17

God's energy because he is the Lord of Maat and the King of Tzedek, one who perfectly upholds rightness, the ordering power in the cosmos, will never lose any of its work potential ever. This is pretty mind-blowing because this means that the energy radiated by God's light is eternal. God's energy will never run out.

45:44

It will never be subject to thermodynamic entropy, ever. God is the ultimate source of renewable energy. Let's see if I can break down the connection between Ma'at and eternal energy for you in just the simplest form. So A, the ancients taught that a single, all-encompassing law governs everything in the cosmos. B, the ancients taught that this cosmic law,

46:13

known as Ma'at among the Egyptians, is established on the principle of Rightness, sometimes translated as righteousness, truth, and justice. c. According to this cosmic law, Rightness produces order in the cosmos, all types of order, including the order of subatomic particles. And conversely, Unrightness produces disorder in the cosmos.

46:43

types of disorder including the disorder of subatomic particles D Thus one who fully adheres to rightness God would have the power to produce order perfect order in all things including the order of subatomic particles E Under God the molecules or subatomic particles would not become dis

47:12

ordered over time. They would stay ordered and thus would never lose their work potential. God's energy would never be subject to thermodynamic death. God's energy would be eternal, which is just amazing. Now if you're wondering if God could ever kind of run out of energy, kind of like running out of gas, the answer is no. And that's because if you recall,

47:40

According to the first law of thermodynamics, energy can neither be created nor destroyed. So there literally would be no way to run out of energy. There's an infinite quantity of energy out there in the cosmos. It's just a matter of knowing how to order the subatomic particles so that they never lose their work potential, which is something that God, because he upholds rightness,

48:09

has the knowledge and the power to do. I hope you're beginning to see how truly awesome God's light is. That glorious light that when John the Revelator saw it, he dropped to the ground as if dead. From this little discussion, we're beginning to see why. Imbued in God's supernal light is a source of energy that's beyond the feeble comprehension of our mortal minds.

48:38

for God's energy is enough energy to sustain everything and anything in the cosmos that God so desires. That amount of energy is truly unfathomable when we consider that in 2022, just in the United States, Americans used over 100 quadrillion BTUs, which are British thermal units of energy. That's an enormous amount of energy.

49:07

Now consider the amount of energy coming from the sun. NASA estimates that just last year, some 44 quadrillion watts of power fell on the earth. So this is just on the earth. Now the average electric power plant produces one billion watts of power. So to put this in human terms, it would take 44 million power plants to equal the energy.

49:36

coming from the sun annually. 44 million power plants. I don't even know where we would put them all. The energy that radiates from God's core is similar to, but different from the energy that we encounter in the temporal world. God's light radiates with an energy that can ignite stars, breathe life into the void, and weave the tapestry of existence itself. Number three.

50:05

building upon what we've just learned about God's light, its ability to radiate divine love and to transmit energy into the cosmos. We learned from Dr. Thavapalan's research that the ancient Mesopotamians understood God's light to be more than a mere passive presence. They taught that it was an active force. God's light didn't just permeate the cosmos, it interacted with the cosmos, with his creations in a dynamic way.

50:34

In other words, the ancient Mesopotamians understood that there was a literal power to the light, a power that Dr. Thavapalan said inspired awe and terror. This characteristic of God's light is also similar to what we see with physical light. Physical light can be extremely powerful. Right now in the United States, the Department of Defense has a high energy laser program.

51:03

and it's appropriately called HEL, H-E-L, High Energy Laser, where they have successfully used high energy lasers to blow missiles out of the sky. That's power, that's the power of light, it's light that can do that. And everyone knows that lasers are made of light, but did you know that lasers are an especially ordered type of light? Unlike the diffuse and scattered light that emanates from a conventional light bulb,

51:32

The light in a laser is organized so that the photons move together in the same direction. And it's that meticulous alignment or orderliness that grants the laser beam its extraordinary, powerful capabilities. I find that kind of interesting. If the US Department of Defense can use light to protect the US from a variety of enemy threats, one can only imagine what God can do with his light.

52:01

how God could use his light as a form of protection and power. And there are a number of other ways in which physical light is powerful outside of blowing missiles out of the sky. For example, when we stand in the sun, our bodies convert sunlight into vitamin D3. This vitamin is vital for calcium absorption, immune defense, muscle function, mood regulation. And when we have the...

52:28

proper levels of vitamin D3 in our system, we're much less likely to get osteoporosis or to experience inflammation or get infections or suffer from depression. It has the power to heal. That's power. That's the power of light. Another example of the power of physical light can be found in a pretty darn amazing emerging technology called quantum computing.

52:55

In regular computers, we have bits, which are like switches, and they can be either be turned on, which is one, or turned off, which is a zero. But in quantum computers, photons of light, which are referred to as qubits, quantum bits, can be in multiple states at once. So they can be on and they can be off, or they can be both, but all at the same time. This means, say, if you wanted to test various compositions of a cancer-fighting drug,

53:25

In a normal computer, you'd have to test each composition one after another. But in a quantum computer, you could test all of the compositions all at once. So problems that would take regular computers hundreds of years to solve, like tackling the mysteries of the universe or cracking some super complex encryption codes could theoretically be solved in days or even hours. You can already see how this is gonna change the world.

53:55

Right now, Microsoft is working on a quantum computer capable of carrying out one million operations in a second. All of this because of light. That's power and pun intended, a quantum leap forward. If we human beings can do this with light, just imagine the powerful things God could do with his light. Have you ever wondered

54:24

or pondered about the astounding capability God has to listen and to respond to the countless prayers lifted up to him daily? I certainly have. Or how about the profound notion that God knows each one of us deeply and personally, all eight billion of us on the earth, and is aware of every detail of our lives at any given moment? I certainly have. I've always wondered how God can do this. How can he know everything that's going on

54:53

on planet Earth in any given moment? Well, quantum computing might give us a clue. If the mere mortals at Microsoft have developed a quantum computer capable of carrying out one million operations in a single second, then it's conceivable that God could use his light to

process billions upon billions of bits of information simultaneously too. Number four, the last thing I wanna talk about in terms of God's light comes from the Judeo-Christian tradition.

55:23

In the Gospel of John, in the New Testament, we learn that God's light has the ability to transmit truth and knowledge. John chapter 1 verse 9 reads, referring to Christ's light, quote, that was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. So let's look at a couple of New Testament commentaries and see what they have to say about this verse.

55:53

McLaren's expositions argues that Christ's light here refers to, quote, the illumination of humanity. Barnes' notes says Christ's light is a light that, quote, enlightens, removes darkness, error, and ignorance from the mind. Meyer's New Testament commentary says this of Christ's light, quote, a characteristic of the true light. It illumines.

56:22

everyone, even though as a matter of fact the illumination is not received by many. In the pulpit commentary says this of Christ's light, quote, the light of reason and conscience, the divine instruction bestowed on every man from the universal manifestation of the Logos life. No man is left without some direct communication of light.

56:49

Each of these commentaries interpret Christ's light as having the ability to transmit truth and knowledge directly to human beings. In our ever decaying society, I find this an incredible gift. Here John is telling us that each person born into the world carries some of Christ's light, truth and knowledge around with them, in their being. This is incredible.

57:19

I'm going to pause it along with the pulpit commentary that some of the truth and knowledge that God deposited in each of us when we came into this world has something to do with the cosmic law of rightness, ascetic. The internal knowledge that each of us has that allows us to distinguish between right and wrong. We all know the difference. We all know it's not right to lie and cheat and still. We just know.

57:47

And John's telling us here why we just know, because God transmitted that knowledge to us through his light. Can you imagine a world where Christ didn't transmit this knowledge? A world where human beings couldn't distinguish between right and wrong? I don't even wanna fathom it. God's ability to transmit truth and knowledge directly to human beings through his light is an absolutely beautiful gift.

58:15

A gift that if we want to conquer the enemy, the dragon, we must have or we will fail. Remember in episode number 20, epic swords, golden bows and ruby slippers, how in the legend of Fafnir, the high god Odin in disguise thrust an epic sword into the barn stoker tree and then told Sigmund, quote, the man to pull out this sword from the trunk shall receive it for me as a gift.

58:43

and he will find out for himself that he never bore in hand a better sword than this. Well, the sword, the gift, is truth and knowledge. The truth and knowledge that Sigurd needs to obtain if he is to be successful in his battle against the terrible dragon Fafnir. In the New Testament, Paul says as much to the Ephesians in chapter 6.

59:12

when he tells the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God, and then he tells them in verse 16 to gird themselves with the quote, sword of the spirit. From John chapter one, verse nine, we see that God gives everyone who comes into the world a foundational understanding of truth and knowledge. But like we learned from the legend of Fafnir, not everyone can metaphorically pull the sword out of the barn stoker tree. Not everyone can obtain

59:41

greater truth and knowledge from God, unless they do what God asks them to do to receive that greater truth and knowledge. I don't know if you caught this earlier when we read John the Revelator's account of witnessing Christ in his full glory, but in that account, John also connects the sword to truth and knowledge, to the truth and knowledge that comes directly from God's mouth.

01:00:11

And this is how John describes Christ in Revelation chapter one, verse 16. It reads, and he had in his hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp, two-edged sword. See, in the ancient texts, legends and fairy tales, the sword that slays the dragon, the special weapon that the selfless son,

01:00:40

is gifted by God is a metaphor. It's a metaphor for the special weapon that all of us need, that all of us must pull out of the barn stoker tree if we wish to conquer the dragon. And what is that weapon? It's the truth and knowledge that comes from God's mouth. Truth and knowledge that is transmitted to human

01:01:10

to the theology of the ancient tradition. So we'll definitely revisit it. Now, lest you think that this teaching is a purely Judeo-Christian doctrine, think back on how special weapons, especially special swords, played a critical role in all of the battles against the dragon that we've covered on this program, from Egypt to Mesopotamia to Ugarit to Israel to Norway to China to Japan.

01:01:41

In all of these traditions, it's the sword that's the weapon that slays the dragon. I'm getting a little off topic here, so I want to draw you back to God's light. It's through God's light that we obtain truth and knowledge. Just think on this for a minute. Imagine everything God knows and all of the truth that he holds. Now imagine him downloading that information into you through his light.

01:02:09

Could you just imagine the things that you'd know, the things that you'd understand, the things that you'd be able to do? Imagine how you'd be able to discern people's motives, discern who was lying and who wasn't, discern what was true and what wasn't. That's the knowledge God's light can relay or reveal to us. In the world we live in, I don't know about you, but I need this. Now, the ability of God to transmit truth and knowledge through light,

01:02:38

is similar to the way in which we see physical light used to transmit information today. And this is done primarily through fiber optic networks. If you aren't familiar with fiber optics, basically the technology takes something like a simple text, text message, and turns it into

flashes of light, similar to those ones and zeros, where different patterns of light represent different information. It then sends those encoded light beams down a strand of glass thinner than a human hair.

01:03:09

The light blazes through the glass cable at nearly the speed of light, where it's decoded at the other end. And this technology serves as the backbone of the internet and all of our modern telecommunication systems. Nearly everything you do all day long that has to do with exchanging information is done by way of light. This technology is amazing, not only because it can transfer information at nearly the speed of light.

01:03:37

but also because these tiny fibers can carry an incredible amount of data all at once. Consider the way humans are already using light to transmit vast amounts of information. We shouldn't be the least surprised to learn that God uses his light to transfer truth and knowledge to those wanting and seeking greater truth and knowledge. And we can take great, great comfort

01:04:07

that the truth and knowledge we receive from God is never wrong, outdated, biased, manipulated, sensationalized, fake, spun, false, inaccurate, misleading, malicious, or untrue. No, it never could be. Why? Because as we established in the previous episode, first and foremost, God is a

01:04:36

a Lord of Maat and a King of Tzedek. In the world that we live in where misinformation, disinformation, falsehoods, and lies are becoming the norm, we need the sword of truth transmitted via God's light more than ever. In summary, ancients and moderns alike attest that

01:05:06

of ineffable light. This episode has reinforced the notion illustrating the profound and immeasurable qualities of God's light. His light has the ability to infuse every particle in the universe with His love. His light has the ability to produce the energy needed to sustain all of His creations. His light is all-powerful, capable of affecting His will.

01:05:35

And most significantly in our times, God's light possesses the extraordinary capacity to impart truth and knowledge directly to every single one of us, so that we too might come off triumphant and conquer the enemy. That's an ineffable light indeed.

01:06:02

That's it for me. I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

01:06:16

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Episode #30 - The Grand Primordial Singularity ("The Big Bang")

<https://theancienttradition.com/30-the-grand-primordial-singularity-the-big-bang/>

00:00

Music

00:10

Listening to the Ancient Tradition. A Wonk Media Production. Music provided by Joseph McDade. Here's your host, Dr. Jack Logan.

00:27

Welcome to the Ancient Tradition. I'm your host, Jack Logan. It's great to have all of you along for today's episode. Before I jump in, I wanna let you know that if you are interested in watching a visual representation of episode number four, Did God Reveal the Ancient Tradition in the Garden of Eden, you can now do so on our YouTube channel. We uploaded

that earlier last week. Just search for the ancient tradition on YouTube and you'll easily find it.

00:54

or you can watch it on our companion website, then it's all there. Today's episode is titled, the grand primordial singularity. And we're gonna do something a little crazy today. We're gonna try and tackle the greatest puzzle in cosmology in modern day astrophysics. We're gonna attempt to answer the question, how did the universe, our universe, come into existence?

01:22

To this day, this is the greatest unsolved mystery in astrophysics. And when we take a look, however, at what the ancients had to say thousands and thousands of years ago, we learned that they already knew how the universe came into being. So the question for us today is, does what the ancients taught mesh with modern day astrophysicists' theories of the origin of the universe, like the theory of the Big Bang?

01:52

Well, for the answer to that, you're gonna have to keep listening. But I think you'll see on today's program, like we've seen before, that modern day astrophysicists are playing catch up once again with what the ancients already knew. Before we jump in, let's start with a brief recap. As I've mentioned, the ancients placed an extraordinary amount of emphasis on the creation, which is why we began the podcast a year ago by starting with the creation.

02:23

and I hope by now you're beginning to see why understanding the creation is so important. It's important because we can't understand anything about the creation without a correct understanding of who God is. We have to know first and foremost that God is a God of rightness, a being who upholds rightness, and that it's through his rightness that he has the power to establish order, to bring about order in the cosmos. In particular here, his ability to command

02:52

the subatomic particles to order form themselves into a world. And it's that ordering of the subatomic particles that we call creation. A whole lot of events took place before God was given the power and authority to create our universe and world. I'm not going to summarize

those events here, but if you haven't given episodes 19 to 25 a listen, you may want to do that so that you have a greater understanding of how the creation plays a

03:22

central role in the theology revealed to the ancients in the beginning. You'll learn in those episodes what God had to do before he could be given the power and authority to create our universe. It will give you a much greater appreciation for who God is. Up to this point in the program, you're eyeing from the ancient texts, focusing primarily on the stubborn bits.

03:52

we can establish a rough sequence of events that led to the creation. They are number one, prior to the creation of the universe, the cosmos was filled with a dark, lifeless, infinite expanse of disordered matter or subatomic particles, which is described by the ancients as a primordial sea. Number two, God appeared over the dark, lifeless, primordial elements and breathed.

04:21

something of his essence into the elements, which is described by the ancients as a brooding wind. Number three, after breathing something of his essence into the elements, God by way of his voice commanded the creation to begin to take shape, which is described by the ancients as divine utterance. As a quick aside, we haven't talked about this on the podcast too much yet.

04:50

But there's plenty in the ancient record to suggest that the word God used to command the elements to take shape was his royal divine name. This is one of those things to keep in your back pocket because divine names and especially God's divine name will play a very important role in the ancient tradition as the podcast progresses. In the Bremner Rind Papyrus

05:19

dated to 1250 BC, we see very clearly that God uses his name to command the elements to take shape. It reads, speaking of the ancient Egyptian god Ra, quote, I am the creator of what hath come into being. I came into being in primeval time. I have spread myself abroad therein.

05:45

So that line right there might refer to imparting something of his essence into the elements. I brought my own name into my mouth as a word of power. The footnote here says I uttered my own name from my own mouth as a word of power. From this text we see a very strong connection between divine utterance, God's name,

06:13

and the power to bring about the creation. This passage couldn't be clearer that God used his name and the power and authority inherent in his name to command the elements to order themselves into a world. In the ancient Near East, we know that names were chosen to reflect the actual essence of the being being named. And since we know that God perfectly embodies maat, cedic, rightness,

06:43

We must surmise that God's name expresses his perfect rightness. The rightness we've learned from the ancients that is the only way one can obtain the power and authority to impose order on disorder. Someone with a lesser name would not have had the power and authority to command the elements. And we must also surmise that all of God's divine utterances must invoke his divine name in some way. Because...

07:12

It's through his name that his commands are recognized as legitimate. His power is in his name because his name is a perfect reflection of his essence, which is the embodiment of rightness. And remember, as we learned in our last two episodes, subatomic particles only respond to the ordering power of rightness. All of this brings me to today's episode.

07:40

According to the ancients, what happened next? What happened after God commanded the elements to take shape? Let's jump into a couple of ancient texts and see what we can learn. Do you remember the ancient Egyptian primordial goose, Gen Genware, the great honker? Several episodes back, we learned from Richard Wilkinson that Gen Genware, which means the great honker, was the sacred celestial goose.

08:09

And according to this ancient Egyptian creation account, Gen Gen Weir laid a large egg on the primordial waters and then rockously honked or cackled, causing the egg to crack open. And a bright light broke forth from the egg and light and life filled the expanse. This ancient Egyptian account is culled from a variety of references in the ancient texts and none of them contain the whole account.

08:37

Here's an example of one of the references to Gen Gen Ware in the Papyrus Leden 350, chapter 90. In this text, Gen Gen Ware is referred to as jargoner, which means to speak or speaker, which in this case, because it's used in reference to a goose, refers to the speech or honk that's made by a goose. And keep in mind that this creation account is highly symbolic. We're clearly dealing here with

09:06

avian symbolism, a goose, which we've learned in previous episodes was used by the ancients to represent celestial beings. In this case, the sacred goose represents the creator god Amun-Ra. Note in this passage the important emphasis placed on Amun-Ra's shout or honk and see if you can figure out what the ancient Egyptians were referring to by the goose's honk. The text reads, quote,

09:36

When his form shone, the first time all beings were amazed at his prestige, he, Jargon, as a great jargoner going to the ground he had created while he was alone, he spoke words inside the silence. He was the first to shout, the land being in silence, and his roar spread without parallel. He gave birth to what is, he gave it life.

10:06

Okay, were you able to figure out what the honk symbolized? Well, if you guessed that the honk represented the same thing we just read earlier in the Bremner Rhine Papyrus, where Ra uttered his name and brought the creation into being, you're correct. You're developing your symbolism literacy. The ancient Egyptians were expressing the same point here in this account as they were in the other account. The

10:32

power of divine utterance to initiate the creation, in this case to open the cosmic egg of creation. Let's read another reference to Gen Genware. This one is found in the ancient

Egyptian Book of the Dead, the Papyrus of Annie in chapter 59. This time while I'm reading, see if you can figure out what the egg symbolizes. The text reads,

11:00

chapter of snuffing the air and having dominion over the waters." And that's referring to the primordial waters. In the underworld, Osiris Annie sayeth, I watch and guard the egg of Ne'ekr. Now Ne'ekr means the great cackler. It groweth, I grow. It liveth, I live. I, the Osiris Annie, in triumph.

11:30

There's a lot of great stuff in this passage. First, the title of this chapter lets us know that this chapter is gonna be about dominion. Dominion over the chaotic elements. Dominion here over the elements means the ability to impose order on chaos or the ability to create. So here, Annie, the triumphant one, who we learned from this epitaph, has triumphed over the dragon himself, compares himself directly to Amun-Ra.

12:01

sacred goose who has the power and authority by his name to create. Annie is essentially telling us in this passage that he now too, now that he reigns in the afterlife as a heavenly king, has the power to crack open the egg and create a world too. It's astounding. But back to my original question, what is this cosmic egg?

12:29

that the sacred goose cracked open. What does this egg symbolize? For most of us, egg symbolism isn't too difficult to grasp. When an egg starts to crack and a cute little baby chick wiggles its way out, it's pretty easy for most of us to see that the egg represents the source from which all life emerges. Makes sense, but it's still not a lot of information. You know, what is this source from which life emerges? This...

12:57

source that needs to be cracked open if life is to emerge. Let's take a look at a couple more cosmic egg accounts to see if we can't glean some more information about what this egg is. I like so much on this program, we find the cosmic egg creation motif all over the world. We find it among the Orphic, Vedic, Taoist, Finnish, Polynesian, Japanese, Chinese, Phoenician, and African cultures and many others.

13:25

So let's look among the Hindu. Among the Hindu, the universe is created from a golden egg known as the Haranya Garba. The word Haranya Garba is a composite word where Haranya means golden and Garba means womb. So Haranya Garba means golden womb. And I think that's pretty interesting. So here we see an association between the egg and a womb. And also note how this egg is

13:55

Golden, which we established in our last episode, represents glory. So we're also seeing a connection between the cosmic egg and glory and light here. In Sanskrit, haranya not only means gold, it also means imperishable or eternal. So keep that in

14:24

and says this is the golden egg. And this is the Ralph T. H. Griffith translation. It reads, quote, in the beginning rose Hiranya Garba. Again, Hiranya Garba is the golden egg. So in the beginning it rose. So note the association here between the phrase in the beginning and the golden egg. The connection between the two is gonna be really important in just a minute. In the Hindu Chandogya Upanishad,

14:53

3.19.1 and 3, it says this of the golden egg. And listen to what comes out of the golden egg. The unknown alone existed when this world was in latency in the beginning of creation. That not known became the known. That egg lay for the time of one year. After that period, it broke open. Now what was born in that egg?

15:23

is this Aditya? When he became manifest, all beings adored him. We read in this passage that the golden egg floated around on the primordial waters for a year, then it broke open, and what was inside the egg? The passage says that Aditya was inside the egg. Aditya in its singular form refers to the Hindu sun god Surya.

15:50

Surya is revered as the source of life and energy and is often identified with the god Vishnu in the Vedic texts. And do you remember the god Vishnu? God Vishnu is the king and

preserver of order in the universe. The god who represents truth and righteousness. I can't make this stuff up.

16:18

Here we see the cosmic egg split open and what's inside? God, God's inside, a being of light whose glory the Hindu equate, just like the ancient Egyptians did with Ra, with the sun. So the cosmic egg splits open and God appears, filling the expanse with his blinding glorious light. And did you catch the connection between God here and heavenly kingship, the ability to preserve the order of the universe, and

16:47

Ma'at or Tzedek, truth and righteousness, because it's all there right in Hinduism. We read a similar account of God bursting forth from the cosmic egg in ancient Egyptian accounts found in the coffin texts and in the book of the dead. Dr. Alicia Maravelia, she's a professor of Egyptology at the People's University of Athens and she summarizes the ancient Egyptian cosmic egg

17:17

like this. She says, quote, The first from the coffin texts denotes the concept of the solar God coming out of his egg, shining in his disk, brightening his horizon and crossing his firmament. The second from the Book of the Dead is of a quite similar context, glorifying the solar God in his egg, who brightens his disk, shines in his horizon and makes his

17:47

to radiate like gold. We learned two important things from these accounts. First, we learned that the cosmic egg was the source of light that initiated the creation. In Coffin Text 76, when Atum has come forth from the egg, Atum says, quote, I made illumination of the darkness. Here Atum is telling us that he was the one who brought the light.

18:16

that illuminated the dark primordial waters. In all of these creation accounts, it's light, God's light that bursts forth from the cosmic egg. And if you listened to our previous episode, episode number 28, who is God, a glorious being of ineffable light, then you already know that God's light and the capabilities of God's light are absolutely astonishing.

18:44

Second, we learned that inside this egg is where God originally resided. So the egg must in some way represent God's home. Dr. Mary Avella, who I just mentioned, also founded the Hellenic Institute of Egyptology in Greece. And she notes that there are significant parallels between the ancient Egyptian creation counts of the cosmic egg and Hellenistic accounts.

19:12

In particular, the account found in the Orphic Hymns. Dr. Mara Velia summarizes the account. This is what she says. Quote, according to the Orphics, whose main texts, the Orphic Hymns were initially written down during the sixth century BC, time after creating ether, chaos and abysmal darkness fashioned a cosmic silver egg that was born by the night.

19:41

The Cosmic Egg was the source of the light of creation. It contained all the germs of creation, exactly as was the case in ancient Egypt. After the Orphic Egg was hatched, the god Fonis was the personification of the primordial extremely brilliant light of creation, replenishing the cosmos with bright light.

20:08

dissolving the mists of the abysmal darkness. Here we see the Orphic God, Fonis, come out of the cosmic egg. The name Fonis actually means, quote, the bringer of light. As I mentioned earlier, we find this cosmic egg motif all over. For example, in China, we have the legend of Pangu. In this legend, which is dated to the third century AD,

20:35

Pangu emerges from a cosmic egg and creates heaven and earth. The earliest recorded version of the legend reads, quote, in the beginning, heaven and earth was one boundary blurred entity like an egg carrying Pangu inside itself. After 18,000 years, heaven and earth formed.

21:04

an ethnic group who live in southern China, sing songs about Pangu. In one line of the hymn to Pangu says, quote, it's thanks to Pangu that human beings can get brightness. So here again, we see the connection between the cosmic egg, the creation and light. This next cosmic creation account is quite intriguing and it comes to us from among the Slavs.

21:32

who lived primarily in what is today central, eastern, and southeastern Europe. The cosmic egg is referred to in this account as a blue pebble or stone and is connected very intriguingly to a sacred tree, which of course has birds perched in the summit of the branches. The account is found in a Carpathian carol written down in the 17th century A.D. So this is very late.

22:01

It reads, and while I'm reading this, try and test your symbolism literacy to see if you can't decipher what the tree, the pigeons, the sea, the sand, and the blue stone or egg symbolize. Quote, it used to be at the beginning of the world. Then there was no sky or earth, no sky nor earth, but the blue sea. And in the middle of the sea on oak, two pigeons were sitting.

22:30

Two pigeons on an oak tree, they held such a council. Happily debated and cooed, how can we create the world? We will fall to the bottom of the sea. We'll bring out the fine sand. Fine sand, blue stone. We will sow fine sand. We will pick up the blue pebble from fine sand, black earth, icy water, green grass. From the blue stone.

22:59

The blue sky, bright sun. I'm not gonna take time here to decipher all of the symbols. A year into the podcast now, you should be noticing how your own ability to decipher the ancient symbols is beginning to increase. So I don't wanna rob you of that opportunity. I do however, wanna point out one very important aspect of this cosmic egg creation account.

23:27

An aspect that provides us with a very, very important clue about what this cosmic egg is. Here, the Slavs are telling us that there's a relationship between the cosmic egg, the blue pebble, and the sacred tree. Now, all of you longtime listeners should know what the sacred tree represents, or rather who the sacred tree represents. It represents God.

23:56

But do you remember where the sacred tree grows? Think back to episode number four, did God reveal the ancient tradition in the Garden of Eden? Where did the Tree of Life grow in the garden? Hopefully you remember. The Tree of Life grew in the midst of the garden. The tree grew in the very middle or center of the garden. Because if you recall in episode number four,

24:24

We learned that the Garden of Eden wasn't just a garden. It was the earth's first sanctuary where God could dwell on earth. If this isn't ringing a bell, be sure and go back and listen to episode number four again or watch the YouTube version that we just uploaded. In that episode, drawing from Richard Davidson's research, we learned that the Garden of Eden was actually a garden temple, set apart and holy where God could dwell.

24:53

while on earth, the garden temple, which was patterned after where God dwelt in heaven, His heavenly temple. If you recall in that episode, we learned that the Mosaic Tabernacle and later Israelite temples like Solomon's temple were all built according to the Garden of Eden temple pattern, which was itself again patterned after God's holy sanctuary or temple in heaven.

25:24

In that episode, we learned from Davidson that the geography given in Genesis was divided in three parts, each representing an increase in the degree of holiness. First you have the land called Eden. Second, within the land called Eden, you have the garden. And third, within the garden, in the center of the garden, you have the tree of life.

25:50

And Davidson went on to show that the Mosaic and Solomonic temples had the same three degrees of holiness. First, you have a courtyard. Second, beyond the courtyard, you have the temple proper called the Holy Place. And then beyond the Holy Place, what do you have? The Holy of Holies, God's throne room. The room where God, that glorious being of ineffable light, rests on his throne.

26:20

When we put the two together, we see that the tree of life in the center of the garden equates with God sitting on his throne in the Holy of Holies of his temple. The Slavs then connect the tree of life, which we now know symbolizes God on his throne in the Holy of Holies, directly with the cosmic egg. So what the Slavs have just done for us is solve the riddle of this cosmic egg.

26:51

The Cosmic Egg is the Holy of Holies, the supremely glorious and holy place where God resides in the heavens in the midst of all things. Which is why at the very moment that the egg splits open, the primordial waters are engulfed in a blinding glorious light. A light which we learned in our last episode radiates directly from God's very being.

27:19

It's here that we should see if we can't learn a little more about the Holy of Holies. In one of the best books that I've ever read, written by a scholar by the name of Margaret Barker, she's a Cambridge-educated British scholar, titled *The Great High Priest*, we find a very insightful chapter on the Holy of Holies. And it's in there that we learn a couple of very important things about the Holy of Holies and the creation of the universe. And before I read to you what she has to say,

27:48

Let me read the first line of Genesis in the Old Testament, just to give you a quick refresher of what the Bible has to say about the creation. It reads, and this is the King James Version, quote, in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. In reference to this, the opening verse of the Bible, Dr. Barker writes, quote,

28:13

The opening words of the Hebrew scriptures are a description of the Holy of Holies. The beginning was the state which the Holy of Holies represented, not the point at which time began. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, describes the state whence the creation emerged. From what she just said, we learned that the phrase, in the beginning,

28:43

synonymous with Holy of Holies. So what is translated in Genesis as in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth could just as well be translated as in the Holy of Holies God created the heaven and earth. All things begin in the Holy of Holies. All creation comes out of the Holy of Holies where God dwells. Dr. Barker notes, quote,

29:12

This hidden center was the unity from which all creation came forth. Later tradition remembered that the secrets of the Holy of Holies were the secrets of creation. What Qumran texts described as the mystery of being. Now this is a super interesting insight

because this is exactly what we saw in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch. If you remember

29:40

Enoch ascends through the heavens to the Holy of Holies and he sees the Lord on his throne in fiery glory. And then what does the Lord do? He shares with Enoch the secrets of creation right there in the Holy of Holies. Dr. Barker's research also reveals one more very, very important aspect of the Holy of Holies. She writes, quote,

30:10

that the temple concept of time was neither linear nor cyclic, but based on the concept of a hidden eternity in the midst of time as we perceive it. Philo in his writing on the creation. If you're wondering who Philo is, Philo was an important and really influential Jewish philosopher who was born in Alexandria, Egypt in 20 BC. And he lived about 70 years. And so he died around 50 AD.

30:40

So Philo in his writing on the creation emphasized that in the beginning should not be taken in a chronological sense. For time there was not before there was a world. Time began either simultaneously with the world or after it. In other words, Philo is arguing here that time does not exist in the Holy of Holies where God dwells. Where he dwells is eternity.

31:10

And grounds for Philo's statement actually can be found in the biblical canon. We find it in the New Testament in Luke chapter 4. Christ is taken up to a high mountain, which you know by now is a symbol of God's temple. And while Christ is there, he's shown the entire history of the world in a single moment.

31:39

shoed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. Dr. Barker notes, quote, the Holy of Holies was beyond time. To enter was to enter eternity. History seen in the Holy of Holies was history seen outside the limitations of space and time. In other words, time does not

32:10

Interestingly, this idea is captured architecturally in sacred edifices all over the world. We'll get into sacred architecture much more in the coming weeks, but let me give you an idea of what I mean. All we have to do is examine the spatial and temporal orientation of the world's oldest sacred monuments and temples to find that the vast majority of them are oriented to the points of the compass.

32:39

and or the solstice and equinoxes. For example, if we look into one of the most famous ancient monuments in the world, Stonehenge, it's located in Wiltshire, England, dated by archeologists to between 3100 and 16100 BC. We learned that Stonehenge was built to align with the sun on the solstice. Now, if you're not familiar with the solstice, the solstice are essentially a measure of time.

33:09

They measure where we are in the year. The spring equinox marks that we are in the spring. The summer solstice marks that we're in the summer. The fall equinox marks that we're in the fall. And the winter solstice marks that we're in the winter. So to align Stonehenge to the solstice is to align the sacred monument to terrestrial time. Okay. So now why would the people who constructed Stonehenge do this? Well,

33:38

Archaeologists discovered that Stonehenge is aligned in particular to the summer solstice, which is the longest day of the year where the sun is at its peak. And this causes a nifty astronomical event to take place in the very center of the monument. In the morning of the summer solstice, the sun rises behind what is known as the heel stone, which is just outside of the main circle of Stonehenge, and the sunlight shines along a straight path.

34:06

that is known as the Stone Avenue, until it reaches the very heart or center of the monument. In other words, Stonehengers built the monument so that the fiery light of the sun would, on the summer solstice, bathe the very center of the monument in a glorious, brilliant light. So are you catching the symbolism of what's going on here?

34:36

Every year thousands and thousands of new-agers and spiritual enthusiasts flock to Stonehenge during the summer solstice just so they can witness this event. But what they

likely don't understand is that what they're witnessing is a visual representation of a very important tenant of the ancient tradition. The notion that God, a glorious being of light, resides on his royal throne in the center, the very center of all things.

35:07

It's a pretty simple doctrine, but it's missed by the vast majority of people who visit Stonehenge because they're not familiar with the doctrines revealed to human beings in the very beginning, the doctrines of the ancient tradition. Now, lest you think that I might be reading more into this than there is, consider that we find this exact same architectural feature in many of the world's most important monuments and temples. For example,

35:35

the ancient Egyptians oriented their temples so that the sun would shine directly into the Holy of Holies on the summer solstice. King Solomon likewise meticulously aligned the Israelite temple to ensure that on the summer solstice, the sun would cast its rays onto the temple's gilded front doors, creating the appearance of a dazzling blaze of fire. We'll talk more about this in coming days,

36:05

Note that by orienting Stonehenge to the Solstice and Equinoxes, terrestrial time, Stonehengers were symbolically conveying another very important point about where God resides. If you recall in episode number four, did God reveal the ancient tradition in the Garden of Eden? We learned that the word temple is derived from the Greek word temenos, which means to cut.

36:32

refers to where two perpendicular lines cut across each other, where they cross. It refers to the point at which the Greek kardo, the north-south line, and the decumanus, the east-west line, cross. In the very center where those lines cross is a temple. In other words, a true temple resides in the spatial center of all things, like God's temple.

37:02

That's what that symbolism conveys. So to orient Stonehenge to the solstices and equinoxes is to do the same thing, but with terrestrial time. If you do a circle on a piece of paper that represented the year, kind of like a clock, then you drew a line from the summer solstice to

the winter solstice, like drawing a line from 12 o'clock to six o'clock, and then drew another line from the spring equinox to the fall equinox from

37:31

three o'clock to six o'clock, where they cut across each other, where they crossed would be the very center of the clock or back to Stonehenge, the very center or heart of the monument. What the ancients were trying to symbolize by doing this is that God resides not only in the center of all space, but that he also resides in the center of all time. In other words, God's heavenly temple where God resides on his heavenly throne.

38:00

resides in the center of all things, both time and space. It's there in the center of all things in the Holy of Holies that time and space as we understand them in terrestrial terms dissolves. Dr. Barker pointed out there is no time in the Holy of Holies. It's beyond time. Where God dwells is eternal. There is no temporal notion of time there.

38:29

just like Jesus experienced when he was taken up to the mountain, the Holy of Holies, and was shown the past, present, and future of all things in a moment. That's only possible outside the limitations of time. This point about God dwelling in eternity in a place where time does not exist is gonna be really super relevant to our understanding of the creation in just a minute. But before we jump into that, we need to take a second

38:59

talk a little bit more about God's light. In our previous episode we talked about the incredible capacity temporal light has to transport quadrillions and quadrillions of watts of energy to act as a powerful force like processing millions of operations in a single second like we see in quantum computing to transmit enormous amounts of information at nearly the speed of light.

39:28

We suggested in that episode that God patterned physical light after his light so that we would have some understanding of how truly awesome his light is and all of the incomprehensible things that he can accomplish with his light. In that episode though, we never answered one crucial question. How did God get this light?

39:52

The ancients uniformly attest that God is a being of glorious light, but I want to know how God got this incredibly powerful light, this light that has the astonishing capacity to do all of these amazing things, this light that actually makes God a God. Now some of you may have already figured this out, especially if you listen to episode number 27. Who is God?

40:22

In a future episode, I'm gonna talk more about this, but it's clear from the ancients that this light comes from adhering to or upholding Ma'at or Tzedek, the cosmic law of rightness. Now, I in no way wanna give you the impression that I understand this process more than I do because I don't. But it's from some of the ancient texts that we've read on this program.

40:49

Like the book of Joseph and Azaneth, where we saw that Azaneth, after she had conquered the dragon, which is akin to upholding rightness, was made a heavenly queen and then took on a brilliant radiance. And it's there that we can easily see the connection between adhering to rightness and obtaining this powerful light. In chapter 18, after having been made a heavenly queen, we're told this about Azaneth's transformation. The text reads, quote,

41:19

Her face was like the sun, and her eyes like the rising morning star. Here we see that she has clearly become a glorious being of light. Or like in the Mesopotamian creation epic, the Enuma Elish, when Marduk, after conquering the sea dragon, and after having become a heavenly king, tablet four tells us, quote,

41:49

with a terrible radiance. And we saw the same thing in the book of the Holy Secrets of Enoch, when Enoch ascended to God's throne, the Holy of Holies, and was made a heavenly king in chapter 22. Here, Enoch, after looking around at others in God's kingdom, looks at himself and he notes, quote, "I saw myself, and I saw I was like one of his glorious ones, and there was no observable difference." At a minimum,

42:18

We assume that God obtained his glorious light in the same manner, from conquering the dragon, from upholding rightness. Now, the mechanism by which this works, I do not know.

But it seems to me that it could be as simple as thinking of our souls like a door. When we uphold rightness, the door opens and our souls receive more and more light and power. And when we don't uphold rightness,

42:48

the door shuts, then no more light and power can enter. Thus, greater and greater lights can be ours the more we uphold rightness, until one day we ourselves become glorious beings, and there's no observable difference. All of this implies that somehow ma'at or tzedek or rightness, which is translated as truth, justice and righteousness, somehow shines.

43:16

that there is a power in rightness, a power again that has a brilliance to it, that shines. This suggests that truth shines, which is an incredible notion to contemplate. And remember it's through this brilliant, powerful light that God has the power and authority to order the disordered subatomic particles to form themselves into a universe and world.

43:45

So we're back to the creation. How does all of what we've just learned mesh with contemporary astrophysicists and what they have to say about the creation of the universe? Right now, based off of the evidence observed in the known universe, astrophysicists theorize that the universe began from a mind-bogglingly hot and incalculably dense point where literally

44:14

all of the matter in the entire universe was packed into a single quantum, the smallest possible discrete unit conceivable in the physical world. Then, from some mechanism, unknown by modern physics, this quantum in a single finite moment suddenly and rapidly expanded,

44:43

the singularity or in common vernacular, the Big Bang. There's actually quite a compelling body of observable evidence that supports this theory of how our universe came into being. For example, astronomers can use the CMBR, which is the Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation of the universe. And it acts like a cosmic baby photo of the universe, taken when the universe was around 380,000 years old.

45:13

Back in those early days, the universe was a hot, dense soup of particles. As it expanded, it cooled. And eventually, light was able to travel freely through the space. This light, which started as a glow from the hot early universe, has stretched and cooled as the universe has expanded, turning into the microwave signals that we detect today.

45:42

omnipresent microwave background gives us a snapshot of the infant universe, providing direct evidence of its rapid expansion from a hot, dense state, exactly as predicted by the Big Bang Theory. Additional observational evidence like the red shift of galaxies, the abundance of light elements like hydrogen, helium, and lithium,

46:08

and the large-scale distribution and evolution of galaxies and stars are consistent with what is predicted by Big Bang models. When astrophysicists extrapolate the expansion of the universe backwards in time, they find that 13.8 billion years have passed since the singularity, the initial Big Bang, which means that our universe is 13.8 billion years old.

46:37

The Big Bang Theory though is not without its problems. See, as astrophysicists work their way backwards, closer and closer to the singularity, the physics of their models work really, really well right up to one second after the singularity. In fact, their models work really well right up to one trillionth of a second after the singularity, which in physics is known as 10 to the minus 12 seconds.

47:07

They can even go as close as 10 to the minus 35 seconds, which is an incredibly short amount of time, and the physics is still relatively stable. But after that, there's trouble. For an explanation of this, we need to turn to my favorite astrophysicist, Dr. Filipenko, professor of astronomy at Cal Berkeley. In this clip, he's gonna refer to what is known as Planck time.

47:35

Planck time is named after Max Planck, a German theoretical physicist who in 1918 won the Nobel Prize in Physics for his role as the father of quantum theory. Planck time is the

smallest meaningful interval of time known in the universe, below which the laws of physics, as we currently understand them, cease to function.

48:05

Let's listen to what Dr. Filippenko has to say about this. The very shortest interval of time, immediately following the singularity, Planck time.

48:19

Suppose we want to go back even further to something like t equals 10 to the minus 43 seconds, the Planck time. Can we do that? This is an almost inconceivably short time. And I would claim that at this time we don't know much about the universe. We essentially know nothing about the universe at earlier times, but even at 10 to the minus 43 seconds, the Planck time, we need a quantum theory of gravity because, you know, at those times temperatures were 10 to the 32 degrees.

48:47

typical masses of particles were 10 to the 19 proton masses. The space-time curvature associated with those masses was huge, and we don't yet have a quantum theory of gravity. The typical length scales were the speed of light times 10 to the minus 43 seconds, which is roughly 10 to the minus 33 centimeters, the Planck length. Everything becomes chaotic and unpredictable. Time and space may be packaged or quantized in bundles.

49:17

possibly even at time scales of 10 to the minus 43 seconds and length scales of 10 to the minus 33 centimeters. And some physicists postulate that there is just this space-time foam of packages of time and space flitting into and out of existence. I mean, this is...

49:35

is a lot of hand weighting. Notice how much I'm waving my hands, all right? We really don't know basically what happened at the Plunk time or before that. There's no fully self-consistent theory of quantum gravity at this time. And so given the great uncertainty at the Plunk time, let's just not discuss it any further. I mean, I think it's an interesting topic, but I won't discuss it any further. Dr. Filippenko cracks me up. He says,

50:01

Speaking of this mysterious Planck time, we just won't discuss it any further. We just don't know what happened in the Planck time and we really don't have any way to test what happened in the Planck time. So we're just not gonna talk about it anymore. What he's admitting here is that astrophysicists have no idea what initiated the Big Bang and they have no idea what happened in that, the smallest meaningful interval of time, 10^{-43} seconds or Planck time.

50:30

immediately following the Big Bang. And that's because our physics, as currently constituted, fall apart when we examine the initial quantum from which the universe began. And that's because that quantum, quote, yields an infinite density and temperature. An infinite density and temperature. Can you even wrap your brain around something like infinite density?

50:58

Or how about something like infinite temperature or heat? John Hawley and Catherine Holcomb wrote Foundations of Modern Cosmology. They note that, quote, even the very concept of a particle breaks down under these conditions. And as Dr. Filippenko pointed out, there aren't any instruments at our disposal that could test something of infinite density or temperature. So we may never know.

51:27

This mystery may permanently remain outside of the realm of human knowledge, which I think is very interesting. Stephen Hawking and George Ellis in their book, The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time, have shown that quote, the theory of general relativity and quantum mechanics is currently realized are not applicable before the Planck Epoch.

51:53

Again, physics as we currently understand it breaks down when we get to 10^{-43} seconds or Planck time after the Big Bang. Here's the really interesting part though. Did you catch how Dr. Filippenko hinted that the notion of time itself gets really messed up under these conditions? Which makes sense if the theory of general relativity, which deals with the fabric of space-time is no longer applicable.

52:23

Listen to this and this is drawn from the work of several astrophysicists including from Dr. Stephen Hawking's book, *The Beginning of Time*. Quote, certain quantum gravity treatments such as the Wheeler-Dewitt equation imply that time itself could be an emergent property. What? What did we just read? We just read that astrophysicists are now positing that time...

52:52

itself actually emerged from the Big Bang. The time didn't exist before the Big Bang. And this of course implies that the singularity emerged out of a place where time did not exist. I continue, quote, as such, physics may conclude that time did not exist before the Big Bang.

53:21

The ancients already knew this. They already knew that our universe came into being in a timeless place, in eternity, when God threw open the doors of the Holy of Holies, cracked the cosmic egg, and flooded the dark abyss with his glorious ineffable light. A light that we learned in our last episode has the infinite capacity

53:51

to generate quadrillions upon quadrillions of watts of energy. That light that has the capacity to transmit His love and knowledge into every single atomic particle, into every single human being. That light that has the capacity to create time itself. Yes, the ancients already knew this.

54:20

And as we see here, modern day astrophysicists are once again playing catch up with the ancients. Remember Dr. Maravelia, who studied the cosmic egg motif among the ancient Egyptians and Greeks? She too noticed a connection between cosmic egg creation accounts and contemporary theories in astrophysics. She writes, speaking of the cosmic egg, quote, we have here a description.

54:49

virtually equivalent to the notions of modern cosmology and astrophysics. The vast egg corresponds to the primordial sphere of fire that was produced just after the Big Bang, bearing in itself the time, the matter, and the energy of creation that is all the pairs of elementary particles and antiparticles together with the cascade of light that brightened the

55:19

universe and was indeed born in principio. And don't forget that the ancients taught that all creation, all light and life, springs from the King of Heaven who is seated on his throne beyond time in the Holy of Holies. Praise God for throwing open the doors of the Holy of Holies.

55:47

and initiating the glorious creation that is this universe.

55:54

That's it for me. I'll leave you with the words of William Shakespeare. Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven. I'm Jack Logan.

56:08

You've been listening to the ancient tradition, a Wonk Media Production.